

## Awareness

### WORD LIST

behold	discernment	envision	foresee	gape
impressionistic	myopia	perceptive	premonition	subliminal

Awareness is part of the protection that nature gives its creatures. Many animals have highly developed senses of hearing, sight, or smell that alert them to danger. Human awareness also involves sensitivities to danger, to social cues, and to environmental factors. This lesson contains words that describe levels and types of awareness. As you study them, think about how aware you are of the details in your own world.

**1. behold (bĭ-hōld')** *verb*

To gaze at or look upon

- The Grand Canyon at sunset is truly a sight to **behold**.

**beholder** *noun* Because people's notions of beauty vary, it is often said that "beauty is in the eye of the **beholder**."

**2. discernment (dĭ-sŭrn'mənt)** *noun* from Latin *dis-*, "apart" + *cernere*, "to separate carefully"

Excellent judgment and insight; skill in perceiving

- The chess player was known for her keen **discernment** of opponents' weaknesses.

**discern** *verb* April taught her niece to **discern** which strawberries were ripe enough to pick.

**3. envision (ĕn-vĭzh'ən)** *verb* from Latin *in-*, "in" + *vision*

To picture in the mind; to imagine

- Vivian **envisioned** how her life would change once she became an actress.

**4. foresee (fōr-sē')** *verb* from Old English *fore*, "in front" + *see*

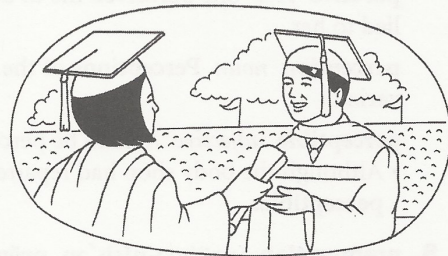
To see or know ahead of time

- City planners were not able to **foresee** that a hurricane would destroy the new library.

**foreseeable** *adjective* Carmen budgeted her funds carefully, as she did not expect a raise in the **foreseeable** future.

**foresight** *noun* While standing in the long security line, Antonio was glad that he had had the **foresight** to arrive at the airport two hours early.

To *discern* can also mean "to see," as in "I *discerned* a figure in the fog."



envisioning the future



**5. gape (gāp) verb**

To stare in amazement, often with the mouth wide open

- The patrons stood and **gaped** at the movie stars, who were filming a scene in the local department store.

*Gape* can also apply to any wide opening, even figurative ones, as in "There were *gaping* holes in the robbery suspect's story."

**6. impressionistic (im-prēsh'ə-nis'tik) adjective** from Latin *im-*, "in" + *press*

- a. Describing a highly personal, individual response to experience
  - Stephen Crane's novel *The Red Badge of Courage* shows a young soldier's **impressionistic** view of a war.
- b. Reflecting a style of painting of the late nineteenth century that focuses on a personal or momentary view of something
  - Claude Monet's **impressionistic** paintings are filled with deliberate blurs that emphasize the effect of sunlight on objects.

**impression** *noun* My **impression** was that he didn't want the job.

**7. myopia (mī-ō'pē-ə) noun** from Greek *muein*, "to close the eyes" + *ops*, "eye"

- a. Lack of planning for the future; shortsightedness
  - **Myopia** among the city planners resulted in overcrowding and poor living conditions.
- b. Nearsightedness; a condition in which distant objects appear blurred
  - **Myopia** prevented her from driving without wearing her glasses.

**myopic** *adjective* The financial planner's **myopic** investments eventually led to his client's bankruptcy.

**8. perceptive (pər-səp'tiv) adjective** from Latin *percipere*, "to grasp with the mind"

Marked by understanding or awareness; sharp; sensitive

- Darren's **perceptive** comments about the story showed that he understood the characters' motives.

**perceive** *verb* She **perceived** me to be a dishonest person, but I never lied to her.

**perception** *noun* **Perceptions** of the events that led up to the accident varied.

**perceptible** *adjective* Able to be perceived or detected

- Although the body shop had repaired the car, the dent was still **perceptible**.

**9. premonition (prē-mə-nish'ən, prēm'ə-nish'en) noun** from Latin *pre*, "before" + *monere*, "to warn"

A feeling that something will happen in the future; an advance warning

- I had a **premonition** that my biology teacher would give us a surprise quiz.

**10. subliminal (süb-līm'ə-nəl) adjective** from Latin *sub-*, "under" + *limin-*, "limit"

Below the threshold of conscious thought; not detectable, but able to bring about a response

- In an infamous advertising campaign, **subliminal** messages urging people to buy snacks were flashed on movie screens for a fraction of a second.



**WRITE THE CORRECT WORD**

Write the correct word in the space next to each definition.

- |                                |                                     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| _____ 1. shortsightedness      | _____ 6. based on personal response |
| _____ 2. to look upon          | _____ 7. to know in advance         |
| _____ 3. to stare in amazement | _____ 8. skill in perceiving        |
| _____ 4. an advance warning    | _____ 9. unconscious                |
| _____ 5. to imagine or picture | _____ 10. sensitive and aware       |

**COMPLETE THE SENTENCE**

Write the letter for the word that best completes each sentence.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. If I had \_\_\_\_\_ the heavy traffic, I would have left earlier.  
a. foreseen                      b. envisioned                      c. gaped                      d. subliminal
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ comments by the lecturer increased our understanding of the topic.  
a. Gaping                      b. Perceptive                      c. Subliminal                      d. Myopic
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Bruce's \_\_\_\_\_ viewpoint made long-range planning very difficult for him.  
a. subliminal                      b. perceptive                      c. myopic                      d. discerning
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The intense blizzard was so similar to the one she had dreamt about that Buffy wondered whether her dream had been a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. discernment                      b. impression                      c. premonition                      d. myopia
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The homesick soldier longed to \_\_\_\_\_ his wife's face.  
a. behold                      b. subliminal                      c. foresee                      d. envision
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The \_\_\_\_\_ painting conveyed the artist's personal feelings for the scene.  
a. foreseen                      b. gaping                      c. myopic                      d. impressionistic
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The visitors to the Taj Mahal \_\_\_\_\_ at the impressive palace.  
a. foresaw                      b. envisioned                      c. discerned                      d. gaped
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. A speaker's body language often sends \_\_\_\_\_ messages that listeners may not be aware of receiving.  
a. myopic                      b. subliminal                      c. gaping                      d. impressionistic
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. In order to evaluate a play, a theater critic must try to \_\_\_\_\_ the strengths and weaknesses of the performance.  
a. foresee                      b. envision                      c. discern                      d. behold
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Charles tried to \_\_\_\_\_ what it would be like to live in a world free of conflict.  
a. behold                      b. envision                      c. gape at                      d. premonition

**Challenge:** Because a \_\_\_\_\_ message is not perceived consciously, the \_\_\_\_\_ of the audience is usually not a factor in determining whether the communication is successful.

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. beheld...impression                      b. myopic...premonition                      c. subliminal...discernment

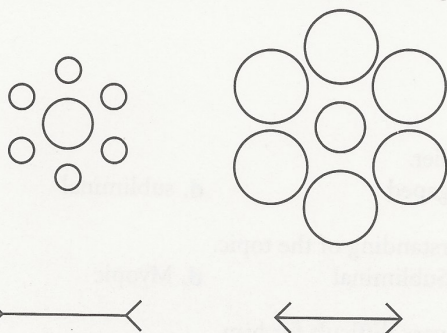


## READING COMPREHENSION

# Are Our Eyes Fooling Us?

Look at the two designs below. Now focus very carefully on the center circle in each design. (1) Can you *discern* which center is larger? Perhaps you think the design on the left is bigger. Wrong! Both circles are exactly the same size! (Measure them if you like.)

(2) Now *behold* the lines with arrows at the ends. Which line is longer? (3) By now, you probably have a *premonition* that this is a trick question, and indeed it is. (4) Both lines are the same length, but our brains give us the *impression* that the line on the right is longer.



What's going on here? (5) Your brain *envisions* something that isn't there. (6) Don't worry—you're not suffering from *myopia*; you're just experiencing a phenomenon called an optical illusion. Scientists cannot fully explain optical illusions, but there are several theories as to how or why our eyes trick us. Some argue that the physical structure of our eyes creates such

illusions. (7) Others feel that optical illusions result from the way people in our culture sometimes perceive information *subliminally*. Most experts agree with the second theory: that we are tricked by optical illusions because of our perspective, or *how* we look at something.

Scientists have studied how people with different perspectives actually see images. Some researchers went to Uganda, in Africa, to show images to people, similar to those on this page. (8) The scientists could not have *foreseen* the results: Most Ugandans who lived in cities, and had seen similar images before, were fooled by the optical illusions, just as most Americans are. But the Ugandans who lived in small villages, and had not seen such shapes before, were not tricked; they saw the circles and lines as the same size.

Some scientists believe that this study shows that optical illusions are not just about the information we take in through our eyes. (9) Past experiences and images also influence our *perception* of what we "see." The most recent theory about optical illusions is that, after the eye sees an image, the brain uses past experiences to figure out what it is seeing. How easily our minds fool us!

There are many Web sites and books you can look at to find more information about optical illusions. (10) Some are so astounding that they will leave you *gaping* at the images, trying to figure out what exactly you are looking at.

Each sentence below refers to a numbered sentence in the passage. Write the letter of the choice that gives the sentence a meaning that is closest to the original sentence.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Can you \_\_\_\_\_ which center is larger?  
a. remember                      b. explain                      c. picture                      d. judge
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Now \_\_\_\_\_ the lines with arrows at the ends.  
a. look at                      b. imagine                      c. remember                      d. understand
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. By now, you probably have a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ that this is a trick question.  
a. memory                      b. feeling                      c. idea                      d. picture
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Both lines are the same length, but our brains give us the \_\_\_\_\_ that the line on the right is longer.  
a. explanation                      b. certainty                      c. theory                      d. response
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Your brain \_\_\_\_\_ something that isn't there.  
a. remembers                      b. describes                      c. pictures                      d. forewarns
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Don't worry—you're not suffering from \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. colorblindness                      b. nearsightedness                      c. awareness                      d. sightlessness



- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Others feel that optical illusions result from the way people in our culture sometimes perceive information \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. by reading      b. unconsciously      c. in groups      d. by sight
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The scientists could not have \_\_\_\_\_ the results.  
a. predicted      b. explained      c. detected      d. described
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Past experiences and images also influence our \_\_\_\_\_ of what we "see."  
a. memory      b. reflections      c. forgetting      d. understanding
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Some are so astounding that they will leave you \_\_\_\_\_ at the images.  
a. talking      b. staring      c. gesturing      d. shouting

Indicate whether the statements below are TRUE or FALSE according to the passage.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. You should always believe what you think you see, no matter what.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. People around the world see optical illusions in exactly the same way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A person's perceptions are influenced by his or her past experiences.

## WRITING EXTENDED RESPONSES

As with optical illusions, our expectations of events influence the way that we perceive them. Think of a time when the outcome of an event was very different from what you had expected (perhaps it was a pleasant surprise, or a huge letdown). In a descriptive essay, tell what you expected and why. Then describe the actual experience and explain how you think your expectations influenced your experience of the event. Your essay should be at least three paragraphs long. Use at least three lesson words in your essay and underline them.

## WRITE THE DERIVATIVE

Complete the sentence by writing the correct form of the word shown in parentheses. You may not need to change the form that is given.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The crowd was \_\_\_\_\_ at the feats of the daring air-show pilots. (*gape*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The moment that Charlotte \_\_\_\_\_ the glorious view from the bedroom window, she knew that this was the house for her. (*behold*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. His \_\_\_\_\_ of the day's events was very different from mine. (*perceptive*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Before he starts to draw, Jeremy always \_\_\_\_\_ the result. (*envision*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. People who fail to consider the long-term consequences of their actions are \_\_\_\_\_. (*myopia*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How many chances do you get to make a first \_\_\_\_\_? (*impressionistic*)



- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I realized later that the faraway church bells had made a \_\_\_\_\_ impression on me; somehow, I'd known it was just after noon. (*subliminal*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The interviewer tried to \_\_\_\_\_ each job applicant's motivation and skill. (*discernment*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. The Founding Fathers had great \_\_\_\_\_ when it came to providing checks and balances in our government's process. (*foresee*)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A person experiencing a \_\_\_\_\_ may simply be picking up on subtle clues that others miss. (*premonition*)

## FIND THE EXAMPLE

Choose the answer that best describes the action or situation.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Something that could be highly *impressionistic*  
 a. phone book      b. dictionary      c. shopping list      d. poem
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Something that most people find difficult to *envision*  
 a. a tree      b. clear water      c. nothingness      d. a pencil
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Someone likely to use *subliminal* methods frequently  
 a. carpenter      b. advertiser      c. accountant      d. landscaper
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Something to *behold*  
 a. Niagara Falls      b. classical music      c. cool breeze      d. warm embrace
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Something that causes one to *gape*  
 a. anger      b. amazement      c. happiness      d. hunger
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Something that one should always choose with much *discernment*  
 a. a chip      b. a pencil      c. a friend      d. a soda
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Something about which it is usually important to be *perceptive*  
 a. others' feelings      b. price of candy      c. shoe polish      d. cutting grass
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Something you do NOT do well if you're *myopic*  
 a. plan a party      b. sing a song      c. read a book      d. see far away
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Something impossible to *foresee*  
 a. tomorrow's schedule      b. a lunar eclipse      c. your next meal      d. the past
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Time when a *premonition* might come true  
 a. long past      b. near future      c. in a dream      d. yesterday



# Using the Dictionary

## Finding the Appropriate Definition

Most dictionary words have more than one definition, and some words have more than one entry. When you look up a word, you must determine which one is most appropriate to the material that you are reading. You can use the following guidelines.

### Strategies

1. *Locate the correct entry for the word.* Some **homographs** have several entries. The common word *dock*, for example, has four in the *American Heritage High School Dictionary*.
2. *Decide which part of speech the word is in the sentence.* Then concentrate on the definitions for that part of speech.
3. *Look through all of the definitions for that part of speech.* Don't simply choose the first one.
4. *Reread the sentence to yourself, substituting each definition within the right part of speech for the unknown word.* You may have to change a definition slightly.

## Practice Finding the Appropriate Definition

Using the dictionary definitions provided, do the activities below.

**squash**<sup>1</sup> (skwŏsh) *n.* 1. Any of various tendril-bearing plants of the genus *Curubita*, having fleshy edible fruit with a leathery rind. 2. The fruit of any of these plants. [From alteration of Narragansett *askutasquash*.]

**squash**<sup>2</sup> (skwŏsh) *v.* **squashed, squash-ing, squash-es** —*tr.* 1. To beat, squeeze, or press into a pulp or a flattened mass; crush. 2. To put down or suppress; quash. 3. To silence or fluster, as with crushing words. —*intr.* 1. To become crushed, flattened, or pulpy, as by pressure or impact. 2. To move with a splashing or sucking sound. —*n.* 1a. The act or sound of squashing. b. The fact or condition of being squashed. 2. A crushed or crowded mass. 3. *Sports* A racket game played in a closed, walled court with a rubber ball. 4. *Chiefly British* A citrus-based soft drink. *adv.* With a squashing sound.

**squeal** (skwēl) *v.* **squealed, squeal-ing, squeals** —*intr.* 1. To give forth a loud, shrill cry or sound. 2. *Slang* To turn informer; betray an accomplice or secret. —*tr.* To utter or produce with a squeal. *n.* A loud, shrill cry or sound: a *squeal of surprise*.

1. Write the best definition of *squashed*: "The soldiers *squashed* the rebellion."

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2. Write the best definition of *squash*: "We planted *squash* in our garden."

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3. Write the definition of *squash* commonly used in Britain.

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4. Write the best definition of *squeal*: "She squealed, 'No!'"

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## Special Labels

Sometimes a definition in an entry has a specialized meaning, which is indicated by a **subject label**. The label is listed in front of its definition. Here is an example:

**ba-sic** (bā'sīk) *adj.* 1. Of, relating to, or forming a base; fundamental. 2. Of, being, or serving as a starting point or basis: *a set of basic woodworking tools*. 3. *Chemistry* a. Of or relating to a base. b. Containing a base, esp. in excess of acid. c. Alkaline. 4. *Geology* Containing little silica, as certain igneous rocks. *n.* 1. An essential, fundamental element or entity: *the basics of math*. 2. Basic training. —**ba-sic'i-ty**. (-sīs'ī-tē) *n.*

The third definition of *basic* as an adjective is used in chemistry. Note that this definition contains three closely related definition subcategories: *a*, *b*, and *c*. The fourth definition of the adjective is used in geology.

Other entries may include **status labels**, which indicate that certain uses of a word are used in limited ways. The usage labels are as follows:

<i>Nonstandard</i>	unacceptable to educated users
<i>Usage Problem</i>	warns of problems involving grammar, diction, or writing style
<i>Offensive</i>	insulting, and discredits the user
<i>Slang</i>	showing very informal use, usually done for effect
<i>Informal</i>	useful in conversation, but not in formal talk or writing

**Temporal labels** show words that are uncommon or no longer used:

<i>Archaic</i>	were once common but are now rare
<i>Obsolete</i>	no longer used in modern speech

**English language and dialect labels** show that a word is used in a particular region that speaks English, such as Australia or Canada. Or, the word may be used by a dialect of English, such as "South Midland" in the United States.

## Practice Using Labels

Using the dictionary definitions provided, do the activities below.

**bash** (bāsh) *v.* **bash-ed, bash-ing, bash-es** —*tr.* 1. To strike with a heavy, crushing blow. 2. To beat or assault severely. 3. *Informal* To criticize (another) harshly, accusatorially, and threateningly. —*intr.* *Informal* To engage in harsh, accusatory, threatening criticism. *n.* 1. *Informal* A heavy, crushing blow. 2. *Slang* A celebration; a party. —**bash'er** *n.*

**dis-lo-ca-tion** (dīs'lō-kā'shən) *n.* 1. The act or process of dislocation or the state of having been dislocated. 2. Displacement of a body part, esp. the temporal displacement of a bone from its normal position. 3. *Chemistry* An imperfection in a crystal structure of a metal or other solid resulting from an absence of an atom or atoms in one or more layers of a crystal. 4. *Geology* See **displacement** 5.

1. Write the meaning of the word *bash* that is slang.

2. Write the meanings of the word *bash* that have usages that are common in informal speech.

3. Write the meaning of *dislocation* that is used in chemistry.

4. Write the meaning of *dislocation* that is used in geology.