

Assignment 2

Basic English Usage

August 28, 2014

A. Read the short passage and answer the questions that follow:

The crystal clear, blue water and the magnificent sun make the Caribbean island of Saint Maarten a favorite vacation spot, one that is popular with North Americans during their winter holidays from December through March, as well as with South Americans and Europeans from April through August. The French and Dutch settled on the island in the 1600s, and to this day, the island is divided between the two of them. The French capital is Marigot; the Dutch capital is Philipsburg. Tourists soon discover that St. Maarten has an intriguing history. Ancient artifacts found on the island date back to the Stone Age, 6,000 years ago! Tourists also learn that 1,200 years ago the Arawak Indians inhabited all the islands of the West Indies and were a peaceful people living under the guidance of their chiefs. Three hundred years after the Arawaks first arrived on St. Maarten, in the 1300s, they were defeated and forced to abandon the island by a hostile tribe of Indians originating in South America. This new tribe was called the Carib. The Caribbean Sea was named after them. Unlike the Arawaks, they had no permanent chiefs or leaders, except in times of strife. And they were extremely warlike. Worse, they were cannibalistic, eating the enemy warriors they captured. In fact, the very word *cannibal* comes from the Spanish name for the Carib Indians. The Spanish arrived in the fifteenth century and, unfortunately, they carried diseases to which the Indians had no immunity. Many Indians succumbed to common European illnesses; others died from the hard labor forced upon them.

1. One can infer from the passage that the Stone Age people lived on St Maarten around the year
 - a. 6000 B.C.
 - b. 4000 B.C.
 - c. 800 A.D.
 - d. 1300 A.D.

2. Which of the following is NOT true about the Carib Indians?

- a. The sea was named after them.
- b. They were peaceful fishermen, hunters, and farmers.
- c. They ate human flesh.
- d. They settled after defeating the Arawak Indians.

3. According to the passage, the Carib Indians were finally defeated by

- a. sickness and forced labor.
- b. the more aggressive Arawak tribe.
- c. the Dutch West India Company.
- d. the French explorers.

4. One can infer from the passage that the underlined word **strife** means

- a. cannibalism.
- b. war.
- c. duty-free.
- d. chief.

5. According to the article, present-day St. Maarten

- a. belongs to the Spanish.
- b. is independent.

- c. is shared by the French and the Dutch.
- d. is part of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

B. Read the following sentences and try to choose the best definition for the italicized word by searching for context clues in the sentence.

1. Her fashion sense was usually described as *flamboyant*, but on the night of the party, Tanya's outfit was uncharacteristically modest.
 - a. impeccable
 - b. showy
 - c. sloppy
 - d. unassuming

2. Even though she'd read her supervisor's memo four or five times, she still found his rambling message *ambiguous*.
 - a. profound
 - b. inspiring
 - c. ridiculous
 - d. unclear

3. As soon as the details of the election were released to the media, the newspaper was *inundated* with calls—far too many to be handled effectively.
 - a. provided
 - b. bothered
 - c. rewarded
 - d. flooded

4. The *intermittent* rain soaked the garden many different times during the day.

- a. protracted
- b. periodic
- c. incredulous
- d. light

C. Choose the best vocabulary word for questions 1 to 3:

1. When Carson suddenly quit his job, he didn't even _____ how difficult it might be to find a new one.

- a. endorse
- b. require
- c. consider
- d. alter

2. Maggie was the most talented tennis player at her school, even though she'd never had the _____ to take formal lessons.

- a. opportunity
- b. compassion
- c. arrogance
- d. marketability

3. We had no idea who the special guest speaker would be, because the organizers of the event were so _____.

- a. animated
- b. secretive
- c. talented
- d. emotional