

Practice English C2

Part 2 — Open Cloze

C2 Proficiency practice test PDF — Use of English

Coining the Future: The Life and Death of New Words

Coining the Future: The Life and Death of New Words

To endure, any living language must continually renew itself, yet it remains instinctively resistant to certain categories of change. The vast majority of coined words glitter briefly, (9) at all, before receding into oblivion. Nevertheless, lexical novelty is an inescapable necessity: as the world is remade, (10) too must the words we deploy to describe it. In an era (11) empirical science commands the intellectual heights, it is wholly unsurprising that working vocabularies are perpetually being expanded (12) specialised terminology.

Unfamiliar words unsettle people for broadly two reasons. They bear witness to phenomena we either dislike (13) anticipate disliking, and their register affronts our sense of linguistic propriety. There is, however, (14) remotely novel about this deep-seated resistance to neologism. As far (15) as the mid-eighteenth century, a prominent English lexicographer was already lamenting the 'superfluous coinages insinuating themselves into reputable usage'.

What, then, determines a word's longevity? It must first achieve widespread adoption; it must also designate something of enduring consequence, for it will survive only so long as the phenomenon (16) question persists; and to become truly entrenched, it must prove capable of generating a family of derivative forms.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

Answer Key

Answers

1. IF
3. WHERE
5. OR
7. BACK

2. SO
4. WITH
6. NOTHING
8. IN