ENGLISH LEARNING FOR CURIOUS MINDS



Episode #229
Doomsday Cults
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Transcript....3
Key vocabulary....22
Language spotlight....29
Quiz....31
Listening Comprehension Multiple Choice Questions....31
True or False....32
Fill in the Blanks....33
Vocabulary Practice....33
Answers....35

Transcript

[00:00:00] Hello, hello hello, and welcome to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:00:11] The show where you can listen to fascinating stories, and learn weird and wonderful things about the world at the same time as improving your English.

[00:00:21] I'm Alastair Budge, and today we are going to be talking about **Doomsday**[1] Cults, times when a **charismatic**[2] person has managed to **convince**[3] large groups of people that the world is about to end, or at least **plunge**[4] into chaos.

[00:00:36] And as a result, tragic things have happened.

[00:00:40] I have to warn you, this episode will have plenty of slightly **unpleasant**[5] stories.

[00:00:45] There will be sex, drugs, suicide and murder, and plenty of people claiming that the world is about to end.

[00:00:54] OK, you've had your warning. If you're ready for it, let's get started.

[00:01:00] Let's first start with a quick definition.

[1] connected with the end of the world

[2] having a powerful charm that makes people admire and follow them

[3] make people believe something; persuade

[4] suddenly fall

[5] upsetting or disturbing; not nice to hear

[00:01:04] What is a cult?

[00:01:07] If you look it up in a dictionary you will find definitions such as “a small religious group that is not part of a larger and more accepted religion and that has beliefs regarded by many people as extreme or dangerous”.

[00:01:23] For a cult to be a cult, and not simply a “belief”, it really needs to have three things:

[00:01:30] Firstly, it needs to be relatively small.

[00:01:34] Once a cult becomes too large, well, it becomes **mainstream**[6], it becomes normalised, and it isn’t really a cult at all any more. There are plenty of religions that started out being viewed as dangerous cults, and as they grew they stopped being referred to as cults.

[00:01:54] And secondly, for a group to be considered to be a cult, the beliefs they hold need to be considered dangerous or extreme by **mainstream** society. A cult needs to pose a danger, either to normal society or to itself, to its members.

[00:02:13] And in every example we’ll learn about today, there was plenty of danger, and in the next twenty minutes we will step over plenty of dead bodies.

[00:02:23] Now, there’s one more thing that almost every cult has, and without which it’s hard for a cult to really get started.

[6] considered normal and accepted by most people

[00:02:32] A **charismatic** leader.

[00:02:34] If you've listened to our episodes on Scientology and Mormonism, you will remember the stories of how Joseph Smith and L. Ron Hubbard were incredibly **charismatic** men and managed to encourage others to follow them.

[00:02:51] The **doomsday** cults we'll learn about today have similarly **charismatic** leaders, men who may well have been **insane**[7] and in some cases **horrendously**[8] evil, but certainly men with the ability to persuade others to follow them, to do what they said, which meant killing **on their behalf**[9], and even killing themselves for them.

[00:03:15] And when you add in the **doomsday** element, the idea that the end of the world is **imminent**[10], people can clearly be persuaded to do all sorts of slightly unusual things.

[00:03:30] So, let's just get right into it and **kick off**[11] with our first **doomsday** cult, the Branch Davidians.

[00:03:39] This cult had been active since the 1930s, and was based in a large **compound**[12] called New Mount Carmel in Texas, in the United States.

[7] seriously mentally ill; mad

[8] shockingly; extremely

[9] for them, because they wanted it

[10] about to happen very soon

[11] start; begin

[12] an area with buildings, surrounded by a fence or wall

[00:03:50] The hundred or so members of the cult lived in that **compound** where they were waiting for the Second Coming, they believed that Jesus Christ would come to Earth and they needed to get ready for it.

[00:04:03] For the first fifty years or so of its existence, nobody knew much about it, but one day in 1993 that all changed.

[00:04:15] The cult had been taken over by a 28-year-old man named Vernon Wayne Howell.

[00:04:22] Howell changed his name to David Koresh, to suggest that he was a **descendant**[13] of both King David of Israel and the Persian king Cyrus the Great, and he most certainly suffered from **delusions of grandeur**[14].

[00:04:38] He declared that he was the **messiah**[15], and that all women living in the **compound** were his spiritual wives.

[00:04:47] If you think this sounds **harmless**[16] and innocent, think again.

[00:04:52] Koresh forced young girls to **bear his children**[17], and essentially turned the entire cult into his own private **hareem**[18].

[13] a person from a later generation of someone's family

[14] false beliefs that he was far more important than he really was

[15] a person sent by God to save the world

[16] safe; not causing any damage or hurt

[17] give birth to babies that he was the father of

[18] a group of women kept for one man's sexual pleasure

[00:05:03] It wasn't to be the sex abuse that brought the Branch Davidians to the public eye though.

[00:05:09] Instead, the American authorities suspected Koresh of **stockpiling**[19] illegal weapons in the **compound**, of buying guns illegally, in preparation for the Second Coming and all of the chaos that would **ensue**[20].

[00:05:25] The police certainly had reason to believe that the Branch Davidians were **stockpiling** weapons because, well, Koresh had publicly stated that God had told him to do so.

[00:05:36] In 1989, shortly after taking control of the cult, he released a piece of audio in which he revealed firstly that God had told him to sleep with all of the women in the cult, and that all of the other men in the cult should be **celibate**[21].

[00:05:54] And, importantly, that God had also told him to start building an army to prepare for the Second Coming and the **Apocalypse**[22].

[00:06:04] There was also plenty of evidence that Koresh and his followers were **stockpiling** and modifying weapons - neighbours had heard machine guns **going off**[23],

[19] collecting and storing large amounts of

[20] happen as a result

[21] not having sex with anyone

[22] the final destruction of the world, as described in the Bible

[23] firing; being shot

delivery people had seen guards with weapons, it seemed pretty clear what was going on.

[00:06:21] So, the US authorities, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms to be precise, decided to go and have a look for themselves.

[00:06:31] But they weren't prepared for what was to come.

[00:06:35] When the authorities raided the compound on February 28th of 1993, the Branch Davidians fought back. 4 government agents were shot and killed, and 6 Branch Davidians lost their lives in the **ensuing**[24] firefight.

[00:06:53] That wasn't it though.

[00:06:55] There was a **standoff**[25], and the entire **compound** was **under siege**[26] for the next 51 days.

[00:07:03] It all ended when the FBI launched a **tear gas**[27] attack on the compound, there was a huge fire, and 76 members of the cult, including its leader, David Koresh, **perished**[28].

[00:07:18] Strangely enough, the Branch Davidians are still active today, they still have a **compound** in the same area of Texas, but they are keeping a low profile, certainly not publicly claiming that they are building an army and preparing for the Second Coming.

[00:07:36] Our second **doomsday** cult is The People's Temple.

[24] following, as a result

[25] a situation in which neither side would give way

[26] surrounded by armed forces trying to make those inside surrender

[27] a gas that hurts the eyes and makes people cry, used by police

[28] died in a terrible way

[00:07:41] It might have a fairly innocent-sounding name, but it has gone down in history as one of the most destructive cults ever, and resulted in the **needless**[29] loss of life of almost a thousand people.

[00:07:55] It all started with a young, **charismatic** American, a man named Jim Jones.

[00:08:02] In 1955 he founded "The People's Temple", which was a Christian-socialist organisation, meaning a group whose beliefs came in part from Christianity, and in part from communist and socialist thought.

[00:08:18] That was the theory at least.

[00:08:21] In practice, what being part of The People's Temple meant was that all followers of The People's Temple had to give all of their property, income and possessions to Jones and the cult.

[00:08:34] Much like the other stories we'll hear today, Jones also required female members of the cult to **be willing to**[30] turn over not just their material possessions but also their bodies to him.

[00:08:48] For the first 15 years or so of the cult's existence, it had bases in California, but after a growing **backlash**[31] against it, Jones relocated the entire cult to a remote

[29] unnecessary and avoidable

[30] be ready and agree to

[31] a strong negative public reaction

settlement in the jungle of Guyana, the small South American country to the east of Venezuela.

[00:09:09] Approximately 1,000 followers came with him, moving their entire lives from the United States to the Guyana jungle, which gives you some idea of quite how much power he held over his followers.

[00:09:24] This settlement was to be a jungle **utopia**[32], a communist Christian heaven where believers could live a true, honest life.

[00:09:35] So, what happened next?

[00:09:37] Well, it didn't last for long.

[00:09:40] A US **Congressman**[33] named Leo Ryan came to investigate in 1978, after receiving **pleas**[34] from **concerned**[35] relatives of members of the cult. There were now almost a thousand people living in this **compound** in the Guyana jungle, people who had **cut off**[36] all contact with the outside world, and this **congressman** came down to see what was actually going on.

[32] a perfect place where everyone is happy

[33] a man elected to the US national law-making body

[34] urgent, emotional requests for help

[35] worried

[36] ended completely

[00:10:07] The **congressman** arrived in the Guyana jungle, **checked out**[37] the **compound**, and as he was on the plane about to leave back to the United States he was murdered with five of his party.

[00:10:21] Meanwhile, back at the **compound** Jones had convinced all of his followers that they were about to be taken from the **compound** and converted to fascism, a **fate**[38] worse than death for anyone **subscribing**[39] to this Communist Christian ideology.

[00:10:40] So, Jones convinced his followers to **line up**[40], one by one, and drink poison, to kill themselves.

[00:10:49] Men, women, children. 918 people in total died at Jonestown after drinking a soft drink called “Flavor Aid” which had been **laced with**[41] cyanide.

[00:11:03] This was, until the September 11th attacks, the single event that caused the largest loss of American lives in history.

[00:11:13] Mad, right?

[37] had a look at; inspected

[38] an outcome that happens to someone, especially a bad one

[39] giving support and belief

[40] stand one behind another; form a queue

[41] poisoned with

[00:11:15] It also **gave rise to**[42] an expression in English that you may have heard of, to "drink the Kool-aid".

[00:11:22] If you "drink the Kool-aid", it means you believe everything someone says, no matter whether it is right or not. This expression comes from the Jonestown Massacre, as this event has come to be known, even though it's not technically correct - the cult members didn't actually drink "Kool-aid", they drank something very similar called "Flavor Aid".

[00:11:47] For our next **doomsday** cult we actually move away from America and cross the Pacific to Japan.

[00:11:56] Although this is a **decidedly**[43] non-American cult, we will **encounter**[44] many familiar themes.

[00:12:03] A **charismatic** leader. A belief that the end of the world is **imminent**. Violence. And followers prepared to do anything the cult leader says.

[00:12:15] The **protagonist**[45] of this particular story is a man named Shoko Asahara.

[42] caused; led to the creation of

[43] very clearly; certainly

[44] come across; see

[45] the main character

[00:12:21] He was born in 1955, and when he was in his twenties he became interested in a wide variety of religions, everything from Buddhism to Christianity as well as Astrology, Taoism and yoga.

[00:12:37] Out of this he created his own belief system, which he called Aum Shinrikyo.

[00:12:44] **Surprise surprise**[46], he was the head and most important figure in Aum Shinrikyo. He said he was Jesus Christ and was the first truly **enlightened**[47] being since Buddha.

[00:12:56] Some big claims, right?

[00:12:59] In any case, Aum Shinrikyo was recognised as a real religion in Japan, and it soon started **amassing**[48] a relatively large following, with tens of thousands of members around the world, most of them in Japan and Russia.

[00:13:16] Part of Asahara's teaching was that the world was ending, that Armageddon was **imminent**.

[00:13:23] He believed that conflict between America and Japan was inevitable, it would result in a Third World War and the **subsequent**[49] end of the world.

[46] as you might have expected

[47] with complete spiritual understanding and wisdom

[48] gradually gathering; building up

[49] following; coming after it

[00:13:34] The only way to avoid this, and to achieve **salvation**[50] would be for people to give up everything and join Aum Shinrikyo.

[00:13:44] Anyone who didn't join the cult would be **doomed**[51] to **eternal**[52] hell unless they were killed by members of the cult.

[00:13:53] The cult became increasingly violent in the early 1990s, and then on March 20th, 1995, members of the cult went on to commit what would become, and still is for that matter, the most deadly terrorist attack in Japanese history.

[00:14:12] Members of the cult **boarded**[53] the Tokyo metro, the underground train network, and released the deadly chemical agent **sarin**[54].

[00:14:22] 14 people were killed and over a thousand injured.

[00:14:27] It's still not completely clear why they did it. One theory is that members thought that they were actually saving the souls of members of the public by killing them.

[00:14:38] Another theory is that they were trying to distract attention away from investigations into other crimes that had been committed by members of the cult.

[50] the saving of a person's soul from sin and hell

[51] certain to be sent

[52] lasting forever; without end

[53] got on

[54] a very poisonous gas that attacks the body's nerves

[00:14:48] And another theory is that they thought that this might be a way of triggering[55] the apocalypse and kick-starting the Armageddon[56] that they so fervently[57] believed was inevitable[58].

[00:15:02] In any case, the world didn't end, and launching a deadly terrorist attack might be a good way of distracting attention away from something else but it certainly isn't a good way of deflecting[59] attention away from you.

[00:15:18] In the aftermath[60] of the attack Shoko Asahara and other senior cult leaders were tracked down[61], arrested, and all either sentenced to lengthy prison sentences or executed.

[00:15:32] Now, doomsday cult number four, our last doomsday cult, is probably the most famous cult in the world, although at least in terms of the number of people who died, it's far from the most deadly.

[00:15:46] Charles Manson and the so-called "Manson Family".

[00:15:51] Indeed, there is probably no name more associated with the term cult leader than "Charles Manson".

[55] starting; causing to begin
[56] a final great battle that will end the world
[57] very strongly and passionately
[58] certain to happen; impossible to avoid
[59] turning or directing
[60] the period of time after a bad event
[61] found after a search

[00:15:59] Manson was a failed musician, who started his own cult in the late 1960s in California.

[00:16:07] Like the other characters we've come across in today's episode, he believed that he was the **Messiah**.

[00:16:14] His cult started simply as a group of friends engaging in a hippie life of drugs and open relationships, but by the late 1960s his views became more and more extreme, and his **delusions**[62] of his own **grandeur**[63] had continued to grow and grow.

[00:16:35] His followers numbered around 100, most of whom were middle-class women. Hallucinogenic drugs and sex were a common **feature**[64].

[00:16:46] There was a much darker side though. He had become obsessed with the idea that America was **on the cusp of**[65] a race war between the black and the white community, and that this was going to cause the end of the world.

[00:17:02] He believed that the black community was going to win this race war, and that when the war was won, the black community would need a white person to lead them, and Manson would be that man.

[62] strong false beliefs

[63] greatness and importance

[64] a typical part or characteristic

[65] very close to; about to have

[00:17:16] At the same time, Manson had been trying to break into Hollywood, he had been trying to make it as a singer.

[00:17:23] The problem was, he just really wasn't very good, and although he had managed to make friends with some famous musicians, such as Dennis Wilson, the drummer from the Beach Boys, Manson was continually rejected.

[00:17:39] As a result, Charles Manson wanted revenge on Hollywood, revenge on the people he believed had rejected him.

[00:17:48] He instructed his followers to go to the house that Roman Polanski and his actress wife, Sharon Tate, were renting, and to kill everyone they found there.

[00:18:00] Polanski wasn't there at the time, but Manson's followers brutally murdered the five people they found there, including the eight-and-a-half-month-pregnant Sharon Tate.

[00:18:12] The murderers weren't immediately caught, allowing them to kill again the following night, when they went out and murdered two more celebrities.

[00:18:22] These crimes shocked the nation.

[00:18:25] They were **brutal**[66], **unprovoked**[67], and committed in the heart of Hollywood.

[66] extremely violent and cruel

[67] not caused by anything the victims had done

[00:18:31] Charles Manson, **it turns out**[68], did not personally murder anyone, but the murders were all carried out on his orders. He forced his followers into committing these **heinous**[69] acts.

[00:18:45] And, of course, he paid the price, or at least he was sentenced to death.

[00:18:51] But he was never actually executed - his sentence was changed to life imprisonment, and he died in prison in 2017 at the age of 83.

[00:19:03] Now, we have evidently just **skimmed the surface**[70] of these stories, there is so much more to them than we've covered today.

[00:19:10] We could certainly have done an episode on each of these four **barbaric**[71] but fascinating **doomsday** cults. Maybe we'll do just that.

[00:19:19] In any case, the stories of these four cults show quite what people will believe, and what people can be forced to believe, and therefore forced to do.

[00:19:31] Equally interesting, and perhaps even more shocking, is to think about the **manipulative**[72], **insane** and **barbaric** behaviour of the leaders of these **doomsday** cults, to think about the men who **sought**[73] power, sex, and **adoration**[74] from their

[68] as was later discovered
[69] extremely evil and shocking
[70] looked only briefly at the most basic parts
[71] terribly cruel and savage
[72] using clever, unfair ways to control people
[73] tried to get
[74] deep love and worship

followers, only to force them to do horrible things either to themselves, to each other, or to innocent people who had nothing to do with the cult **whatsoever**[75].

[00:19:58] The four characters in our story certainly aren't the only **doomsday** cult leaders, they weren't the first and unfortunately they won't be the last.

[00:20:08] Perhaps if there's one thing we can take away from all this, it's that if a strange man claiming to be the **Messiah** offers you a glass of Kool-Aid, or should I say "Flavor Aid", it's probably time to **make a run for it**[76].

[00:20:25] OK then, that is it for this little look into our four **creepy**[77] **Doomsday** Cults.

[00:20:32] I hope you enjoyed it, and that it wasn't too difficult to listen to - in fact I left out a lot of the bloodiest parts, but if you are the sort of person who enjoys that kind of detail, well you can go and read up on it for yourself.

[00:20:47] As always, I would love to know what you thought of this episode.

[00:20:51] Do you know anyone, either directly or indirectly, who has ever been **caught up**[78] in a cult? I imagine you might not know anyone who was part of any of these four cults, but perhaps you might have a weird cult story that you would like to share.

[75] at all

[76] escape quickly; get away as fast as you can

[77] strange and frightening, making you feel uneasy

[78] involved, often without meaning to be

[00:21:07] Or are there other **chilling**[79] stories of cults from your country? Are there similar situations where someone has predicted the end of the world and used that as cover to do terrible things?

[00:21:19] I would love to know. The place for that is our community forum, which is at community.leonardoenglish.com.

[00:21:27] You've been listening to English Learning for Curious Minds, by Leonardo English.

[00:21:33] I'm Alastair Budge, you stay safe, and I'll catch you in the next episode.

[END OF EPISODE]

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[79] very frightening and disturbing

Key vocabulary

Word	Definition
Doomsday	connected with the end of the world
Charismatic	having a powerful charm that makes people admire and follow them
Convince	make people believe something; persuade
Plunge	suddenly fall
Unpleasant	upsetting or disturbing; not nice to hear
Mainstream	considered normal and accepted by most people
Insane	seriously mentally ill; mad
Horrendously	shockingly; extremely
On their behalf	for them, because they wanted it
Imminent	about to happen very soon

Kick off	start; begin
Compound	an area with buildings, surrounded by a fence or wall
Descendant	a person from a later generation of someone's family
Delusions of grandeur	false beliefs that he was far more important than he really was
Messiah	a person sent by God to save the world
Harmless	safe; not causing any damage or hurt
Bear his children	give birth to babies that he was the father of
Hareem	a group of women kept for one man's sexual pleasure
Stockpiling	collecting and storing large amounts of
Ensue	happen as a result
Celibate	not having sex with anyone
Apocalypse	the final destruction of the world, as described in the Bible

Going off	firing; being shot
Ensuing	following, as a result
Standoff	a situation in which neither side would give way
Under siege	surrounded by armed forces trying to make those inside surrender
Tear gas	a gas that hurts the eyes and makes people cry, used by police
Perished	died in a terrible way
Needless	unnecessary and avoidable
Be willing to	be ready and agree to
Backlash	a strong negative public reaction
Utopia	a perfect place where everyone is happy
Congressman	a man elected to the US national law-making body

Pleas	urgent, emotional requests for help
Concerned	worried
Cut off	ended completely
Checked out	had a look at; inspected
Fate	an outcome that happens to someone, especially a bad one
Subscribing	giving support and belief
Line up	stand one behind another; form a queue
Laced with	poisoned with
Gave rise to	caused; led to the creation of
Decidedly	very clearly; certainly
Encounter	come across; see
Protagonist	the main character

Surprise surprise	as you might have expected
Enlightened	with complete spiritual understanding and wisdom
Amassing	gradually gathering; building up
Subsequent	following; coming after it
Salvation	the saving of a person's soul from sin and hell
Doomed	certain to be sent
Eternal	lasting forever; without end
Boarded	got on
Sarin	a very poisonous gas that attacks the body's nerves
Triggering	starting; causing to begin
Armageddon	a final great battle that will end the world
Fervently	very strongly and passionately

Inevitable	certain to happen; impossible to avoid
Deflecting	turning or directing
Aftermath	the period of time after a bad event
Tracked down	found after a search
Delusions	strong false beliefs
Grandeur	greatness and importance
Feature	a typical part or characteristic
On the cusp of	very close to; about to have
Brutal	extremely violent and cruel
Unprovoked	not caused by anything the victims had done
It turns out	as was later discovered
Heinous	extremely evil and shocking

Skimmed the surface	looked only briefly at the most basic parts
Barbaric	terribly cruel and savage
Manipulative	using clever, unfair ways to control people
Sought	tried to get
Adoration	deep love and worship
Whatsoever	at all
Make a run for it	escape quickly; get away as fast as you can
Creepy	strange and frightening, making you feel uneasy
Caught up	involved, often without meaning to be
Chilling	very frightening and disturbing

Language spotlight

1. Delusions of grandeur

- **Meaning**: A false belief that you are much more important, powerful or talented than you really are.
- **Synonyms**: megalomania, an inflated ego, self-importance
- **Antonyms**: humility, modesty, low self-esteem
- **Examples**:
    - After one small promotion, Mark started acting as if he owned the company; he clearly has **delusions of grandeur**.
    - The young singer, who had **delusions of grandeur**, told everyone he would be more famous than the Beatles.

2. Give rise to

- **Meaning**: To cause something to happen or begin to exist.
- **Synonyms**: lead to, bring about, produce
- **Antonyms**: prevent, stop, put an end to
- **Examples**:
    - The plans for a new motorway **gave rise to** angry complaints from local residents.
    - Poor working conditions can **give rise to** serious health problems.

3. On the cusp of

- **Meaning**: Very close to the point at which something new or important happens.
- **Synonyms**: on the verge of, on the brink of, about to
- **Antonyms**: far from, nowhere near, a long way off
- **Examples**:
    - Scientists believe they are **on the cusp of** a major breakthrough in cancer treatment.
    - At seventeen, she was **on the cusp of** adulthood and couldn't wait to leave home.

4. Skim the surface

- **Meaning**: To deal with only the most basic or obvious parts of a subject, without going into detail.
- **Synonyms**: scratch the surface, touch on, deal with superficially
- **Antonyms**: go into depth, examine closely, explore thoroughly
- **Examples**:
    - This short course only **skims the surface** of Chinese history.
    - We've barely **skimmed the surface** of what this new software can do.

5. Make a run for it

- **Meaning**: To try to escape by suddenly running away.
- **Synonyms**: flee, bolt, escape
- **Antonyms**: stay put, stand your ground, give yourself up
- **Examples**:
    - When the shop alarm went off, the thief **made a run for it**.
    - The prisoners waited until the guards were asleep and then **made a run for it**.

Quiz

Listening Comprehension Multiple Choice Questions

1. According to Alastair, what happens when a cult becomes too large?

a) It usually splits into several smaller, rival groups

b) It is normally banned by the government of its country

c) It becomes normal and accepted, no longer really a cult

d) Its leader is normally replaced by a younger, stronger rival

2. Why did the US authorities become interested in the Branch Davidians?

a) They suspected the cult of collecting illegal weapons

b) Neighbours had reported the abuse of young girls

c) The cult had refused to pay taxes on its land

d) Its members had kidnapped a local police officer

3. Why did Jim Jones move the People's Temple from California to Guyana?

a) The government of Guyana had invited him to build there

b) The cult had run out of money in the United States

c) A US congressman had ordered the cult to leave the country

d) Opposition to the cult in California was growing stronger

4. What is one theory about why members of Aum Shinrikyo carried out the attack on the Tokyo metro?

a) They wanted revenge because the cult had been banned in Japan

b) They thought they were saving the souls of the people they killed

c) They hoped the attack would prevent a war between America and Japan

d) They were trying to force the release of their leader from prison

5. Why did Charles Manson want revenge on Hollywood?

a) A film studio had refused to make a film about his life

b) Sharon Tate had publicly insulted him and his followers

c) He had been rejected repeatedly while trying to become a singer

d) A Hollywood newspaper had mocked his claim to be the Messiah

True or False

6. The Branch Davidians cult was founded by David Koresh. (True/False)

7. Koresh said that all the other men in the cult should be celibate. (True/False)

8. Approximately 1,000 followers moved with Jim Jones to the jungle of Guyana. (True/False)

9. The members of the People's Temple died after drinking Kool-Aid laced with cyanide. (True/False)

10. Charles Manson was executed for the murders committed by his followers. (True/False)

Fill in the Blanks

11. He most certainly suffered from delusions of _____.

12. There was a standoff, and the entire compound was under _____ for the next 51 days.

13. 918 people in total died at Jonestown after drinking a soft drink called “Flavor Aid” which had been _____ with cyanide.

14. He had become obsessed with the idea that America was on the ____ of a race war between the black and the white community.

15. If a strange man claiming to be the Messiah offers you a glass of Kool-Aid, or should I say “Flavor Aid”, it’s probably time to make a ___ for it.

Vocabulary Practice

16. What does “**stockpiling**” mean in what the American authorities suspected Koresh of doing?

a) Collecting and storing large amounts of

b) Secretly selling to other groups

c) Burying in hidden places underground

d) Repairing and cleaning regularly

17. What does “**pleas**” mean in the reason why Leo Ryan came to investigate the cult?

a) Official complaints made to the police

b) Formal statements made in a court case

c) Letters thanking him for his work

d) Urgent, emotional requests for help

18. What does "**fervently**" mean in how Aum Shinrikyo's members believed in Armageddon?

a) Secretly and quietly

b) Very strongly and passionately

c) Only for a short time

d) Without really understanding

19. In the podcast, what does "**aftermath**" mean in the part about the Tokyo metro attack?

a) The period of planning before an event

b) The exact moment when an event happens

c) The period of time after a bad event

d) The official report written about an event

20. In the podcast, what does "**heinous**" mean when describing the acts of Manson's followers?

a) Extremely evil and shocking

b) Carefully planned in secret

c) Done in a hurry without thought

d) Carried out by a large group

Answers

1. c) It becomes normal and accepted, no longer really a cult
2. a) They suspected the cult of collecting illegal weapons
3. d) Opposition to the cult in California was growing stronger
4. b) They thought they were saving the souls of the people they killed
5. c) He had been rejected repeatedly while trying to become a singer
6. False
7. True
8. True
9. False
10. False
11. grandeur
12. siege
13. laced
14. cusp
15. run
16. a) Collecting and storing large amounts of
17. d) Urgent, emotional requests for help
18. b) Very strongly and passionately

19. c) The period of time after a bad event

20. a) Extremely evil and shocking