

the ARTICLE (for teachers)

The Last Decade

The decade has ended and the world now moves into the second decade of the twenty-first century. An insatiable appetite for up-to-the-minute news fuels online media, resulting in fads churned out, adopted, and discarded at a breakneck pace. This is perhaps one reason that the English language still lacks a universally adopted term for the years between 2000 and 2009. No single idea has been picked up by enough people to go viral.

The last decade as a whole was quite bland. However, major exceptions include the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the war in the Middle East, and the devastated world economy. Yet not much of note has occurred which might adequately define the decade. For better or worse, the 90s had grunge music, the 80s had Reagonomics, and the 70s had disco. What has happened in the 2000s?

The lack of any particularly defining cultural moment also serves as a reason for the absence of a definite term. Some people call the decade the "aughties," which refers to zeros. Others call the decade the "zeroes" and the "2Ks." No single idea has stuck. Experts in the evolution of the English language, as well as other experts in pop culture, anticipate that as years pass, at least one term will gradually get adopted. Which term it will be, though, is anyone's guess.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface are the answers.

STUDENT HANDOUT (fill in the blank)

Fill in the blank with the correct word.

worse	of note	particularly	breakneck	churned out
bland	anticipate	devastated	absence	evolution
adequately	insatiable	guess	century	exceptions

The Last Decade

The decade has ended and the world now moves into the second decade of the twenty-first (a. _____). An (b. _____) appetite for up-to-the-minute news fuels online media, resulting in fads (c. _____), adopted, and discarded at a (d. _____) pace. This is perhaps one reason that the English language still lacks a universally adopted term for the years between 2000 and 2009. No single idea has been picked up by enough people to go viral.

The last decade as a whole was quite (e. _____). However, major (f. _____) include the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the war in the Middle East, and the (g. _____) world economy. Yet not much (h. _____) has occurred which might (i. _____) define the decade. For better or (j. _____), the 90s had grunge music, the 80s had Reaganomics, and the 70s had disco. What has happened in the 2000s?

The lack of any (k. _____) defining cultural moment also serves as a reason for the (l. _____) of a definite term. Some people call the decade the "aughties," which refers to zeros. Others call the decade the "zeroes" and the "2Ks." No single idea has stuck. Experts in the (m. _____) of the English language, as well as other experts in pop culture, (n. _____) that as years pass, at least one term will gradually get adopted. Which term it will be, though, is anyone's (o. _____).

The Last Decade – January 17, 2010

Advanced - Vocabulary

STEP ONE

Brainstorm: Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "decade" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

STEP TWO

Vocabulary match: Individually or in pairs/groups, match the words in column A (from the article) with the best choice in column B. Use a dictionary for any words you don't know, but check your English-English dictionary.

a.	insatiable	q.	leaving out
b.	churn out	r.	produce quickly
c.	breakneck	s.	important
d.	bland	t.	extremely fast
e.	exception	u.	lack
f.	devastate	v.	destroy
g.	of note	w.	wanting
h.	adequate	x.	predict
i.	absence	y.	sufficient
j.	anticipate	z.	boring

STEP THREE

Fill in the Blanks: Fill in the blank with the correct word.

	breakneck	anticipate	adequately	insatiable	of note
	devastated	churned out	exceptions	absence	bland
a.	There is an () appetite for up-to-the-minute news.				
b.	Online media results in fads that are ().				
c.	The fads are adopted and discarded at a () pace.				
d.	The last decade as a whole was quite ()				
e.	Major () include the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the war in the Middle East.				
f.	There is the () world economy too.				
g.	Not much () has occurred in the last decade.				
h.	No event () defines the decade.				
i.	The lack of a defining moment also serves as a reason for the () of a definite term.				
j.	Experts () that as years pass, at least one term will gradually get adopted.				

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STEP FOUR

The Article: 1) Read the article, but don't worry about the missing words. 2) Fill in the blanks with today's vocabulary, followed by all the other words. 3) Read the article again, and circle any unknown words/phrases. In pairs/groups, use your dictionaries to understand the words or phrases you circled. 4) Answer the questions to check your comprehension.

a.	What is one reason that the last decade doesn't have a name?
b.	Although the article calls the decade "bland," what exceptions are given?
c.	According to the article, what did the 80s have?
d.	According to the article, what did the 70s have?
e.	What are some terms used to describe the last decade?

STEP FIVE

Discuss: Write down five vocabulary words from today's article that you want to use.

a.	
b.	
c.	
d.	
e.	

Now talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Every time you use a vocabulary word, place a check next to it. Try to use today's vocabulary as much as possible.

a.	What was your general impression after reading this article?
b.	What do you think is the best term for the last decade?
c.	Why do you think no term has been decided on yet?
d.	What major events happened in the world but weren't mentioned in the article? Please explain.

Score yourself:

10 or more times: Fantastic! Be sure to review the words at home.

6-9 times: Pretty good! You're on your way to acquiring today's vocabulary. Try writing your own sentences at home for additional practice.

5 or less times: Try harder next time! To acquire new vocabulary, you need to use the new words as much as possible.