

**Build Your Vocabulary:**

1. If you **lag** behind, you are behind others. *Quit **lagging** behind, Elmo. Keep up with the rest of us. Jeff always lagged behind when we were touring a museum.* If you **straggle**, you walk slowly. Someone who is always **straggling** might be a **slowpoke**. *The soldiers all straggled back to camp after the battle.*

2. Lag and straggle are verbs. You can change them to nouns. If you are a person who habitually lags behind, you are a **laggard**. If you straggle, you are a **straggler**.

3. If you don't **keep up**, you **fall behind**. *We were walking through the woods when John fell behind.*

4. If you **loiter**, you stand around for no purpose. *The policeman looked suspiciously at the teenagers **loitering** around the back door.* You may see a sign that says, "no loitering". Why would someone put a sign like that in their shop?

5. You know what a rocket launch is. Try to figure out what "launch" means in these sentences.

6. The man **launched** himself through the window and rescued the child from the burning building. The union **launched** a campaign to raise the minimum wage.

**Working With Prepositions**

A. The preposition "at" is frequently used to indicate a **reaction**. EX: *We were shocked at the condition of the school after the hurricane passed through. Maria was astonished at Ed's anger about her decision. The parents were amazed at the children's art work. We guessed at the answer. The citizens rebelled at losing their freedoms.*

B. "At" can also indicate a **degree of skill**. EX: *Margo is good at tennis, but not good at golf.*

**C. Fill in the blanks of these sentences. Read your sentences to the group.**

1. *I am good at \_\_\_\_\_, but not good at \_\_\_\_\_.*
2. *When I arrived in the US, I was amazed at \_\_\_\_\_.*
3. *As a kid, I was astonished at how difficult it was to \_\_\_\_\_.*
4. *I am thrilled at finding \_\_\_\_\_.*
5. *I am trembling in fear at the thought of \_\_\_\_\_.*

Note: If you tremble with fear, you are so scared you are shaking.

D. If you are **an old hand at** something, you have much experience and practice in that field. EX: *If anyone can get George elected, Bill Smith can. He is an old hand at campaigning.*

Finish this sentence. *I am an old hand at \_\_\_\_\_.*

**E. Write a sentence using each phrase. Read them to the class. (Teachers correct them)**

**EX: at the latest**—The train will be here by 11 PM at the latest.

1. **at your age.** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **at this distance.** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **at that speed** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **At this rate** \_\_\_\_\_
5. **At least** \_\_\_\_\_
6. **at the earliest.** \_\_\_\_\_
7. **at the latest.** \_\_\_\_\_
8. **at a disadvantage** \_\_\_\_\_

9. at his mercy \_\_\_\_\_  
10. at the most \_\_\_\_\_

### TOEFL Vocabulary Practice

Choose the letter that best defines the underlined word used in the sentence.

- 1-It is difficult to get young people to plan for their old age, which seems very distant to them.  
A impossible B far away  
C observable D fearful
- 2-Dotting the marshy expanse of the Florida Everglades are little islands known locally as hummocks.  
A generally B to all  
C in that area D occasionally
- 3-The government levied a hefty fine on all employers hiring illegal immigrants.  
A believed B imposed  
C correlated D requested
- 4-They gave us a tentative date for the festival.  
A preliminary B final  
C obvious D superficial
- 5-After receiving the injection, the rat manifests signs of insomnia.  
A belittles B shows  
C desires D prefers
- 6-Though he just learned English recently, he was able to articulate his argument forcefully.  
A banter B misrepresent  
C express D monologue
- 7-The immigrants sought asylum in a European country.  
A benevolent B refuge  
C refuse D camouflage
- 8-We knew there had been a fight in the room because the tables were turned over and the pictures were hanging awry.  
A flawed B warped  
C expertly D askew
- 9-The young man isolated himself from friends and lived the ascetic life of a monk.  
A wanton B abstinent  
C flexible D luxurious
- 10-Being upgraded to first class was an auspicious start to our vacation.  
A ominous B inopportune  
C promising D adverse
- 11-The customs inspector felt the documents were not authentic.  
A bona fide B positive  
C worthy D executed
- 12-The politician besmirched his opponent's good name with vile epithets.  
A praised B pressured  
C smeared D blistered