

I. Read the meaning of these prepositional phrases. Read and explain the example sentence. Then write a sentence of your own with this phrase.

1-**At first** means when something started. EX At first we thought the hike was easy, but once we entered the hills it was much harder. At first _____

2-**At last** means finally. EX After a five hour drive, we reached home at last.

At last _____

3-**At length** means for a long time/ thoroughly EX We discussed the topic at length at our meeting, but never arrived at a solution.

4-**At night** means when it is night. We don't say in night, but at night. We say in the morning, or in the afternoon, but at night. EX I always study at night. We like to eat ice cream at night.

5-**At once** means immediately. EX Tell Patricia to come to my office at once. The fire alarm sounded; everyone clear the building at once. At once can also mean several things together. EX Try to learn one step at a time rather than three or four steps at once.

6-**At present** means now. **At the moment** also means now. EX At present we don't have any applicants for the position. At the moment there are no available workers.

7-**At the sound of, At the thought** of mean when one experiences something EX At the sound of the train whistle, gather your luggage and go out to the platform. I get depressed at the thought of returning home.

8-**At** can mean working there. EX I've been at the computer since early this morning. Mother has been at the stove all day preparing the stew.

9- **At peace** or **at war** means continuing in that condition EX That country has been at war for years. The United States and England have been at peace since the early 19th century.

10-If you keep at it, you don't stop. EX Tiger Woods was tired of practicing his golf swing but he kept at it until it was perfect.

When Christmas decoration goes over the top.

Read this paragraph and discuss in your group. Then answer the questions. The result is at the bottom. Don't read that until after you answer the discussion questions.

Jennings and Mitzi Osborne live in a suburb of Little Rock, Arkansas. They began decorating their house for Christmas in 1986. For the next six years, they added more and more lights and decorations to their house. By 1992, they had over 1.6 million lights on their house and in their yard. Large numbers of people began coming to see the decorations. They walked over the neighbors yard and even stopped to picnic in

some of the yards. They left their trash. Their cars blocked the neighbors driveway and traffic was awful. Sometimes it would take over an hour for the neighbors to get off their street as they waited in line with the sightseers. One year the electrical transformer blew when the Osborne's turned on their lights. The whole street was without power for several hours. Finally the neighbors had had enough. They asked the Osborne's to stop putting up so many lights. When the Osborne's refused, the neighbors sued them in court.

1-If you were the judge, what would your decision be?

2-Do you think Americans go "over the top" in Christmas decorating?

3-Osborne claimed this was his religious expression which is protected by the Constitution. Do you think is a good argument?

RESULT: A lower court ruled that the Osbornes could only keep the lights on for 15 days a year. They must hire security guards to protect the neighborhood and set up trash barrels and no littering signs. Mr. Osborne was unhappy with that decision, claiming that it violated his right to free speech and religious expression. He appealed the decision. The case went all the way to the Arkansas State Supreme Court who ruled Osborne must cut back on his display so that it would reduce the crowds.