

Unit 10 Word Usage Exercise: Possible Answers

Mr. H wrote these comments for last year's class, who wrote and submitted their answers. Though you didn't submit your answers, you will find some comments here that apply to your language and to your performance on the final exam.

When answering a question, identify exactly what the question is asking, and structure your answer to focus on that. When answering, in almost all writing, use this good general structure: 1) present your point, 2) present a general reason for your point, and then 3) present a detailed explanation for the reason.

“I” = You didn't give a complete answer. Something in the question wasn't given enough attention.

“Q” = Either the point of the question isn't apparent in your first sentence, or the main point of your answer isn't in the first sentence.

“Focus” = Your answer (possibly including the explanation) doesn't focus on the main point of the question.

If you simply copy the language from the article, you will not answer the question. Here are some ideas for focusing on what the question is asking.

1. The study on multi-generational families showed that sometimes we don't understand even those who live closest with us. (contrary – impression – impositions – time and energy)

Your answer should have some reference to closeness, since the question was about understanding between “those who live closest with us.” For example, “In spite of the closeness between grandmothers and their grown daughters, and contrary to the impression that...”

A GOOD ANSWER: The study on multi-generational families showed that sometimes we don't understand even those who live closest with us. The relationship between mother and grown daughter is one of the closest relationships we know of, but we now know that there is often misunderstanding between the two. Contrary to the impression that mothers are delighted to help their grown daughters, many mothers resent the frequent impositions of the younger generations on their time and energy.

2. These days women with children appreciate their mothers more than in the past, but it doesn't work the other way. (pressure – pieces – part)

Refer to “the other way,” and contrast past and present. (Note the classical painting on the wall.) Also, be careful about the word *more* in “appreciate their mothers more”; it would not be right to say that “mothers don't appreciate their grown daughters” because leaving out the qualifier *more* would imply that aging mothers don't appreciate their daughters *at all*, which is not true in most situations.

A GOOD ANSWER: While women with children appreciate their mothers more than in the past, their mothers don't appreciate their married daughters. Since women with children are under a lot of pressure these days, they expect their mothers to help them pick up the pieces. The grown daughter's impositions are the strongest source of resentment on the part of their aging mothers.

3. Grandmothers don't like to see their children and grandchildren. (own life – own time – day off)
Focus on “like.” They *do* like to see their grandchildren, but...

A GOOD ANSWER: Grandmothers like to see their children and grandchildren, but grandmothers have their own lives to live and they want to see them on their own time, not on their one day off.

4. Older people are becoming a burden to society. (turn to – pile on)

Focus on society and burden, and use daughters as an example. A good phrase to use here would be “It's the other way around,” and then state that society is becoming a burden to older people. Then present the example of daughters.

A GOOD ANSWER: Rather than older people becoming a burden to society, it is society that is becoming a burden to older people. Society keeps piling on the burdens for older people. Parents of grown children are busy with jobs and other activities but are also expected to help their grown children when they turn to their parents for help.

5. The reason older people are alienated from young people is because young people ignore them. (too much – tension – generation)

The key word here is “ignore,” so address that idea. “Contrary to being ignored...”

A GOOD ANSWER: Older people are not really alienated from young people, and young people don't ignore them. As for alienation, it's true that life gets to be too much for older people because American society keeps piling on the burdens for them, and it's true that they resent this, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they're alienated. If they were alienated, their daughters wouldn't often turn to them for advice, affection and companionship. For that same reason, we cannot say that young people ignore older people. The tension between generations exists for the very reason that the younger generation doesn't give the older generation the time and space that they need to attend to their own affairs and friends.

6. Grandmother Rockefeller probably had a better relationship with her grown daughter than the Boston woman does. (interdependence – working/middle/upper – geography – orientation)

Common punctuation problem: How do you contract “middle-class and upper-class families”? Drop the first “class” but keep the hyphen: middle- and upper-class families.

Start out with Grandmother Rockefeller; associate Grandmother Rockefeller with the upper class.

A GOOD ANSWER: Grandma Rockefeller, who belonged to an upper-class family, probably had a better relationship with her grown daughter than the Boston woman does, who belongs to a working-class family. Problems with interdependence between generations are likely to be more intense in working-class families than in middle- and upper-class families, because they have a tendency to be geographically less mobile and the daughters are more likely to be reared with a strong family orientation and less emphasis on establishing independent lives.

7. The Korean family is becoming nuclear because of industrialization. (disintegration – interaction – roof – extended)

Does the question focus on whether or not the Korean family is nuclear, or one the cause of the factual nuclear family? If you want to be sure to answer this question fully, you should answer both questions. (Frankly, it is a poorly presented question, and it will be revised.) At least, present the status of the extended family in modern Korea (as opposed to the past), mention whatever you want about industrialization, and then state how much interaction there is. (Some students answered with the nonsensical idea that “There never has been an extended family in Korea,” which proves that the student mechanically copied and didn’t think at all, which leads me to think that the student has been wasting his or her time in this class.)

A GOOD ANSWER: The Korean family is not becoming nuclear, because it has been nuclear for quite a while; it became nuclear because of industrialization. Disintegration of the Korean extended family began soon after the north-south conflict, with the onset of industrialization. However, there is still a lot of interaction, even though it is unusual to see three generations living under one roof.