ESSENTIAL WORDS FOR THE TOEFL

Essential Words for the TOEFL Lesson 15 Vocabulary Test

20 questions · Choose the correct answer. Online test and answer key with explanations:
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Name: _____ Date: _____ Score: _____ / 20

1. **Choose the synonym.**
foster
A) exaggerate **B)** stimulate
C) gain **D)** enhance

2. halt
A) evaporate **B)** avoid
C) defy **D)** stop

3. trait
A) dwelling **B)** characteristic
C) function **D)** abundance

4. adept
A) clumsy **B)** honorable
C) content **D)** talented

5. redundant
A) repetitious **B)** creative
C) round **D)** active

6. substantial
A) haphazard **B)** diverse
C) significant **D)** perilous

7. underscore
A) shelter **B)** highlight
C) boost **D)** exaggerate

8. mysterious
A) unhealthy **B)** dangerous
C) dramatic **D)** baffling

9. insignificant
A) meaningless **B)** rudimentary
C) vigorous **D)** spacious

10. adhere
A) exhaust **B)** reject
C) comply **D)** withstand

11. Scientists can only speculate on the possible fate of the Cosmos. If the universe is unbound, there is little possibility that its expansion will **halt**. Thus, eventually, the galaxies and stars will all die. The Cosmos then would be a cold, dark, and virtually empty place. If the universe is bound, the mass and energy content will come together again in a big fiery squeeze.

The word **halt** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
A) continue **B)** stop
C) expand **D)** intensify

12. The perception of depth and distance depends on information transmitted through various sense organs. Sensory cues indicate the distance at which objects are located from the individual and from each other. The senses of sight and hearing transmit depth and distance cues that are **substantially** independent of one another.

The word **substantially** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
A) significantly **B)** absurdly
C) critically **D)** vigorously

13. Because the needs of human communication are so various, the study of meaning is probably the most difficult and **mysterious** aspect of serious language study. Traditionally, language has been defined as the expression of thought. But this idea is far too narrow an interpretation of language and far too broad a view of thought to be worthwhile. The expression of thought is just one of the many roles of language.

The word **mysterious** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
A) substantial **B)** meaningful
C) promising **D)** baffling

14. The theory of environmental determinism says that the physical surroundings of a people, including natural resources, climate, and geography, are the major determining factors in the development of their culture. Therefore, determinism **rejects** the idea that history and tradition, social and economic factors, and other elements of culture explain social development.

The word **rejects** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
A) refuses **B)** ignores
C) promotes **D)** withstands

15. The greatest benefit of a regular exercise program is an improvement in overall fitness. Appropriate exercise **boosts** muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and cardiorespiratory endurance. The level of maximum oxygen intake or cardiorespiratory endurance is usually not of great importance to most individuals. The most important thing is to attain their maximum level of performance.

The word **boosts** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
A) harms **B)** manages
C) promotes **D)** alters

16. The number of giant pandas in the world is dwindling. The chief reason is that their natural habitat in China has been reduced as bamboo forests have been cleared to increase available land for China's vast human population. In fact, the world came **perilously close** to losing the panda altogether in the 1980s as a result. Today, the panda's future is brighter. The Chinese government now protects most of the panda's natural habitat.

In saying that the world came **perilously close** to losing the panda, the author means that the giant panda _____.

A) has been set free from zoos.
B) endangered human beings.
C) threatened the extinction of bamboo.
D) was nearly entirely eliminated.

17. Several pilots were killed during the competition for the Orteig Prize, which was promised to the first pilot to fly nonstop from New York to Paris. Charles Lindbergh believed he could win it if he had the right airplane, and he was right. He received the $25,000 prize in 1927 for being the first to make the **perilous** solo flight across the Atlantic.

The word **perilous** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

A) substantial **B)** dangerous
C) haphazard **D)** prosperous

18. In parts of the world that lack modern sewage treatment plants, water carrying human waste can flow into drinking water supplies. Disease-carrying bacteria in the waste can make the drinking water **harmful**. Even in certain U.S. cities, such contaminants have been found in urban water supplies.

The word **harmful** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

A) frail **B)** adverse
C) conspicuous **D)** unhealthy

19. Commercial arbitration has been practiced in European countries for many years. In the United States, commercial arbitration to **handle** disputes is gaining in popularity. The American Arbitration Association hires panels of arbitrators who mediate disagreements and propose solutions. The decisions of these panels have been enforced by the courts of many states.

The word **handle** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

A) face **B)** manage
C) enact **D)** promote

20. Martin Luther King Jr. had a magnificent speaking ability. This quality enabled him to **adeptly** express African-Americans' need for social justice. He gained the support of millions of people of all races through his eloquent pleas for nonviolent social action in the face of acute opposition. He received international accolades when he was awarded the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize, after many years of struggle to assure basic civil rights for all citizens.

The word **adeptly** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

A) constantly **B)** extremely
C) passionately **D)** skillfully

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