

## **Spelling**

*Pick the one you think is correct. Do not use a dictionary.*

- 1: supersede/supercede
- 2: irresistible /irresistable
- 3: development/developement
- 4: seperate/separate
- 5: recommend/reccomend
- 6: minuscule/miniscule
- 7: inoculate/inoculate
- 8: accommodate/accomodate
- 9: repetition/repitition
- 10: publically/publicly

### **Grammar, punctuation, spelling**

*Some are correct; some have more than one error. You can use a dictionary and an AP Stylebook on this section.*

1. I see a light at the end of the tunnel, it's probably a mirror.
2. "I see a light at the end of the tunnel," Lincoln said, "It's probably a mirror."
3. Look out! That light at the end of the tunnel is a train, and it's heading your way.
4. Its beginning to look a lot like Christmas at the Capitol, which has it's dome all aglow.
5. It's a bird. It's a plane. No, it's a pterodactyl, that is neither a bird nor a plane.
6. I'd rather see the cartoon that is happy than the one that is sad.
7. Charles Julius Guiteau assassinated President Garfield, an emotionally disturbed man that had failed to gain an appointment in Garfield's administration.
8. Jane, who lives in McLean, likes to dance, eat and watch C-SPAN.
9. Congress authorized a memorial statue of Rear Admiral Samuel Francis duPont in recognition of his Civil War service in 1882. At that point, DuPont had been dead for 17 years.
10. This goofy grammar test has gone where no men has gone before.

### **Congressional Minutiae:**

*Simply answer as many of these as you know off the top of your head. Don't look anything up.*

1: Name the Senate majority and minority leaders

2: Name the Speaker of the House and the House minority leader

3: How many votes are needed to cut off debate in the Senate? What is this process called?

4: Name a piece of legislation the House considered last week.

5: How many appropriations subcommittees are there in each chamber?

6: There is a new Congress every \_\_\_\_ years.

7: Which chamber confirms presidential appointments?

8: All bills concerning appropriations and taxes must originate in which chamber?

9: A senator's term is how many years? What about a representative's?

10: List as many members of the president's Cabinet by name and title as you can. (Hint: There are 15.)

## Blurbs and Headlines:

*Read the following stories and write a blurb and a headline for each, patterning what you write after the example below. Please note that the last example is a column, not a hard news story.*

### EXAMPLE:

Headline: Specter Again Targets 'Judicial Activism' in Letter to Roberts

*Blurb: Arlen Specter has released a letter to Supreme Court nominee John G. Roberts Jr. blasting "judicial activism" of the court under Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist. This second letter focuses on two cases regarding the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in which retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor proved to be the decisive vote.*

Story: For the second time this month, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Arlen Specter has released a letter to Supreme Court nominee John G. Roberts Jr. blasting "judicial activism" of the court under Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist.

On Tuesday, Specter focused his second letter on two cases regarding the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) in which retiring Justice Sandra Day O'Connor proved to be the decisive vote.

In a case decided in 2001, *Alabama v. Garrett*, the court ruled the ADA could not be used to hold a state liable for employment discrimination. But in a case decided last year, *Tennessee v. Lane*, the court ruled the ADA mandated that a courthouse had to be made handicap-accessible. That lawsuit was filed by a paraplegic who worked as a courthouse stenographer and had to crawl up steps to a second floor courtroom.

Specter, R-Pa., suggested the differing outcomes show how the court is "functioning as a super-legislature."

"I am concerned about the Supreme Court's judicial activism which has usurped Congressional authority by creating, as Justice [Antonin] Scalia's dissent in *Tennessee v. Lane* states, a 'flabby test' which is an 'invitation to judicial arbitrariness by policy driven decision-making,'" Specter wrote.

At the end of the three-page letter, Specter listed four questions for Roberts that he said he intends to ask the nominee during his confirmation hearings before the Judiciary Committee, scheduled to begin Sept. 6.

Sen. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., responded favorably Tuesday to Specter's letter. "Once again Sen. Specter in his thoughtful way has made it clear that learning a nominee's judicial philosophy on important cases is essential in deciding whether or not

he should be confirmed to a lifetime appointment to the Supreme Court,” Schumer said in a statement.

In Specter’s first letter, which was released Aug. 8, the chairman similarly listed four questions he intends to ask Roberts. They are related to a series of “federalism” decisions in recent years that have interpreted parts of the Constitution in ways that have curbed Congress’ lawmaking authority in favor of states’ rights.

Specter focused on a 2000 federalism case, *United States v. Morrison*, in which the court overturned a provision in the Violence Against Women Act of 1994 (PL 103-322) that allowed victims of gender-motivated violence to file lawsuits in federal courts seeking damages from their attackers.

Lawmakers had claimed constitutional authority for the law under the Commerce Clause and the 14th Amendment. But the high court disagreed.

In 1995, the court ruled in another federalism case, *United States v. Lopez*, that Congress exceeded its constitutional authority to regulate interstate commerce when it enacted a crime law (PL 101-647) that established gun-free zones within 1,000 feet of schools.

Both *Lopez* and *Morrison* were 5-4 decisions. Rehnquist, Scalia, O’Connor, Clarence Thomas and Anthony Kennedy were in the majority against the court’s four consistently liberal justices.

Roberts is the first Supreme Court nominee since 1994, before the court decided *Lopez*, *Morrison* and some other federalism cases.

#1:

Headline:

Blurb:

Story: The Senate Finance Committee unanimously endorsed three pending nominations for positions in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on Wednesday without really meeting at all.

Members voted 20-0 in favor of each nomination, including proxy votes in favor by Democrats Charles E. Schumer of New York and John D. Rockefeller IV of West Virginia, in open roll call votes in a room just off the Senate floor.

During Senate floor votes, the Finance panel members approved the following HHS nominations: Alex Azar II to be deputy secretary; Charles E. Johnson to be assistant secretary for budget, technology, and finance; and Suzanne C. DeFrancis to be assistant secretary for public affairs.

Azar is the former general counsel for HHS and already serves in his position in an acting capacity. Johnson and DeFrancis have both worked in the public and private sectors in their respective fields.

The committee held a confirmation hearing for the three nominees on May 24.

#2:

Headline:

Blurb:

Story: The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is expanding its “presence” on Capitol Hill by moving its lobbyists into a five-story Victorian-style townhouse just three blocks from the House side of the Capitol.

The price tag? \$1. 9 million for the 115-year-old brick rowhouse in Southeast Washington, which will have to undergo a substantial renovation over the next year. To the chamber, though, it’s clearly worth it.

“We are already neighbors with the White House on Lafayette Park — now we’ll be in Congress’ backyard as well,” said Chamber Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer Suzanne Clark.

Renovations are scheduled to be completed in autumn 2006. The building will house 15 full-time lobbyists and more than 60 policy experts.

#3:

Headline:

Blurb:

Story: Inflation is coming. That's one possible translation of the subtle message from the Federal Reserve explaining why central bankers last week increased, for the 10th time since June 2004, the short-term interest rate they control.

Bond market investors took the opposite view, pushing down yields on longer-term Treasury securities immediately after the Fed spoke and choosing to believe there really is no immediate reason to fret that accelerating prices will erode the value of their holdings.

The possibility remains, however, that the Fed has its eye on some specter of inflation that no one else can see. Right now, however, it's almost impossible to see what evidence might be causing the Fed any anxiety. That's important because if investors decide that Alan Greenspan and Co. are blowing smoke, the central bank's ability to work its will in the market is suddenly diminished.

What's a Fed-watcher to think? To begin with, let's parse the 148 words that make up the main part of the Fed's typically laconic Aug. 9 statement. Of those, only 23 were different from the previous statement on June 30. And the nut of the change can be found in as few as 10 of them.

The most significant two sentences this time were these: "Aggregate spending, despite high energy prices, appears to have strengthened since late winter, and labor market conditions continue to improve gradually. Core inflation has been relatively low in recent months and longer-term inflation expectations remain well contained, but pressures on inflation have stayed elevated."

The resulting impression is that the central bank is more certain now than it was six weeks ago that the economy is positioned to roar ahead — and that always poses a risk that prices can get out of control. In June, the Fed was saying the economy "remains firm." By last week, it said new signs of economic vitality suggested that spending "appears to have strengthened."

More directly, the Fed has reversed its on-the-one-hand, on-the-other-hand emphasis on the inflation outlook. In its August statement, the Fed's final thought is that inflation-producing pressures remain high. The June statement also fretted that such pressures were elevated, but its last word was that inflation would probably stay contained.

All this may amount to an aggressively Talmudic interpretation of a few jargon-laden sentences. But those words are what people interested in the central bank's plans have to



go on. The combination of faster growth and a shift in emphasis on inflation expectations does look like the Fed is waving a yellow flag. And last month, Chairman Greenspan told Congress the central bank has raised its inflation forecast.

For most investors and financial analysts, however, there's just not a lot of hard evidence that inflation is poised to pick up. Most recent gauges are down. The Labor Department's consumer price index showed a 2.5 percent year-over-year inflation rate in June, the smallest since September and a full percentage point below the April reading. The so-called core CPI, which excludes energy and food prices, showed just a 2.1 percent inflation rate. And the inflation gauge the Fed loves best — one linked to Commerce Department calculations of personal spending on items other than food and energy — was lower in the second quarter than it has been in almost a year.

The rub is that these statistics are the result of looking in a rearview mirror, as economists like to say. On the highway, you better spend most of your time watching what's ahead to keep from running into the back of a truck. The same goes for inflation-monitoring. By the time you see it in your mirror, it's too late.

A handful of other economic statistics are generally regarded as inflation precursors, but they mostly look benign as well.

One is unit labor costs, which measures how much companies pay for wages and related expenses, calculated as a function of how much they produce. This figure is directly related to productivity gains, and when companies are less efficient, unit labor costs tend to rise. That in turn puts pressures on companies to raise prices.

Well, a Labor Department report last week showed that in the second quarter productivity grew at a 2.2 percent annual rate, the slowest since the third quarter of last year. Weaker productivity might suggest an inflation problem down the road, except unit labor costs rose at a 1.3 percent pace, down from 3.6 percent in the previous three months. Wages just aren't rising very fast.

Likewise, the Labor Department's separate employment cost index, released two weeks ago, showed that total compensation for workers in private industry rose more slowly in the first half of this year than for any six-month period in almost 10 years. The second-quarter increase in fringe benefit costs, which have been the big driver in this statistic, was the smallest in more than three years.

So, record crude oil and gasoline prices notwithstanding, the broad economy isn't acting like it does in an inflation spiral, when companies raise prices to anticipate higher costs and workers demand higher wages to offset future price increases.

We haven't seen anything like that in years, and if central bankers are trying to ratchet up inflation expectations, they risk being seen as crying wolf.

Editing Test:

*Edit the following two stories for content, grammar, etc. Use any resources you might wish, and make notes of any questions you would refer back to the reporter. Be ruthless, and unmerciful. Write a headline and a blurb of about 50 words for each one.*

#1:

Headline:

Blurb:

Senators late Wednesday passed a bill that would expand government relief for Hurricane Katrina.

The legislation (S 1777) extends disaster unemployment benefits from the current maximum of 26 weeks to 39 weeks, and lengthens the window of time under which unemployed people can apply for assistance.

It also would allow communities to be reimbursed for supplies such as toiletries and cots distributed to Katrina victims — rather than only reimbursing those expenses incurred by the victims themselves. The bill was sponsored by Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Chairwoman Susan Collins, R-Maine, and Joseph I. Lieberman of Connecticut, the ranking Democrat on the panel.

Senators passed the bill by voice vote after adopting a substitute amendment that removed a provision that would have waived the cap on total federal assistance from \$26,200 per disaster declaration per individual or household.

Also removed was a provision that would have given the president the authority to waive a required 75 percent federal, 10 percent state and local cost share for assistance to individuals and households, as required by the Stafford Act. The bill would have authorized the president to provide assistance up to a 90 percent federal, 10 percent state and local cost share.

A Senate aide said dropping those provisions allowed the bill to move forward. The Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs panel approved the bill in September.

“Our legislation ensures that federal aid for families devastated by Hurricane Katrina is commensurate with the magnitude of the disaster,” Collins said in a statement. “It provides increased flexibility in disaster assistance while ensuring accountability.” Lieberman add, “The fact that so many families remain unemployed almost six months after the storm is a grave reminder that we as a nation still have far to go to realize our promise of hope to the proud people of New Orleans and the rest of the Gulf Coast.” The legislation also includes a non-binding provision saying that foreign students who could not meet the terms of their visa requirements because of the storm should not be deported.

#2

Headline:

Blurb:

France has ordered for its 60 million citizens 200 million of the type of mask that significantly reduces the odds of inhaling a pandemic flu virus, many more than the U.S. has ordered even though the American population is five times larger, manufacturers warned in a little-noticed public meeting last week.

And it's not as if makers of the devices, known as "N-95 respirators," are operating at full capacity and can't fill a larger U.S. order, manufacturers said in a public meeting sponsored by the Institute of Medicine last week.

But the longer the U.S. waits, the farther back it will be in the growing line of nations and companies that have placed orders for the respirators, they added."The longer U.S. entities wait to place orders for respirators and purchase them, the longer it is going to take," Janice Comer Bradley, technical director for the International Safety Equipment Association, told the January 23 IoM event.

With vaccines and antiviral drugs expected to be in extremely short supply if a flu pandemic occurs soon, measures to prevent inhalation or other contact with bird flu virus may be all that stands between the public and fatal infection.

The Department of Health and Human Services is stressing the importance of staying away from work, school, and other public areas as the key to avoiding infection

in a pandemic. But with multiple waves of infection expected and each wave lasting several weeks, venturing out of the home may be inevitable.

HHS has in effect conceded that, asking the IoM to carry out a study of whether respirators or masks can be reused to offer health care workers and the public more protection. But manufacturers and unions say HHS could be doing more on its own to increase protection in addition to, or in lieu of, the reuse strategy.

The tide may be turning on that score, however. Centers for Disease Control Director Julie Gerberding, MD, told a Senate panel Monday that that HHS plans to spend significantly more money this year on protective face wear.

Although the HHS pandemic flu plan calls for doctors and nurses and other health care workers to wear surgical masks to control infection, those masks do not protect not the wearer except in very limited circumstances, industry representatives said. Rather, they protect those in the vicinity from becoming infected if the wearer has the flu virus, they explained.

Surgical masks might offer some protection in that they might keep a wearer from getting the flu virus by putting his or her hands in the mouth, added Weber. Or a surgical mask might help “if you are not infected, but if you actually put a surgical mask on someone in your family or in whatever community you are in that is infected,” said Lily Engstrom, a senior HHS policy advisor on public health emergency preparedness.

But “If you are afraid something is going to get in your lungs, you need a respirator,” said Webber.

Designs that do not have a valve also protect not only the wearer but also those in the vicinity of the wearer.

Although they come in different designs, many N-95 respirators look very much like surgical masks and are not bulky contraptions like a gas mask. N-95s last for about eight hours and are meant to be disposed after a single use. They cost about a dollar, compared to about 15 cents for a surgical mask, industry officials said.

France “has taken delivery and paid for 200 million respirators as of December 2005 for their citizens, and wants nearly three to four hundred [million] more,” Bradley said. McDonald’s and other large corporations are buying the devices for their employees, the industry reps added. “We are...seeing a lot with multinational companies, not only U.S. ones, but in Japan, Korea...and in Europe,” 3M’s Weber said.

His own company, the largest U.S. supplier of the devices, is giving respirators to employees and their families in some parts of the world. A family of four usually gets a supply of 10 respirators. Two-and-a-half uses apiece “is all you get,” Weber said.

HHS, meanwhile, has maintained a low profile when it comes to stockpiling N-95s, and needs to act well in advance of an emergency, industry officials said.

“If the United States determines that N-95s are the right way to go, to wait for the time of an actual emergency is too late,” said Jeffrey Birkner, an official with Moldex, a supplier of N-95 masks.

“I don’t know how many N-95s or other respirators are in the national stockpile, in caches or in other places,” said Bradley, whose association represents some six dozen safety equipment suppliers including 3M. “I have absolutely no idea how many the U.S. government currently possesses. I don’t know if they plan to order more.”

Engstrom maintained, however, that HHS has made its plans known for an initial order, and Gerberding's testimony Monday suggests the department will go well beyond the initial order

. "There is a pre-solicitation out from our department in which we have put industry on alert to the fact that the department wants to purchase, for the time being, 50 million N-95s, and 50 million surgical masks," Engstrom said. "That is no secret. It is out there. It is public information," she said. But HHS has not called attention to the order, issuing no press release on the matter, for example.

Given the short amount of time many N-95 respirators can be used, 50 million is peanuts anyway, health analysts say. "France has ordered 200 million and we have six times the population of France," said Alan Hack, a respirator expert retired from Los Alamos National Laboratory who serving on the IoM panel that convened the meeting.

Manufacturers' reps said they were unable to give an estimate of the U.S. or global capacity to produce N-95 masks. However, 3M has privately shared data on its manufacturing capacity with senior HHS officials.

While not relating its assessment directly to its knowledge of 3M data, the department has reached the conclusion that not enough surgical or N-95 masks will be available to meet demand, even if manufacturers ramp up capacity.

That's why HHS is asking the IoM to advise it on whether existing technology could be adapted for reuse to alleviate the expected shortage of respirators and masks for both the health care community and the public.

The January 23 meeting gave no great cause for optimism on that score. “If there e was such a thing as a reusable disposable respirator that fit everybody, it would already be on the market,” Bradley said.

Designing more reusable respirators would take considerable time and drive up the per unit cost of the devices, manufacturers said.

Gerbering told the Labor-HHS Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee Monday that HHS would spend \$242 million on face masks. It wasn’t immediately clear how the money would be apportioned among respirators and surgical masks and to what degree it would be intended to protect health care workers and to what degree the general public.

Unions, meanwhile, say the emphasis of the IoM study is misplaced. The focus should first be on determining what the level of protection should be and then on how to provide it, said James August, safety director for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. August said “I am appalled and, in fact, I am quite angry” about the questions HHS is putting to the IoM panel.

It’s unclear that the N-95 respirator is the needed level of protection, and in any event protection must go beyond respirators to include other methods of controlling exposure to pandemic flu virus, said August. “We don’t think that an N-95 is going to protect our members enough,” said Ron McGraw, an official with the International Association of Fire Fighters. His union may instead may urge its members use of a different kind of respirator, the P-100.