THE HINDU IN SCHOOL
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30-MINUTE ACTIVITY FOR CHILDREN - 35
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Word of the day

Laconic

The word laconic means "using very few words" and can be used to describe a person, a speech or even a writing style. The usage of the word has come down relatively, following the highs it experienced up until the 19th Century.

The word, which can also be used to express ideas such as "concise" and "abrupt", has an interesting etymology. Laconic derives from the place Laconia – the district around Sparta in southern Greece in ancient times. The inhabitants of Laconia famously cultivated this skill of conveying much by saying just a few words, thus giving laconic its meaning.

The following example illustrates it perfectly. When Philip of Macedon (King of the kingdom of Macedon) threatened the people with, "If I enter Laconia, I will raze Sparta to the ground," the Spartans' reply was, "If." Little said, much conveyed!

Usage: Her replies might be laconic, but it doesn't mean she isn't paying attention to the conversation.

Activity: Use the word of the day in a sentence of your own.

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World tour

This week, we focus on **Germany.** Here are some facts

- Germany is in Central Europe, sharing borders with nine countries. Berlin is its capital.
- Germany's history is marked by a few unsettling periods. They include the Nazi regime and the tension between East and West Germany (which were reunified in 1990).
- The country is a federal parliamentary republic led by Chancellor Angela Merkel.
- The country is called the Land of poets and thinkers. Prominent Germans include poets John Denver and Charles Bukowski; philosophers Karl Marx and Immanuel Kant; musicians Johann Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven; scientists Hermann von Helmholtz, Heinrich Hertz, Joseph von Fraunhofer, Gabriel Daniel Fahrenheit, Albert Einstein, Max Planck; and mathematicians Carl Friedrich Gauss, David Hilbert and Bernhard Riemann.

German landmark Brandenburg Gate. Photo: AP

- The highest mountain in Germany is the 'Zugspitze', which is a top tourist attraction. Black Forest, the scenic town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber, the science and arts museums of Munich, and the German Alps are other places of interest. Germany is also famous for its castles: there are more than 25,000 castles in the country.

Choose the correct answer:

1. This dark chocolate cake filled with cherries and cream is bad on the German dessert *Schwarzwalder Kirschtorte.* Name the popular cake.

A. Red Velvet
B. Black Forest
C. Chocolate truffle

2. This scientist-turned politician is the first female chancellor of Germany. Who is she?

A. Angela Merkel
B. Annegret Kramp-Karrenbauer
C. Ursula Gertrud von der Leyen

Answer: 1. B and 2. A

Fun with Math

From the shapes mentioned below, circle the one which has nine sides

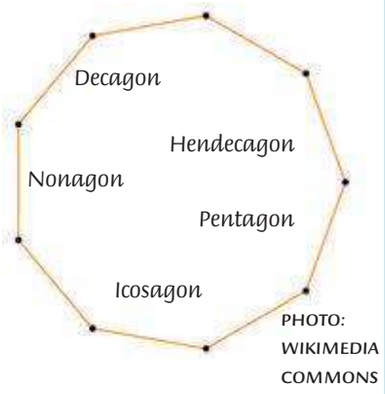

PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Answer: Nonagon, also called enneagon

Earth watch

Match the description with the right word

1. The natural process in which topsoil moves from one place to another.
2. Water received from rain, snow and melting of ice.
3. Plants and animals in a region.
4. A poisonous substance found naturally or manufactured.
5. Related to the sea.

a. Flora and fauna.
b. Soil erosion.
c. Marine.
d. Stormwater.
e. Toxin.

Ritu Raj Konwar

Answers: 1. b, 2. d, 3. a, 4. e, 5. c.

Picture story

Come up with a witty caption for this photo

Reuters

These baby elephants enjoy a day in the sun next to their mum in the enclosure at Prague Zoo. Can you sum up the picture in a few words. Be creative!

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Journal Writing

Dear Diary

Guess what! I found my long-lost .... while cleaning my cupboard this morning.

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Imagine and write. You may even type a note and mail it to us at **school@thehindu.co.in.** We will select a few for publication when we resume

Today's Diary Pick

Dear Diary,

I am going to describe my weekend using three colour words. They are white, red and green. This is because, white symbolizes cleanliness. No, red doesn't only mean danger, it also means bravery. The third colour, green, stands for hope. I am gonna spend this weekend by maintaining cleanliness, being brave and staying indoors, and hoping that once again, India will come back to normal after vanquishing this Coronavirus. So, stay home, be clean, help your parents by doing a few chores and keep your fingers crossed!

Shraddha Hiremath
VII, Kittur Sainik School, Dharwad

Dear Diary,

I am going to describe my weekend using three colour words. They are orange, blue and yellow. After following a hectic routine the entire week, this weekend fills me with hope, energy and sunshine like the orange rays of the sun. My weekend is as calm and soothing as the blue sky. At the same time it is as joyous, exciting and filled with positivity like the yellow wick of the candle. I wait eagerly for my colorful weekend.

Anant Bhargava,
5A, Bakhshi's Springdales School, Kota, (Rajasthan).

Easy search

Spot six flowers that commonly grow in home gardens. Write your answers in the space provided

S	R	O	S	E	Q	T	U	D	J
H	M	A	R	I	G	O	L	D	T
Q	L	H	T	N	C	P	M	X	P
Y	S	U	N	F	L	O	W	E	R
Z	I	N	N	I	A	H	D	K	A
I	H	I	B	I	S	C	U	S	F
H	I	J	H	Q	C	S	T	O	G
T	C	X	A	M	Y	N	M	N	B
E	T	Z	Y	S	E	B	M	A	I
R	G	M	J	A	S	M	I	N	E

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Answers: 1. Jasmine 2. Zinnia 3. Hibiscus 4. Sunflower 5. Marigold 6. Rose

Fun facts

1. Unusual Japanese tradition

There is a strange, centuries-old tradition and belief in Japan where if a sumo wrestler can make a baby cry, the baby will have a healthy life and enjoy good fortune. So at a special ceremony held in Tokyo each year, people hand over their babies aged under one to sumo wrestlers, who gently bounce them up and down, pull funny faces or even roar to make them burst into tears.

Q: Find out the name of the festival.

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2. Bones in our feet

Did you know that 25% of our bones are in our feet? There are 206 bones in an adult human's body. We have 26 bones in each foot. So there are 52 bones in our feet, amounting to more than 25%. Not surprisingly, our entire body's weight is supported by our feet, which we also use to jump, run, and climb.

Q: How many bones do we have at birth?

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Answers
1. Naki-zumo Festival, "naki" meaning "cry".
2. Nearly 300; this comes down to 206 by adulthood after some bones fuse together.

The W Corner

PHOTOS: AFP

Which is the original ball? While one of these balls is the actual ball that was in play in 2019 IPL game between Rajasthan Royals and the Royal Challengers Bangalore, the others have been introduced by us. Can you spot the right one?

Answer: C is the original ball.

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