

CAE PREMIUM Lesson 1.3

Can you complete the following synonyms or near synonyms for the word 'eccentric'?

unc_____

p_c_____

unor_____

e c c e n t r i c

off_____

o_____

q_____

w_____

Q: What prompted you to make a scientific study of eccentricity?

A: Psychologists have undertaken exhaustive studies of every personality type under the sun, yet somehow we have completely overlooked eccentrics. And psychiatry, on the other hand, tends only to take an interest in those who seek treatment, and since eccentrics rarely do so, they have been overlooked. I thought it might contribute something important to our understanding of the mind if we had a better understanding of the thought processes of those who regard themselves and who are regarded by others as eccentric.

Q: Can you give us a description of the eccentric?

A: The eccentric is very creative and curious and has vivid visual imagination in the daytime and vivid dreams at night. Eccentrics are intelligent, opinionated, and frequently have a mischievous sense of humour. Many of them are loners, and they often have unorthodox living arrangements.

Q: For example?

A: We have several men who lived in caves. Women eccentrics tend to be obsessive collectors and renovators. One woman in our study has 7,500 garden gnomes on her lawn.

Q: You found in your study that eccentrics are happier and healthier than the rest of us.

A: We did meet a few gloomy eccentrics, but most of the subjects in our study had a refreshingly sunny outlook on life. There is also pretty solid proof that eccentrics are healthier than the norm. In Great Britain the average person goes to the doctor twice a year, while eccentrics will typically go for eight or nine years without seeking medical help. It's not that they're avoiding doctors or don't believe in conventional medicine. They just don't need it much.

Q: How do you explain this?

A: It's a combination of an optimistic outlook and low stress, due to the fact that eccentrics don't feel the need to conform. Eccentrics don't give a damn what the rest of the world thinks of them; if someone makes fun of them, instead of getting angry or embarrassed, they regard the other person as the one with a problem.

Q: What makes a person an eccentric? After all, everyone has some unusual habits or traits.

A: Eccentricity is a choice. It's quite true that everyone has eccentric traits, but as we grow older, most of us learn to conform, to blend in – the process we call socialisation. But the eccentric says, 'No, thank you,' and chooses not to conform.

Q: Are men or women more likely to be eccentric?

A: The incidence of eccentricity is about the same, but it manifests itself in different ways. Society has always been more tolerant of aberrant behaviour in men than in women. If a man gets into a fight with a colleague or goes off on a drinking spree, we might overlook it, but if a woman does the same thing it's considered scandalous. A woman sometimes becomes eccentric later in life: she conforms in her youth, marries and has children, but once the kids have left home, she leaves her husband and lets her eccentric, creative side take over.

Q: Dr Weeks, are you eccentric?

A: I would say that I may have always been slightly eccentric, perhaps a little rebellious. I do, however, admire the authentic, life-long eccentrics. I think we can all learn a lot from them about holding onto the dreams and curiosity we had as children.

Look at these words from the text. Underline the main stressed syllable.

conventional curious gloomy intelligent mischievous opinionated
rebellious unorthodox



Correct the mistakes made by exam candidates. In some cases more than one answer is possible.

- 1 Do you come to the meeting next week?
- 2 I'm waiting for you at Vicenza Station tomorrow afternoon.
- 3 Barbara and I know each other for years. We went to primary school together.
- 4 In your memo you asked me to write a report, so now I send it to you.
- 5 I was waiting for 30 minutes when a man came and spoke to me.
- 6 I promise that when you'll come to visit me next summer, you'll have a wonderful holiday.
- 7 On Wednesday we went to St. Andrews, as I arranged to meet a friend of mine there.

Choose the correct answer.

- 1 I *enjoy* / *enjoyed* / *have enjoyed* studying history since I was a child.
- 2 I'll look for a job when I *get* / *will get* / *will have got* my degree.
- 3 I'm *waiting* / *'ve been waiting* / *was waiting* in this queue for hours!
- 4 By the end of this century, we're *exploring* / *'ll have explored* / *explore* distant planets.
- 5 My friend Stefan *was reading* / *has been reading* / *read* a book when I called at his house.
- 6 I'm not yet sure which subject I want to study, but I think I'll *do* / *'m doing* / *'ll have done* maths.
- 7 When politicians at last realised what was happening, the climate *already became* / *had already become* / *had already been becoming* warmer.

EXTREME-SELFIE HUNTERS



David explains how extreme selfie-hunters, in search of a (1) perfect shot, frequently engage in risky behaviour.

David uses the word (2) _____ to describe the popular status of extreme-selfie photography.

When talking about the picture taken from the top of the building, David states it was the (3) _____ of the photographer that most impressed him.

David explains that people used online (4) _____ services to ensure that their pictures could be seen worldwide.

David acknowledges the importance of the (5) _____ shown to famous selfie-hunters by their fans.

David says that there was a shift in approach to this art form as the (6) _____ of its new contributors became more prominent.

David believes that the (7) _____ of extreme-selfie photography is often ignored by its critics.

David thinks the available (8) _____ confirm that people rarely put themselves in danger through a desire to copy others.

Friends or contacts?

I find it (1) _____ that social media sites use the word 'friends' instead of the more neutral 'contacts'. To me, a friend is a person you can turn to in difficult times, who will be (2) _____ when you have problems. Also, your friends should (3) _____ live reasonably close so that they can help out in a crisis. I suppose a social media contact could (4) _____ care about you, but I usually trust people I know in real life much more. I am fine chatting online with people who share the same interests – in my case, ballroom dancing – as it can be difficult in real life to find friends who share my (5) _____ for my hobby. I am still (6) _____ and hoping to meet someone in the future but I have not seriously considered online dating. For one thing, my family's (7) _____ would put me off.

FRUSTRATE

SUPPORT

IDEAL

GENUINE

**ENTHUSE
MARRY**

APPROVE