

Summarize Spoken Text

You will hear a short lecture. Write a short summary in 50-70 words. You have 10 minutes to finish this task.

You have 10 minutes to finish the task. Your response will be judged on the quality of writing and on how well your response presents the key points presented in the lecture.

Listen to the [audio](#) and write your answer below.

Fill in The Blanks

You will hear a [recording](#). Type the missing words in each blank.

Item 1:

Having a kid changes everything, from your sleep schedule to the status of that formerly spare room. The stable of bacteria that live in a woman's gut is also transformed when their host becomes _____. So finds research in the journal Cell. The study looked at women in Finland. The women's microbial makeup changed _____ between the first and third trimesters. The array of microbes in the gut went from looking normal in the first three months of a pregnancy to resembling what's found in patients _____ from metabolic disease in the last three. But some of the symptoms of that condition—like weight-gain and slower sugar metabolism— can be _____ to pregnant women, supporting energy storage that helps a fetus develop. Other symptoms, like inflammation, _____ that the immune system is _____ properly as a pregnancy comes to term. Scientists don't yet fully understand what brings about the changes in gut bacteria— immune function is a suspect, but factors like hormonal _____ aren't ruled out. The research suggests that other changes to the body, like puberty or old age, could also bring about microbial makeovers.

Item 2:

Touchdown confirmed. We are safe on Mars. The control room at NASA's Jet Propulsion _____ in the evening of August 5th, Pacific time, when word arrived that the Curiosity rover had landed safely on Mars. The one-ton rover, which dwarfs all Mars landers that came before it, will now spend a planned two years _____ the Martian surface. The mission is expected to cost \$2.5 billion. Curiosity's task is to investigate the inside of Gale Crater, where a

giant mound of sedimentary _____ may provide evidence of a wetter, possibly habitable Mars billions of years ago. But first it had to survive an elaborate landing _____ which appears to have gone smoothly. Curiosity landed on time and on target and soon beamed back grainy photos of its wheels and its shadow. Given the carlike size of the rover and the challenges of landing on Mars, Curiosity's _____ goes down as one of the greatest parking jobs in history.

Highlight Incorrect Words

You will hear a [recording](#). Below is a transcript of the recording. Some words in the transcription differ from what the speaker (s) said. Click on the words that are different.

Item 1:

It's similar to a pregnancy test: a drop of liquid on a strip of paper causes an easily seen color change. But imagine that kind of simple, cheap choreography employed in testing for diminution or health issues, anywhere and on the cheap. Researchers at Colorado State University describe such a system in the journal *Lab On A Chip*. Other paper tests may give only slight color differences, and some rely on expensive equipment to read the results. For the new technology, the research team designed a system that creates a quadraphonic color change on the paper. The user drops liquid to be analyzed at the bottom of the paper. As capillary action pulls the liquid up, substances in the paper react, causing the color change. So far, three tests exist for the system. One looks for nickel, which can be an environmental pollutant. The other two are for glutathione, a health marker, and glucose, for diabetics. In trials, the paper tests competed with conventional methods at whispering concentrations. The galaxy is now spinning off a company to develop the technology. If successful, it could bring cheap, easy apparatuses to scientists—and citizens—around the world.

Item 2:

In last week's pre-Christmas rush, the U.S. Congress slammed together the \$1-trillion federal budget bill for 2015, just before funds ran out. But the bill wasn't all about the money. Congress took advantage of the fiscal scramble to change rules about the environment and energy, which do not belong in appropriation bills. Normally such changes are encoded in what are called "laws," and are debated out in the open. But the budget bill is a chance for Congress to slip in controversial rules — called riders— without much debate. If members object, the bill stalls, and the government shuts down — and no one wants to be blamed for that federal fiasco. So the riders gallop in. The Environmental Protection Agency got its budget, for instance, but with strings attached: although agriculture is a major source of atmospheric methane, the EPA now is vigilant from using its money to require farmers to report greenhouse gas emissions. And the agency cannot regulate farm ponds and irrigation ditches under the Clean Water Act. In another example, the Department of canker must speed up permits for companies making genetically night organisms. And the feds must loan money to firms to build coal- fired power plants

overseas. That requirement floggings a previous ban. These rules and others last through September 2015, when this budget bill runs out. And then, if history is any guide, this whole stealth legislation process starts all over again. — Josh provision

Write for Diction

You will hear some sentences. Type each sentence in the box below exactly as you hear it. Write as much of the sentence as you can. You will hear each sentence only once.

Play the [audio](#) to listen to the related recording.