

be categorized among the "weird". On the other hand, if something is labeled as "strange", it is not necessarily bad. Rather, something "strange" is simply abnormal, or unusual—a deviation from what is expected. This distinction between "weird" and "strange" is so pronounced that the latter can be used as a **euphemism** for the former in certain situations. For example, notice how a simple substitution is able to make the following sentence less offensive: "Your mother's cookies taste weird" compared to, "Your mother's cookies taste strange". In the former sentence, the speaker sounds as though he or she is insulting your mother's cookies, stating that they taste bad. In the latter sentence, however, the speaker sounds as though the cookies simply taste different, or unusual, compared to what he or she is used to—the difference owing to the unintentional addition of too much flour, perhaps.

5. Finally, let's look at the synonyms, "happy" and "glad". As in the aforementioned cases, **these** words seem to have little or no **discernible** difference between them. Take for example the following sentences: 1) Tommy is happy because he's got a new bike. 2) Tommy is glad because he's got a new bike. Most understand these sentences to have the same meaning. And again, upon consulting a dictionary, one will find highly similar, if not the same, definitions. But these definitions lack the feeling, the unique emotional charge that these words convey. The word "happy" conveys a sense of rude or a carefree attitude. The thought of someone who is "happy" imagines the image of a bright-eyed, ruddy, smiling face. One is "happy" on the morning of his birthday, discovering a new puppy bounding into his bedroom. On the other hand, the word "glad" conveys a sense of relief or contentment. The thought of someone who is "glad" conjures the image of a man standing crossed-armed, nodding gently, a **stole** grin crossing his face. One is "glad" when he sees that the child's lost puppy has been found, and was merely frolicking too far from home.

6. Granted, the **notion** that close synonyms can be used interchangeably is prevalent among English speakers. And alas, the dictionary—the text wrongly considered to be responsible for clarifying such issues—is of little assistance. In the end, it is left to us, the speakers of the language, those actively responsible for maintaining its coexistence, to understand how these words make us feel and what mood we are inclined to attach to them. Using the examples and insights described above, one may come to recognize these subtle, yet crucial, differences.

1. What is the main idea of the passage?
 - A. It is not uncommon for close synonyms to be believed to share the same meaning.
 - B. However, for those of us who give great attention to every detail, it is of significant value to comprehend such nuances.
 - C. While many close synonyms share similar, if not the same, dictionary definitions, the feeling, or mood, they convey is utterly singular.
 - D. Although a dictionary can provide information about word meanings, pronunciations, etymologies, inflected forms, derived forms, et cetera, it cannot communicate the energy of a word.

7. With respect to the way in which close synonyms are commonly understood, the author's tone can best be described as...?

- A. Aggressive
- B. Superior
- C. Sad
- D. Careful

6. One of the following is true according to the passage?

- A. The passage highlights how English grammar works during communication.
- B. The passage briefly explains how the four language skills are integrated.
- C. It explains how antonym words function in different contexts.
- D. The answer is not given.

5. Which of the following statements best describes the main idea of this passage?

- A. Close synonyms are difficult to comprehend and are commonly used interchangeably.
- B. Contrary to popular belief, close synonyms do not share the same meaning.
- C. The difference between the words "hard" and "difficult" is indiscernible to most.
- D. Absent a dictionary definition, the difference between close synonyms is difficult to discern.

4. Which of the following sentences from the passage represents a fact, rather than an opinion?

- A. One may employ one or the other with complete indifference, postulating no discrepancy between them.
- B. Although a dictionary can provide information about word meanings, pronunciations, etymologies, inflected forms, derived forms, et cetera, it cannot communicate how it feels to use a word.
- C. No one wants to be associated with something "weird".
- D. The thought of someone who is "happy" conjures the image of a bright-eyed, ruddy, smiling face.

3. Using the information in paragraph 4, it can be inferred that which of the following statements examines a tautology?

- A. Paige received a free gift for her birthday.
- B. Science tells us that humans evolved to use their thumbs.
- C. Computers represent a significant technological advancement.
- D. Hexagons have six sides.

2. As used in paragraph 1, what is most likely meant by "postulating no discrepancy"?

- A. Being very sure about the absence of differences between the two words.
- B. There is a tendency of differences between the two words.
- C. Being very sure about the absence of similarities between the two words.
- D. It suggests that there is a tendency of similarity between the two words.

INSTRUCTION 2: Below are given the contextual meaning of those words written in bold in the reading passage. Provide the appropriate word for each of these meanings (1 point each).

8. An idea, a belief, or an understanding of something
9. Excessively
10. Solving problems in a practical and sensible way
11. A feeling or an opinion

INSTRUCTION 3: Reference Questions. The following pronouns are taken from the above reading passage. Answer what these pronouns refer to (1 point each)

12. 'them' (Para.2, line 3) refers to
13. 'it' (Para.3 line 10) refers to
14. 'they' (Para.4 line 4) refer to
15. 'these' (Para.5 line 1) refer to

INSTRUCTION 4: The following words are taken from your module, so insert them in a context where they can give appropriate meaning (0.5 point each)

Procrastination *maneuver* *transient* *linchpin* *an invaluable*

16. I stayed there only a month or so for a mini research, but it was _____ experience.
17. She was smart, but her constant _____ led her to be late with almost every assignment.
18. It should have enough space outside the door to _____ that wheelchair.
19. Grandmother is the _____ of our family and holds our crew together with her love.
20. A glass of whisky has only a _____ warming effect.

Instruction 1: Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow (1 point each)

1. It is not uncommon for close synonyms to be understood to share the same meaning. The difference between words like "hard" and "difficult", for example, goes tragically unnoticed. One may employ one or the other with complete indifference, **postulating** no discrepancy between them. In general, this is well and good; most people lack the culture of paying attention to the so-called minor issues in connection with the meanings of words. Nevertheless, for those of us with a big responsibility, it is of significant value to comprehend such nuances.
2. Take for example the following sentences: 1) the test was hard. 2) The test was difficult. Is the difference between these synonyms readily apparent? Is there a noticeable difference between **them** at all? Indeed, these questions are valid and warrant answers. For, what would be the point of having multiple words with the exact same meaning? No, that would be **unnecessary**; the English language is far too economical. While many close synonyms share similar, if not the same, dictionary definitions, the feeling, or *mood*, they convey are utterly similar. Although a dictionary can provide information about word meanings, pronunciations, etymologies, inflected forms, derived forms, et cetera, it cannot communicate how it *feels* to use a word.
3. So, if there is indeed a difference between words like "hard" and "difficult", what is it? To begin, "hard" is **pragmatic** and realistic, firmly grounded in reality. It is the use of the appropriate word that gets the job done and doesn't apologize for its offensive, rude nature. On the other hand, "difficult" is eloquent and refined. It is civilized, willing to expend the effort necessary to appear urbane. Why the **mere** difference in sonic quality between them is striking enough. "Hard" makes a quick, unassuming sound, having but a single syllable (voiced under certain inflections, it can even come across as harsh), while "difficult" is more lengthy and melodic, its number of syllables totaling three times that of its counterpart. Furthermore, "hard" is more likely to be used in casual, informal circumstances, to communicate an idea "on the go" or simply to "get it out" as the sayings go. It is used without pretense and does not maintain a feeling of being **overly** concerned. In terms of daily usage, "hard" may be employed by an exhausted brick mason when posed with the question, "How was your day?" Conversely, "difficult" may be used by a military general upon explaining to his or her superior the progression of a particularly taxing campaign.
4. Similar to "hard" and "difficult", the words "weird" and "strange" too are close synonyms, and may seemingly be used interchangeably. Take for instance the following sentences: 1) Sea monkeys are weird. 2) Sea monkeys are strange. Contrary to popular belief, these sentences are not repetitive. So how do **they** differ? Their dictionary definitions are nearly identical, so the difference does not lie there. Rather, the difference involves the feeling, or *mood*, that these words convey. Notice that while "weird" and "strange" both have but one syllable, the latter has a remarkably distinguished feel. Similar to "hard", "weird" conveys a more basic, a cruder, and **sentiment**. Something "weird" is crass or gross, and is typically undesirable. No one wants to be associated with something "weird". If trying to impress someone, one probably doesn't want to

INSTRUCTION 5: Almaz is giving a colleague some advice about a journey he is planning. Fill the gaps in the text using the following modals (had better, had better not, should, and ought to) (0.5 point each)

ALMAZ: OK, well, I think, you haven't done this trip before, so let me tell you a few tips on what (21) _____ you do from my experience. First, you (22) _____ make sure you get to the airport really early, or you have to queue for ages at check-in. Most people told them that they (23) _____ introduce a more efficient system, but they won't. Anyway, then you have to go through passport control and so on. In that case, you (24) _____ go there unless something good to read is at your hand because you will have quite a long wait in the departure lounge. Then, your flight will be called, so you are supposed to follow an officer out to your plane. Here, you (25) _____ take very heavy hand luggage because you have to carry it yourself and there aren't any trolleys. Bon-voyage anyways!

INSTRUCTION 6: Read the following paragraph and put the verbs in the brackets in the correct forms (present perfect or past simple). (1 mark each)

Then and Now

Thirty years ago, few people (26) _____ (realize) that computers were about to become part of our daily lives. This short period of time (27) _____ (see) massive changes, in business, education and public administration. Jobs which (28) _____ (take) weeks to complete in the past, are now carried in minutes. Clerks who (29) _____ (spend) all day copying and checking calculations are now freed from these tedious tasks. In the office, the soft hum and clicking of word processors have replaced the clatter of typewriters. School children have become as familiar with hardware and software as their parents (30) _____ (be) with pencils and exercise books. Computerization of public records (31) _____ (enable) government departments to scrutinize the needs of citizens in detail. Some of us may wonder, however, whether life (32) _____ (really/ improve) as a result of these changes. Many jobs disappeared, for example when intelligent machines (33) _____ (take) over the work. Employers complain that clerical staff have become dependent on calculators and cannot do simple arithmetic. There are fears that the government (34) _____ (not/do) enough to ensure that personal information held on computers is really kept secret. Certainly, many people may now be wondering whether the spread of computers (35) _____ (bring) us as many problems as it has solved.