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Department of English
Course Title: READING
Level: First Year-LMD
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PRACTICE WITH PREVIEWING

Exercise 1: *Preview this essay by quickly, reading only the underlined parts. After previewing, answer the questions that follow. Your teacher will time you or you can time yourself for one minute.*

How Dictionaries Are Made

by S. I. Hayakawa

It is widely believed that every word has a correct meaning that we learn these meanings principally from teachers and grammarians (except that most of the time we don't bother to, so that we ordinarily speak "sloppy English"), and that dictionaries and grammars are the supreme authority in matters of meaning and usage. [...] Few people ask by what authority the writers of dictionaries and grammars say what they say.

Let us see how dictionaries are made and how the editors arrive at definitions. What follows applies, incidentally, only to those dictionary offices where first-hand, original research goes on—not those in which editors simply copy existing dictionaries. The task of writing a dictionary begins with the reading of vast amounts of the literature of the period or subject that the dictionary is to cover. As the editors read, they copy on cards every interesting or rare word, every unusual or peculiar occurrence of a common word, a large number of common words in their ordinary uses, and also the sentences in which each of these words appears, thus:

pail

The dairy pails bring home increase of milk

Keats, Endymion 1, 44-45

That is to say, the context of each word is collected, along with the word itself. For a really big job of dictionary writing, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary* (usually bound in about twenty-five volumes) millions of such cards are collected, and the task of editing occupies decades. As the cards are collected, they are alphabetized and sorted. When the

sorting is completed, there will be for each word anywhere from two to three to several hundred illustrative quotations, each on its card.

To define a word, then, the dictionary editor places before him the stack of cards illustrating that word: each of the cards represents an actual use of the word by a writer of some literary or historical importance. He reads the cards carefully, discards some, rereads the rest, and divides up the stack according to what he thinks are the several senses of the word. Finally, he writes his definitions, following the hard-and-fast rule that each definition *must* be based on what the quotations in front of him reveal about the meaning of the word. The editor cannot be influenced by what *he* thinks a given word *ought* to mean. He must work according to the cards or not at all.

The writing of a dictionary, therefore, is not a task of setting up authoritative statements about the "true meanings" of words, but a task of *recording*, to the best of one's ability, what various words have meant to authors in the distant or immediate past. *The writer of a dictionary is a historian, not a lawgiver. [...]* To regard the dictionary as an "authority," therefore, is to credit the dictionary writer with gifts of prophecy which neither he nor anyone else possesses. In choosing our words when we speak or write, we can be *guided* by the historical record afforded us by the dictionary, but we cannot be *bound* by it, because new situations, new experiences, new inventions, new feelings, are always compelling us to give new uses to old words. Looking under a "hood," we should ordinarily have found, five hundred years ago, a monk; today, we find a motorcar engine.

(Source: S. I. Hayakawa, *Language in Thought and Action*, 2nd Edition. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1939)

Notice how much you are able to remember from just one minute of previewing!

1. What is this essay about?
2. What kind of text is this (i.e., description, explanation, argument, narrative)?
3. Where do dictionary meanings come from?
4. What is the role of a dictionary writer?
5. Do words keep the same meaning forever?
6. Write any words, phrases, or numbers you noticed.

Exercise 2 : *Read the table of contents from a sociology textbook. Then answer the questions that follow.*

Brief Contents

1 Sociology: Perspective, Theory, and Method	1
2 Culture	29
3 Socialization	57
4 Social Interaction in Everyday Life	81
5 Groups and Organizations	103
6 Sexuality and Society	127
7 Deviance	155
8 Social Stratification	189
9 Global Stratification	213
10 Gender Stratification	239
11 Race and Ethnicity	265
12 The Economy and Politics	299
13 Family and Religion	333
14 Education and Medicine	365
15 Population, Urbanization, and the Environment	389
16 Social Change: Traditional, Modern, and Postmodern Societies	411
Glossary	434
Name Index	467
Subject Index	472

(Source: J. J. Macionis, *Society: The Basics*, 4th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998)

1. How many chapters does this book contain?
2. Which topics are not familiar to you?
3. Which chapters do you think would be most interesting to read?
4. Besides chapters, what other sections are listed?

Exercise 3 : *Read the outline for Chapter 3 of Society: The Basics and answer the questions that follow.*

CHAPTER 3: SOCIALIZATION

The Importance of Social Experience

Human Development: Nature and Nurture

Social Isolation

Understanding Socialization

Sigmund Freud: The Elements of Personality

Jean Piaget: Cognitive Development
Lawrence Kohlberg: Moral Development
Carol Gilligan: The Gender Factor
George Herbert Mead: The Social Self

Agents of Socialization

The Family
The School
The Peer Group
The Mass Media

Socialization and the Life Course

Childhood
Adolescence
Adulthood
Old Age
Death and Dying
The Life Course: An Overview

Resocialization: Total Institutions

Summary

Key Concepts

Critical-Thinking Questions

(Source: J. J. Macionis, *Society: The Basics*, 4th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998)

1. What is the title of Chapter 3?
2. Which topics are familiar to you?
3. Which topics do you think would be most interesting to read about?
4. Are there many unfamiliar words or names in this outline? List some of them.
5. Would this chapter be difficult for you to read? If so, why?
6. What study aids are included at the end of Chapter 3?

Exercise 4 : Preview the following passage from Chapter 3 of *Society: The Basics for one minute*. Then answer the questions that follow.

Introduction: The Importance of Social Experience

On a cold winter day in 1938, a concerned social worker walked anxiously to the door of a rural Pennsylvania farmhouse. Investigating a case of possible child abuse, the social worker soon discovered a five-year-old girl hidden in a second-floor storage room. The child,

whose name was Anna, was wedged into an old chair with her arms tied above her head so she could not move. She was wearing filthy garments, and her arms and legs were as thin as matchsticks.

Anna's situation can only be described as tragic. She was born in 1932 to an unmarried mentally impaired woman of twenty-six who lived with her father. Enraged by his daughter's "illegitimate" motherhood, the grandfather did not even want the child in his home. Anna, therefore, spent the early months of her life in the custody of various welfare agencies. But her mother was unable to pay for this care, so Anna returned to the home where she was not wanted. Because of her grandfather's hostility and her mother's indifference, Anna lived alone in a room where she received little attention and just enough milk to keep her alive. There she stayed—day after day, month after month, with virtually no human contact—for five years.

Upon learning of the discovery of Anna, sociologist Kingsley Davis traveled immediately to see the child. He found her in a county home, where local authorities had taken her. Davis was appalled by the sight of the emaciated child, who could not laugh, speak, or even smile. Anna was completely apathetic, as if alone in an empty world.

(Source: J. J. Macionis, *Society: The Basics*, 4th Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998)

- *Answer the following questions without looking back at the passage.*

1. What is the section about?
2. Have you ever heard or read about other children like Anna?
3. Is this part of the chapter divided into parts?
4. Do you think this chapter would be difficult to read and understand?
5. What words, phrases, or numbers do you remember from previewing the passage?

Reference :

Mikulecky, B.S. & Jeffries, L (2007). *Advanced reading power : Extensive reading, vocabulary building, comprehension skills, reading faster*. New York : Pearson Longman.