



**Vocabulary Worksheets**  
Understanding and Using English Grammar, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition  
**Chapter 5: Review of Verb Tenses**

**Worksheet 1. Reading: Nobel Lecture by Al Gore, Oslo, 10 December 2007**  
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**Read this excerpt from Al Gore’s speech upon winning the Nobel Peace Prize. Then review the glossary and complete the exercises that follow it.**

1 We, the human species, are confronting a planetary emergency—a threat to the survival of  
2 our civilization ... But there is hopeful news as well: we have the ability to solve this crisis  
3 and avoid the worst—though not all—of its consequences, if we act boldly, decisively, and  
4 quickly.

5 ... Today, we dumped another 70 million tons of global-warming pollution into the thin shell  
6 of atmosphere surrounding our planet, as if it were an open sewer. And tomorrow, we will  
7 dump a slightly larger amount, with the cumulative concentrations now trapping more and  
8 more heat from the sun.

9 As a result, the earth has a fever. And the fever is rising. The experts have told us it is not a  
10 passing affliction that will heal by itself ....

11 In the last few months, it has been harder and harder to misinterpret the signs that our  
12 world is spinning out of kilter. Major cities in North and South America, Asia, and Australia  
13 are nearly out of water due to massive droughts and melting glaciers. Desperate farmers  
14 are losing their livelihoods. Peoples in the frozen Arctic and on low-lying Pacific islands are  
15 planning evacuations of places they have long called home. Stronger storms in the Pacific  
16 and Atlantic have threatened whole cities. Millions have been displaced by massive flooding  
17 in South Asia, Mexico, and 18 countries in Africa ....

18 As temperature extremes have increased, tens of thousands have lost their lives. We are  
19 recklessly burning and clearing our forests and driving more and more species into  
20 extinction. The very web of life on which we depend is being ripped and frayed.

21 ... Now comes the threat of climate crisis—a threat that is real, rising, imminent, and  
22 universal. The penalties for ignoring this challenge are immense and growing .... For now  
23 we still have the power to choose our fate, and the remaining question is only this: Have we  
24 the will to act vigorously and in time, or will we remain imprisoned by a dangerous illusion?



### Worksheet 1 (page 2)

25 The future is knocking at our door right now. Make no mistake, the next generation will ask  
26 us one of two questions. Either they will ask: "What were you thinking; why didn't you act?"  
27 Or they will ask instead: "How did you find the moral courage to rise and successfully  
28 resolve a crisis that so many said was impossible to solve?" We have everything we need to  
29 get started ... We have a purpose. We are many. For this purpose we will rise, and we will  
30 act.

### Glossary

Line 5 *dumped* — threw carelessly

Line 5&6 *thin shell of atmosphere* — thin layer of air surrounding the earth

Line 6 *sewer* — an underground pipe that carries waste from cities

Line 7 *cumulative* — increasing gradually as more of something is added or happens

Line 7 *trapping* — preventing from escape

Line 10 *affliction* — something that causes pain or suffering, especially a medical condition

Line 12 *spinning out of kilter* — turning rapidly, with no control

Line 15 *evacuations* — movements of populations to leave a place

Line 22 *ignoring* — paying no attention to

Line 23 *fate* — the outcome; the results

Line 24 *will* — strong desire

### Comprehension practice

**Decide whether each sentence is true or false, according to the reading. Circle T if the sentence is true and F if the sentence is false.**

1. On this planet, we are facing an environmental emergency. T / F
2. The future is totally hopeless. T / F
3. People are dumping millions of tons of pollution into the air. T / F
4. Experts say that the pollution is part of a cycle, and will heal itself. T / F
5. Major cities in North and South America are now underwater. T / F
6. Because of the warmer climate, there is now more water on the planet, and there aren't any droughts. T / F
7. People in some low-lying islands will probably have to leave their homes because of flooding. T / F
8. Storms in the oceans are getting worse. T / F
9. Some species are becoming extinct. T / F
10. We can choose to make changes now to save the planet from serious harm. T / F