**Non- Fictional Narration:**

**Text One:**

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The beginnings of English dictionaries date from 1604 when the first 'hard-word dictionary' was published it contained fewer than 3000 difficult words, which were explained by easier ones. An important principle was introduced: that of listing words in alphabetical order (A-Z).

The first major dictionary was the Universal Etymological English Dictionary by Nathaniel Bailey, which was published in 1721. (Etymology is the study of the origin and history of words and their meanings.) This one volume contained about 40,000 words.

One of the great landmarks in the history of dictionaries was the publication in 1755 of A Dictionary of the English Language by Samuel Johnson. He built on the work of Bailey and illustrated the use of words by including about 100,000 quotations from well-known authors from the 16th century onwards. Perhaps his most famous definition is that of 'oats': 'A grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland **supports the people**.'

In America, in 1828. Noah Webster published An American Dictionary of the English Language. Its two volumes consisted of about 70,000 words and included scientific terms. Webster included American

Probably the most important development in the history of dictionaries was the production of The Oxford English Dictionary. Dr James Murray started to edit the enormous work in 1879, and the first part was published in 1884: A - ANT, in 352 pages! It took another 44 years to complete the dictionary, in 125 parts. The final work was published in 1928 in 12 volumes. covering 15,487 pages which included nearly 500,000 words.

Academic Writing Course – Study skills in English, R.R. Jordan

Answer the following questions according to the text:

1. What does the text deal with?
2. Why do you think made the definition of 'oat' the most famous?
3. What do the underlined words refer to in the text?
4. Compare this text to that by Agatha Christie.
5. What does the bold-typed expression in the text mean?
6. Account for sentence variety in the above text.

Text Two:

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The word 'university' comes from the Latin word 'universitas' meaning 'the whole'. Later, in Latin legal language 'universitas' meant 'a society, guild or corporation'. Thus, in mediaeval academic use the word meant an association of teachers and scholars. The modern definition of a university is 'an institution that teaches and examines students in many branches of advanced learning, awarding degrees and providing facilities for academic research'.

The origins of universities can be traced back to the Middle Ages, especially the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. In the early twelfth century, long before universities were organised in the modern sense, students gathered together for higher studies at certain centres of learning. The earliest centres in Europe were at Bologna in Italy, for law, founded in 1088; Salerno in Italy, for medicine; and Paris, France, for philosophy and theology, founded in 1150. Other early ones in Europe were at Prague, Czechoslovakia, founded in 1348; Vienna, Austria, founded in 1365; and Heidelberg, Germany, founded in 1386.

The first universities in England were established at Oxford in 1185 and at Cambridge in 1209. The first Scottish university was founded at St Andrews in 1412. By comparison, the oldest universities in the USA are at Harvard, founded in 1636, and Yale, established in 1701.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, three more universities were founded in Scotland: at Glasgow in 1415, Aberdeen in 1494, and Edinburgh in 1582. The next English university to be founded was not until the nineteenth century - London, in 1836. This was followed, later in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, by the foundation of several civic universities. These had developed from provincial colleges which were mainly situated in industrial areas. Manchester, for example, received its charter in 1880, and Birmingham in 1900. In addition, the federal University of Wales was established in 1893 comprising three colleges.

Several other civic universities were founded in the 1940s and 1950s, such as Nottingham in 1948, Southampton in 1954 and Exeter in 1957. However, it was in the 1960s that the largest single expansion of higher education took place in Britain. This expansion took three basic forms: existing universities were enlarged; new universities were developed from existing colleges; and seven completely new universities were founded, mostly away from town centres and in the countryside, e.g. Warwick, 1965. The Open University was founded in 1969: it is non-residential and uses correspondence courses combined with TV and radio broadcasts.

A big development in recent years was an Education Act in 1992 that allowed former polytechnics to become universities. Before the Act there were 47 universities in the UK; after the Act there were 86 universities.

All British universities receive some government funding, except Buckingham, which is Britain's only independent university, founded in 1983. This runs two-year courses instead of the usual three years.

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**Task One: Answer the following questions according to the text:**

1. What does the above text deal with?
2. Give the main idea of each paragraph.
3. Give a suitable title to the passage.
4. What common points can you find between this text and that dealing with dictionaries?

**Task Two:** Below is a summary of the passage in sentences which are given in the wrong order. Put the sentences in the correct order.

1. The quarter of a century from 1940 to 1965 was the period when there was a big increase in the number of universities in Britain.
2. The Open University was founded in 1969.
3. The oldest American university was founded in the seventeenth century.
4. One of the original meanings of 'university' was an association of teachers and students.
5. There is one private university in Britain: it was established in 1983.
6. After three more Scottish universities were established in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the next major developments were not until the foundation of a number of civic universities in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.
7. Oxford and Cambridge are the oldest English universities.
8. Former polytechnics became universities in and after 1992.
9. The first Scottish university was established in the early fifteenth century.
10. There were gatherings of students at centres of learning in Europe between the twelfth and fourteenth centuries.