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101 Pre-Lesson Grammar Worksheets

get your students ready BEFORE class
maximize the time IN class

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Imagine that you possessed the ability to recall small, unimportant events, details, and dates from your life with almost perfect accuracy. Let's say, for example, you could remember than June 15th, 1992 was a Monday, and you ate a hamburger with extra cheese and onions for dinner while you watched a rerun of Seinfeld on TV. For Brad Williams, this isn't a what if. It's a feat of which he has always been capable.

There have been other people with similar abilities. However, they only could memorize random letters or numbers with ease, or maybe remember book passages and short stories word for word. Williams is different. He doesn't remember meaningless facts or figures, but information directly from his past. What's more, his memory has proved almost flawless.

"I've always been this way," he said. In fact, as a child, he thought everyone had the same ability. To his family, the phenomenon has always just been amusing. But one expert believes that Williams may have one of the best memories in the world. The doctor is studying Williams because he hopes to better understand how memory works.

Another woman has also been found with an almost identical talent, and has joined the same study. She calls her ability a burden, though. Whenever she hears a date, a flood of memories flows through her mind. It's nonstop and exhausting.

Both Williams and the woman remember information that they find interesting. Because this is an essential part of their abilities, some researchers have concluded that many others may be capable of the same skills. Since the study began, a third person has been discovered with similar potential.

Teacher’s Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface are the answers.
Fill in the blank with the correct word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>burden</th>
<th>phenomenon</th>
<th>potential</th>
<th>rerun</th>
<th>essential</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>feat</td>
<td>memories</td>
<td>ease</td>
<td>possessed</td>
<td>capable</td>
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<tr>
<td>understand</td>
<td>accuracy</td>
<td>identical</td>
<td>concluded</td>
<td>flawless</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All Things Remembered

Imagine that you (a. _______________) the ability to recall small, unimportant events, details, and dates from your life with almost perfect (b. ________________). Let's say, for example, you could remember than June 15th, 1992 was a Monday, and you ate a hamburger with extra cheese and onions for dinner while you watched a (c. ________________) of Seinfeld on TV. For Brad Williams, this isn't a what if. It's a (d. ________________) of which he has always been (e. ________________).

There have been other people with similar abilities. However, they only could memorize random letters or numbers with (f. ________________), or maybe remember book passages and short stories word for word. Williams is different. He doesn't remember meaningless facts or figures, but information directly from his past. What's more, his memory has proved almost (g. ________________).

"I've always been this way," he said. In fact, as a child, he thought everyone had the same ability. To his family, the (h. ________________) has always just been amusing. But one expert believes that Williams may have one of the best (i. ________________) in the world. The doctor is studying Williams because he hopes to better (j. ________________) how memory works.

Another woman has also been found with an almost (k. ________________) talent, and has joined the same study. She calls her ability a (l. ________________), though. Whenever she hears a date, a flood of memories flows through her mind. It's nonstop and exhausting.

Both Williams and the woman remember information that they find interesting. Because this is an (m. ________________) part of their abilities, some researchers have (n. ________________) that many others may be capable of the same skills. Since the study began, a third person has been discovered with similar (o. ________________).
**STEP ONE**

Define: What does "photographic memory" mean? Can you use it in a sentence? Can you give examples?

**STEP TWO**

Word Search: Find the target words (in bold) with their exact match. How long did it take to find all the words?

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F P N Y N U O F M L H R A L C
E A M E P O Z X A H D N C A O
Q Y E F D O M I I A R U C C R
Z Q N T B R T O A D E R U I N
A R R P W N U E N S J E R T C
Y K L U E F F B E O Q R A N W
M T R T Z M L N S E N S C E V
J G O P I R T A D M A E Y D U
P P F X X I W R W Z P M H I B
G Y C A R U C A L Y D T P H
J K N L Y F Q W E Y E A N L Z
N O N E M O N E H P E S B S K
E S S E N T I A L F E A S E T
B E W Z Y E E I G I P W J Y B
Q T W H J V E A L W J T J E W

**STEP THREE**

Vocabulary Match: 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 be sure to check your English-English dictionary, too.

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a. Imagine that you possessed the ability to recall small details from your life with perfect (    )
b. You ate a hamburger with extra cheese and onions for dinner while you watched a (    ) on TV.
c. It's a (    ) of which he has always been capable.
d. They only could memorize random letters or numbers with (    ).
e. What's more, his memory has proved almost (    ).
f. To his family, the (    ) has always just been amusing.
g. Another woman has also been found with an almost (    ) talent, and has joined the same study.
h. She calls her ability a (    ), though.
i. Williams remembers information that he finds interesting. This is an (    ) part of his abilities.
j. Since the study began, a third person has been discovered with similar (    ).
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 your circled. 4) Answer the questions to check your comprehension.

a. What is Brad Williams’s ability?
b. How is his ability different than other, similar cases?
c. What does his family think?
d. How does the woman with a similar ability feel?
e. What do some researchers believe of the ability?

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.

a. What was your general impression after reading this article?
b. How good is your memory?
c. Would you want to have the same ability as Brad Williams? Why/not?
d. How likely is it that everyone will be the same as Brad Williams one day? Please explain your answer.

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.