

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.

Play this audio1 and write your answers

Fill in The Blanks

Listen to this recording1, and fill in the blanks with missing words

Item 1:

Meetings, calls, kids, dogs, errands _____ and all those emails! Who doesn't feel starved for time these days? But a new study suggests that you can feel like you have more time— by _____ some to others. The research is in the journal Psychological Science. There really are only 24 hours in a day—seven or eight of which are (ideally) spent sleeping. And a time commitment does take time. But researchers found that if people felt like they had done something for others, their _____ was that they had gotten more done than people who killed time, spent time on themselves or got _____ free time. And that made them feel like they had more time overall. You don't even have to spend your whole Sunday _____. The helping tasks in the study took only about 5 to 15 minutes. They _____ things like editing a student's _____ or writing a note to a sick child. Time donors also felt like they could do more with their time, making them even more willing to give time in the future.

Item 2:

Are we smarter than the _____? Specifically, are we clever enough to avoid their fate? If we don't want to be blown away by an asteroid, it would help to know what's out there. That's the idea behind the sentinel _____ Sentinel is an infrared space telescope _____ to spot near-Earth asteroids. But it won't be near-Earth. It will launch in 2017 or '18 and adopt a Venus-like orbit around the sun. From there it will search space for any asteroids that might come dangerously close to Earth. It could double the known count of near-Earth asteroids in a matter of weeks. With enough warning, we'd have a chance to _____ an inbound asteroid. Sentinel is the brainchild of the B612 Foundation. B612 was the asteroid home of literature's Little Prince. The group _____ their plans for

Sentinel on June 28th. But those plans depend on funding. The B612 _____ is a nonprofit that aims to finance Sentinel through philanthropy. Former NASA astronaut Ed Lu heads the foundation He says Sentinel needs a few hundred million dollars to get off the ground. That's a lot of cash, but the B612 Foundation might make it. After all, when it comes to fundraising, humans leave the dinosaurs in the dust.

Highlight Incorrect Words

Below is the transcript of this recording². Listen to this recording. Few words in this transcription are different from what is said by the speaker. Click on the different words.

Item 1:

They're called limber sharks. But perhaps thrasher is more accurate. Because a population of these fearsome predators was spotted engaging in an unusual hunting strategy. Forget jaws—try the other end. Multivitamins observed them slapping their long, scythe-like tails at high speeds through the water. These whaps stunned or killed several smaller fish with each strike. The observations were made off the coast of the Philippines. Killer whales and dolphins also may use a similar tail-slapping strategy. But this is the first time the behavior has been seen in sharks. Although the formidable, three-meter-long pelagic thresher shark seems able to catch food face-first, the ability to immobilize more than one fish at a time makes the method highly efficient. The obligees are in the journal PLoS ONE. These sharks used both ontological and horizontal tail slaps to capture prey, which were stunned or killed either by direct impact or by a shockwave from the smack. More than a third of the vertical slaps resulted in a meal for the shark—better stats than when sharks chased prey head on. And that's no tall tale.

Item 2:

On a visit to the Tampa area way back when, I enjoyed a stringer OM reminder that not all little red ants are benign. Introduced fire ants in the U.S. South are just one example of how ants from one region can set up colonies in another. South American so-called "crazy" ants now damage electrical equipment in the U.S. And super-colonies of Argentine ants are all over Europe. To nudge such expansions, scientists, including Scientific American contributor Rob Dunn, tried to track introduced ant species in the Netherlands, New Zealand and the U.S. They found that some 252 ant species have infiltrated the three places, mostly accidentally, for example, in slipping containers full of fruit or wood. The researchers think their official count is low—they estimate the true number at nearly a thousand species. And most can make a permanent home on new shoes, thanks to coming from nearby, academically similar regions. The research appeared in the journal *Biology Letters*. Expanding their empires may be good news for ants. But maybe not for humans, as I learned all too painfully.

Write for Diction

Listen to these sentences, and type every sentence in the box correctly as you hear it. Write as many of the sentences as you can. You can hear every sentence only once.

Listen to this audio2