
CAE reading – Scanning for information

Read paragraphs A though I look for the words that answer questions 1 through 13

ANGLO-INDIAN ETYMOLOGY

A. Gingham

This is a kind of stuff, defined in the Draper's Dictionary as being made from cotton yarn dyed before being woven. The origin of this word is obscure, but it is likely that it originated in the Indian trade. Still, a Javanese dictionary gives *ginggang*, a sort of striped East Indian cotton. The verb *ginggang* in Javanese means "to separate, to go away" but this throws no light on the matter, nor can we connect the cloth with that of the name of a place on the northern coast of Sumatra. On the other hand, the Eastern derivation of the name has been entirely rejected. The right explanation is simply that *gingham* is an old English spelling of a town in Brittany, *Guingamp*, where linen was once manufactured.

B. Bungalow

The most usual class of house that was occupied by Europeans in the interior of India, being on one storey, and covered by a pyramidal roof, which in the normal bungalow is of thatch, but may be of tiles without impairing its title to be called a bungalow. In reference to the style of house, bungalow is sometimes used in contradistinction to the (usually more pretentious) *pukka* house; by which latter term is implied a masonry house with a terraced roof. A bungalow may be a small building of the type which we have described, but of temporary material, in a garden. The term has been adopted by Europeans generally in Ceylon and China. The word derives from *bangla*, which is probably from the place *Banga* in Bengal. It is to be remembered that in Hindustan proper the adjective, of or belonging to Bengal, is constantly pronounced as *bangala* or *bangla*. The probability is that when Europeans started to build houses of this character in Behar and Upper India, these were called *Bangla* or "Bengal-fashion" houses.

C. Calico

This cotton cloth, of a reasonably fine texture, occurs in the 17th century in the form *calicut*. The word may have come into English through the French *calicot*, which in turn comes from *Calicut*, which in the Middle Ages was the chief city and one of the ports of Malabar. The fine cotton material of the Malabar coast was mentioned by Marco Polo. The cotton itself seems to have been brought from the hinterland as Malabar cotton, ripening during the rains, is not usable.

D. Pyjamas

This word derives from the Hindi *pae-jama*, literally translated as "leg-clothing", a pair of loose drawers, tied round the waist. Such a garment was worn by Sikh men and by Moslems of both sexes. It was adopted by Europeans as comfortable casual clothing and as night attire. It is probable that the clothing and the word came into English usage from the Portuguese. Originally, pyjamas sometimes had feet sewn into them and when a Jermyn St tailor was asked why, he replied, "I believe, sir, it is because of the white ants." And as a traveller remarked in 1881, "The rest of our attire consisted of that particularly light and airy white flannel garment, known throughout India as a pyjama suit."

E. Chintz

This, a printed or spotted cotton cloth, is called *chint* in Hindi, but appears to stem from the Sanskrit, *chitra*, meaning variegated or speckled. The French form of the word is *chite*, which has suggested the English sheet being of the same origin. But *chite* is apparently of Indian origin, whilst *sheet* is much older than the Portuguese communication with India. The manufacture and export of chintzes from India to Europe has now ceased. However, in Java and Sumatra, chintzes of a very peculiar kind of marbled pattern are still manufactured under the name of *batik*.

F. Veranda

This, referring to an open pillared gallery round a house, is one of the very perplexing words for which at least two origins may be maintained, both with equal plausibility. One group consider it to be of Sanskrit origin, barandah, meaning a portico. However, others point out that verandah with the meaning in question does not belong to the older Sanskrit, but is found only in comparatively modern works. That the word as used in England and France was brought by the English from India need not be doubted. But either in the same sense, or in one closely analogous, it seems to have existed quite independently in both Spanish and Portuguese. The suspicion must be that the word was taken to India by the Portuguese and thence re-exported by the English to northern Europe.

G. Cheroot

This is a cigar, but the term has been appropriated especially to cigars truncated at both ends, as Indian cigars always were in the old days. The word is Tamil, shurutu, translated as a roll of tobacco. In the south, cheroots were chiefly made at Trichinopoly and were consequently known as Trichies. Grose, in around 1760, speaking of Bombay, whilst describing the cheroot does not use that word, but another, buncus, which is now entirely obsolete.

H. Thug

The word is found in Sanskrit and in Hindi where it means a cheat and a swindler, but during the 19th century is acquired a more specific meaning, referring to robbers of a particular type who formed a gang and pretended to be travellers, perhaps on business or on a pilgrimage. They would join other travellers on the road, befriend them and then, given a suitable opportunity, would strangle them, plunder them and bury their bodies. The proper name for such people was phansigar, from the word phansi, meaning "a noose", because they would throw a slip-knot around the necks of their victims.

I. Curry

Curry consists of meat, fish, fruit or vegetables, cooked with a quantity of bruised spices and turmeric. A little of this gives flavour to a large mess of rice. The word is Tamil in origin, kari, meaning "sauce". It is possible, however, that the kind of curry found in restaurants is not of purely Indian origin, but has come down to us from the spiced cookery of medieval Europe and Western Asia. There is, indeed, no room for doubt that the capsicum or red pepper was introduced into India by the Portuguese. The Sanskrit books of cookery, which cannot be of any considerable antiquity, contain many recipes for curry without this ingredient.

Which "Indian" word(s)

is more likely to be Portuguese than Indian in origin? 1)

refers to coloured cloth? 2) 3)

is in origin more north-western European than Indian? 4)

derive from the name of a place in India? 5) 6)

refers to something which is not, strictly speaking, properly Indian? 7)

has been confused with a French equivalent? 8)

came from Tamil? 9) 10)

referred to a covering for the legs? 11)

came into English from French? 12)

became more precise in its meaning? 13)

ANSWERS

1. F

2/3. A, E any order

4. A

5/6. B, C any order

7. I

8. E

9/10. G, I any order

11. D

12. C

13. H