Paired Texts Vocabulary

“The Great Stink”

1. **epidemic** (ep-ih-DEM-ik) *noun*; An epidemic is a rapid outbreak of disease, when the disease spreads quickly and affects many people at the same time. If a few people in your town get the flu, that is not an epidemic. But if hundreds of people in your town get the flu in the same week, that is an epidemic.

2. **fertilizer** (FUR-tl-ahy-zer) *noun*; The adjective **fertile** (FUR-tl) is used to describe land that is able to support the growth of many plants or crops. Fertilizer is a substance that is added to soil, such as manure or a chemical mixture, to make the soil more fertile—to give it any nutrients it needs to help plants grow better.

3. **intricate** (IN-trih-kit) *adjective*; Something that is intricate is very complicated or detailed. A car engine has an intricate design, with many parts that are connected in complex ways. A mystery novel with an intricate plot might be difficult to follow at first.

4. **putrid** (PYOO-trid) *adjective*; *Putrid* means “rotting and giving off an awful smell.” It can also mean “extremely horrible or evil.”

5. **treatment plant** (TREET-muhnt plant) *noun*; A treatment plant is a facility where wastewater (water that has been used, such as in a sink, shower, or toilet) is cleaned so that it is not harmful to the environment or people’s health.

   Here’s how it works: Water from sinks, showers, toilets, etc., flows underground through a system of pipes to the treatment plant. At the treatment plant, the water goes through many stages of cleaning—screens and filters might remove solid waste, while a chemical like chlorine might be used to kill bacteria. By the end of the treatment, water is clean enough to be reused or safely discharged into a stream or river.
“Toilets of the Future”

1. **conventional (kuhn-VEN-shuh-nl)** *adjective*; Something that is conventional is common, ordinary, and follows the usual or widely accepted way of doing things. A conventional wedding might take place in a church or temple with everyone wearing fancy clothes. An unconventional wedding might take place underwater with everyone wearing scuba gear.

2. **developing country (dih-VEL-uh-ping KUHN-tree)** *noun*; A developing country is one in which most citizens are poor and work as farmers, and where there are not a lot of factories and other businesses to produce or provide products and services. Poor sanitation, hunger, and a lack of access to education are among the challenges people in developing countries often face.

3. **organic (awr-GAN-ik)** *adjective*; As it is used in the article, *organic* means “relating to or coming from living things.” Decaying leaves, cow manure, and rotting vegetables are all examples of organic matter.

    *Organic* can also mean “grown or made without the use of artificial chemicals.” At the grocery store, for example, you might see that some apples are labeled as organic. This means that no pesticides or chemical fertilizers were used to grow them.

**Directions:** Below or on the back of this page, list any other words from the articles whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence.
Paired Texts Vocabulary Practice

**Directions:** Choose the best answer to each question below.

1. **Which of these books is about an epidemic?**
   - A. *Yellow Fever: The story of how a disease spread by mosquitoes sickened an entire city in 1793*
   - B. *Food Safety in the Kitchen: Understanding bacteria and how to prevent food poisoning*

2. **Which person is more likely to use fertilizer in their line of work?**
   - A. a farmer
   - B. a car mechanic

3. **Which item is organic?**
   - A. a banana peel
   - B. a plastic bag

4. **Which would most people agree has a putrid smell?**
   - A. roses in bloom
   - B. rotting fish

5. **Which puzzle is intricate?**
   - A. one with 15 pieces that teaches toddlers basic shapes
   - B. one with 1,000 pieces that creates a dazzling, complex, and colorful pattern

**Directions:** Briefly respond to each prompt.

6. **Describe a conventional way that you might greet someone.**

7. **Some waste bins are for organic material only. What is an example of something you could put in this type of bin?**

8. **Why are water treatment plants important?**

9. **If you find a putrid sandwich at the bottom of your locker, what should you do with it?**

10. **Is the United States a developing country? Explain.**