

Which of the following situations involve communications?

Parents respond to a crying baby.

A track official waves a checkered flag, and drivers stop their race cars.

One computer can be connected with several others to form a network for the exchange of information.

If you accept the idea that communication is the process of sharing meaning, you will probably agree that all of the situations involve some aspect of the communication process.

Since words are necessary for communicating all but the simplest messages, this lesson focuses on verbal communication. These vocabulary words will help you to understand and describe the many ways in which people discuss ideas with others.

WORD LIST

circumlocution
discourse
euphemism
falter
literate
prattle
raconteur
reiterate
utterance
verbose

After you have studied the definitions and example for each vocabulary word, write the word on the line to the right.

1. **circumlocution** (sûr'kəm-lō-kyōō'shən) *noun* a. The use of roundabout expressions or wordy and indirect language. b. Speech or writing that is wordy or evasive. (From the Latin *circum-*, meaning "around," and *loqui*, meaning "to speak")

Example The lecturer's *circumlocutions* convinced the audience that he was not familiar with the Great Barrier Reef.

2. **discourse** (dīs'kôrs') *noun* a. Verbal expression in the form of speech or writing. b. The formal and lengthy discussion of a subject, either written or spoken. *intrans. verb* (dī-skôrs') a. To speak or write formally and at length. b. To engage in conversation or discussion. (From the Latin word *discurrere*, meaning "to speak at length")

Example Rochelle enjoys the essays of Michel de Montaigne, which are *discourses* on various subjects.

3. **euphemism** (yōō'fə-miz'əm) *noun* The act or an example of the substitution of an inoffensive term for one that is considered offensive, unpleasant, or too direct. (From the Greek *eu-*, meaning "good," and *phēmē*, meaning "speech")

Related Words *euphemistic adjective; euphemistically adverb*

Example The coach used the *euphemism* "high-spirited" rather than call her students "rowdy."

1. _____

2. _____

USAGE NOTE: *Discourse* can mean "to discuss," but it implies formal and lengthy discussion. *Discourse* is often used with the word *on*.

3. _____

4. **falter** (fôl'tər) *intrans. verb* a. To speak hesitatingly; stammer. b. To waver in confidence. c. To move unsteadily; stumble. *noun* An unsteadiness in speech or action. (From the Middle English word *falteren*, meaning "to stagger")

Related Word *falteringly* *adverb*

Example Although Justin *faltered* as he began his speech, his voice became stronger as he grew more confident.

5. **literate** (līt'ər-īt) *adjective* a. Able to read and write; knowledgeable; educated. b. Well-written; polished. *noun* a. Someone who can read and write. b. A well-informed, educated person. (From the Latin word *littera*, meaning "letter")

Related Words *literacy* *noun*; *literately* *adverb*

Example Charlemagne, a great emperor in the Middle Ages, did not become *literate* until he was an adult.

6. **prattle** (prăt'l) *intrans. verb* To talk idly or meaninglessly; babble. *trans. verb* To utter in a childish or silly way. *noun* Childish or meaningless sounds; babble.

Example Rosella *prattled* on endlessly about how wonderful her vacation had been.

7. **raconteur** (rāk'ôn-tûr') *noun* A person who tells stories and anecdotes with skill and wit. (From the Old French word *raconter*, meaning "to tell")

Example Abraham Lincoln was a natural *raconteur* who used stories to communicate political messages.

8. **reiterate** (rē-īt'ə-rāt') *trans. verb* To say over again; repeat. (From the Latin *re-*, meaning "again," and *iterare*, meaning "to repeat")

Related Word *reiteration* *noun*

Example Wendy *reiterated* the word *no* several times to her dog, which was intent upon chasing a neighbor's cat.

8. **USAGE NOTE:** *Iterate* and *reiterate* mean the same thing, but *reiterate* seems stronger and is used more often.

9. **utterance** (ūt'ər-əns) *noun* a. The act of expressing vocally. b. Something that is expressed.

Related Word *utter* *verb*

Example When he learned that he had won the contest, he made an *utterance* of delight.

10. **verbose** (vər-bōs') *adjective* Using or containing an excessive number of words. (From the Latin word *verbum*, meaning "word")

Related Words *verbosely* *adverb*; *verbosity* *noun*

Example Because writing styles have changed, the long descriptions in eighteenth-century literature may seem *verbose* to the modern reader.