

Unit 10 Tomorrow's world

Compound nouns and expressions with *brain*

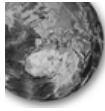
Learn the expressions

1 In this unit, you talked about developments in technology and the “brainpower” of scientists. Let’s look at some nouns and expressions with the word *brain*. Read the sentences. Try to guess the meaning of the words and expressions in boldface. Circle *a* or *b*.

- The Model T, an idea that revolutionized the car industry, was the **brainchild** of Henry Ford.
a) an idea that someone has thought of by him or herself
b) an idea that is constantly in someone’s mind
- “Looking Through the Green Glass Door” is my favorite **brainteaser**. It took me a week to figure it out.
a) a stimulating picture b) a difficult problem or puzzle
- The government must find a way to stop the **brain drain** in our country. What can we do to encourage more of our professionals to stay?
a) a situation in which well-educated people move to other countries for better opportunities
b) a situation in which very intelligent people decide to take over the country
- I’ve used all my **brainpower** on this project. I haven’t thought about anything else for weeks.
a) mental ability b) physical energy
- Pablo is really a **brain**. After becoming a lawyer, he decided to go to medical school.
a) someone who often changes his or her mind b) someone who is very intelligent
- I’ve just had a **brainstorm**. Instead of cleaning the house today, let’s go to the beach!
a) a cloudy mental image b) a sudden great idea
- Susan **racked her brain** and finally remembered why Terry looked so familiar: The two of them had gone to the same high school.
a) thought very hard b) scratched her head
- I don’t trust politicians who try to **brainwash** me into believing they’re the only hope for the country.
a) give someone clean ideas b) make someone believe something
- I’m looking for a book that won’t **tax my brain**. After a tough week at work, I really want to read something light and fun.
a) require a lot of thinking b) be hard to find
- My decision to change jobs was a **no-brainer**. My new job pays me twice my old salary.
a) a very bad choice b) easy to do or understand

Answer Key

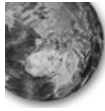
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|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. a | 2. b | 3. a | 4. a | 5. b |
| 6. b | 7. a | 8. b | 9. a | 10. b |



Use the expressions

2 Read each situation and choose the appropriate response or follow-up for each of the sentences with the word *brain*.

1. Rachel is such a brain.
 - a) It's no surprise that she's the head of the physics department.
 - b) It's hard to believe that she finished university in just three years.
2. Brain drain is a serious problem in many developing nations.
 - a) There has to be a way to encourage people to believe in themselves.
 - b) Governments and private industry should work together to keep qualified people in the country.
3. I think our history teacher is trying to brainwash us. She just wants us to vote for the Green Party.
 - a) I don't think so. She really wants us to know that the Green Party is best for the country.
 - b) I don't think so. She's just trying to explain the different choices that we have.
4. This crossword puzzle is a no-brainer.
 - a) Yeah, really. My four-year old nephew could complete it.
 - b) Yes, it is. I'm having a really difficult time with it.
5. A New Year's Eve party for 100 people at our house? Whose brainchild is this?
 - a) We haven't made up our mind yet.
 - b) The idea is all mine. Brilliant, isn't it?
6. This income tax form has been taxing my brain for two weeks.
 - a) I'm glad you're enjoying it.
 - b) Well, you always liked a good mental challenge.
7. Lisa Evans! That's who she is. Wow, I had to rack my brain to remember her name.
 - a) I guess you hadn't seen her for a long time.
 - b) I guess you knew her really well.
8. Ralph works very hard as an accountant all week. On weekends, he likes to use as little brainpower as possible.
 - a) That explains why he spends his Sundays relaxing and watching TV.
 - b) That's why he plays chess and reads technical journals on Sundays.
9. How are we going to finish this proposal? If one of us doesn't have a brainstorm, we'll be here all night.
 - a) Don't blame me. I've had a lot of good ideas today. It's not my fault you haven't liked them.
 - b) That's great. We've finally finished it. Let's go home.
10. Are you trying that Rubik's Cube again? Why do you waste your time on those brainteasers?
 - a) Because I love spending time with intelligent people.
 - b) They're fun! And maybe I'll actually solve one someday.



Make the expressions your own

3 Choose one question and answer it with information about yourself. Give details and examples in your answer.

1. Do you know someone who is a real brain? Describe him or her. What do you like or dislike about this person?
2. Have you ever had a brainchild? Describe it. What did other people think of your idea?
3. Has someone ever tried to brainwash you into doing or believing something? Describe the situation. How did you react?