

SuperClean



a short story for English
reading and speaking

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Super Clean.....	4
Reading Comprehension Questions.....	10
Essential Vocabulary.....	12
True or False?.....	14
What is the Correct Synonym?.....	16
What is the Correct Antonym?.....	17
Words and Meanings.....	18
What is the Missing Word?.....	21
The Story Plot Points.....	24
Discussion Questions.....	27
Role Play.....	29
Writing.....	31
True or False — Answers.....	33
What is the Correct Synonym — Answers.....	36
What is the Correct Antonym — Answers.....	37
Words and Meanings — Answers.....	38
What is the Missing Word — Answers.....	40
The Story Plot Points — Answers.....	42
Credits.....	45

Introduction

Are you a clean person?

Do you like to clean your house?

Are some people obsessive about cleanliness?

How much time and energy should we spend on cleaning the house?

Super Clean

I sat down with a cup of tea and turned the TV on.

It was a Tuesday night, and all I wanted to do was relax and watch mindless rubbish on the box.

A show appeared on the screen. Perfect suntanned bodies. Impossibly beautiful girls arguing with ultra-handsome boys in a villa on a perfect island.

One of those awful reality shows. But perfect for the mood I was in right now.

I reclined lower in the armchair to watch the show. But I couldn't help but notice that the TV screen had a fine layer of dust on it.

I decided to ignore it. But as much as I tried not to think about it, the dust stared back at me, refusing to let me relax.

All I had to do was find a rag and clean the screen. Then I could just slide down into the armchair and forget everything.

I went to the kitchen and found an old cloth that I used for

cleaning pretty much everything. Came back to the living room and gave the TV screen a good wipe.

The beautiful people on the reality show looked much cleaner now. They practically shone.

I noticed the edges of the screen also had a little dust on them, so I ran the cloth over there too.

Now, the TV didn't have one speck of dust on it.

Good job. I allowed a small sense of achievement to run through my mind. A small hit of dopamine that did a little celebration dance inside my head.

I was just about to dump the cloth back in the kitchen when I noticed the stand the TV was on.

I had had this stand for years. I know I didn't buy it. Someone gave it to me. It looked like one of those generic pieces of furniture you can find in department stores or those big box furniture outlets.

But the amount of dust lying on the top of it...

I could be breathing that in. All those tiny fragments of dead skin, plant life, food, paper, deceased insects...

I had to get rid of it.

I rushed back into the kitchen to rinse the cloth in the sink.

Get some fresh water in it.

But then I remembered the bucket that I had somewhere...

I scurried around the kitchen, but I couldn't find it.

Then I remembered where it was!

The old toilet in the garden. This was put up years ago when the house was first built.

Now, I just used it to store old stuff.

I ran out to the garden and opened the door of the outside toilet. There inside was the bucket.

Back in the kitchen, I filled it with hot water. I added some washing-up liquid too.

Then I got to work cleaning the TV stand.

I was overcome with this feeling of accomplishment as I washed off all the debris from the top of the stand.

Just as I was leaning back, smiling to myself with a small sense of pride, I saw that the shelves of the stand needed cleaning, too.

There was a ton of stuff just crammed into the shelves.

Times when I had come home and had an item that I wanted to tidy away.

But in my haste, I just shoved it with all the other things on

the small shelves under the TV stand.

I pulled it all out. And there was a lot of it.

Advertising, promotion leaflets, and flyers introducing gyms and tanning centres.

I turned my head to the dusty, grimy shelves, then back to the pile of items on the floor next to me.

Clean the shelves or organise all this old stuff?

I had to make a decision...

The noise from the reality show was starting to interfere with my thinking, so I picked up the remote and turned it off.

That was better. Now I could think properly.

I picked up the rag, rinsed it out in the hot, soapy water and got to work on the shelves.

There were a couple of tough spots to clean, but I managed to get it all off.

Now they were pristine...

I sat back on the carpet and stared at the TV and the second-hand shelving unit that it stood upon.

All clean. Super clean.

A small rush of accomplishment ran through my mind. It felt good to do this.

Now, I could sit down and enjoy the rest of the evening...

I picked up the cup of tea and took a sip. It was cold now.

No problem, I'll make another one.

And as I walked to the kitchen, I noticed a small stain on the rim of the cup. Old tea stains. Something that I just hadn't bothered to clean off properly when I did the washing up.

In the kitchen, I threw the old tea down the drain. Then I picked up the wire wool scrubber and scratched at the stain on the cup.

It came off, but then a thought came into my head that all the other cups could have stains. And maybe some of the other crockery.

I opened the cupboard and pulled out all the cups, bowls, plates and other pieces of china.

I inspected everything. Things could be cleaner for sure.

I opened the hot water tap and filled the sink with hot, soapy water.

As it was filling up, I noticed that the inside of the cupboard was filthy...

My eyes traversed down to the floor, and I was disgusted

by how grimy it was.

The table, the walls... And the windows had not been cleaned in weeks.

I would have to clean everything.

There was no way I could stop. No way I could rest until the kitchen was totally spotless.

Then I could do the bathroom. The bedroom. All the living room.

This would be an all-night job. I might not feel that great tomorrow at work, but there was no way I could sleep in a house this filthy.

I pulled my sleeves up, took a breath, and got to work.

Reading Comprehension Questions

Where does the story take place?

What day is it in the story?

What plan did the narrator initially have for the evening?

What are they drinking?

How does the narrator feel about the reality show on TV?

Do they like this show?

Why are they watching it?

What first distracts the narrator from watching TV?

How do they react when they see what is on the TV screen?

Why does the narrator decide to clean the TV screen?

What do they get from the kitchen?

What do they notice after cleaning the TV screen?

How did the narrator acquire the TV stand?

Describe the condition of the TV stand before the narrator cleans it.

What does the narrator find inside the TV stand shelves?

What is the narrator looking for in the kitchen?

Where is the bucket?

What does the narrator keep in the old toilet in the garden?

What task does the narrator decide to do after cleaning the TV stand?

What kind of leaflets are on the shelves of the TV stand?

Why do they turn off the reality show?

What was wrong with the tea when the narrator finally sat down to drink it?

What realization do they have while making a fresh cup of tea?

What do they see on the cup?

What other items does the narrator want to clean?

What does the narrator decide to do after seeing the condition of the kitchen?

How does the narrator feel about the cleaning task as it progresses?

What is their plan by the end of the story?

Does the narrator have work the next day?

Essential Vocabulary

recline	dust	cloth
wipe	stand	achievement
generic	fragments	deceased
debris	advertise	leaflet
flyer	organise	grimy
pristine	stain	wire wool
scratch	crockery	cupboard
inspect	traverse	filthy
grimy	spotless	breathe
scurry	rush	interfere
tidy	shove	residue
hasten	rinse	scrubber

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Recline — *To lean or lie back in a relaxed position.*

Dust — *Fine particles of matter such as dirt or pollen that settle on surfaces.*

Then write a sentence of your own that uses the new word or phrase correctly.

He reclined in the armchair, ready to watch TV.

A thin layer of dust covered the TV screen.

Do this with all the vocabulary and, over time, this will help improve all your English skills — reading, writing, speaking and listening.

True or False?

Look at all the statements below.
Say whether they are true or false.

If a statement is false, correct it and make it true.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan!

The narrator turned off the TV because the reality show was too loud.

The reality show featured people with perfect suntanned bodies on an island.

The narrator ignored the dust on the TV screen and continued watching the show.

The narrator noticed a small stain on the rim of the cup while walking to the kitchen.

The bucket the narrator used was stored in the kitchen.

The narrator decided to clean only the kitchen and leave the other rooms for another day.

The narrator used a brand new cloth to clean the TV

screen.

The narrator felt a small sense of accomplishment after cleaning the TV screen.

The narrator decided to clean the TV stand after noticing it was covered in dust.

The TV stand had only a few items on the shelves.

The narrator didn't clean the shelves because it was too much work.

The narrator planned to clean the entire house because they couldn't rest in a filthy environment.

The narrator was pleased with how clean everything looked after cleaning the shelves.

The narrator's cup of tea was still hot when they finally sat down.

The narrator wanted to relax and watch a serious documentary on TV.

What is the Correct Synonym?

Look at the table of words below.

Match the words on the left with the correct synonym on the right.

A synonym is a word of similar meaning.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan!

Relax	Repulsed
Mindless	Filthy
Reclined	Particle
Speck	Discard
Rushed	Leaned
Grimy	Disrupt
Stared	Immaculate
Accomplishment	Unwind
Spotless	Hurried
Disgusted	Achievement
Debris	Untarnished
Dump	Thoughtless
Inspect	Clutter
Pristine	Gazed
Interfere	Examine

What is the Correct Antonym?

Look at the table of words below.

Match the words on the left with the correct antonym on the right.

An antonym is a word of similar meaning.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan!

Clean	Tainted
Relax	Flawed
Beautiful	Dislike
Perfect	Stale
Ignore	Stress
Fresh	Messy
Small	Notice
Hot	Delay
Enjoy	Disorganise
Accomplishment	Dirty
Tidy	Large
Pristine	Ugly
Shine	Failure
Organise	Cold
Rush	Dull

Words and Meanings

Look at the table of words below.

Now match each of the words with the correct meaning below the table.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan!

Recline	Pristine	Achievement
Grimy	Inspect	Rinse
Deceased	Scrubber	Residue
Flyer	Traverse	Scurry
Wire wool	Tidy	Crockery

To travel across or through a particular area or stretch of land.

A small handbill or leaflet intended for wide distribution, usually to advertise an event or product.

To wash something with clean water, especially to remove soap, detergent, or dirt.

Covered with or characterized by dirt, soot, or other grime; dirty.

Plates, dishes, cups, and other similar items made from earthenware or china.

A bundle of fine, flexible metal strands used for cleaning, polishing, or smoothing surfaces.

To clean up or organize a space, making it neat and orderly.

A small amount of something that remains after the main part has gone or been removed.

To lean or lie back in a relaxed position with the back supported.

To look at something closely, typically to assess its condition or to ensure that it meets certain standards.

A person who has died; no longer living.

A tool or device used for scrubbing or cleaning surfaces, often with bristles or abrasive materials.

To move quickly or hurriedly with short, rapid steps.

In its original condition; unspoiled or untouched; clean and fresh, as if new.

A thing done successfully, typically by effort, skill, or courage.

What is the Missing Word?

Look at the table of words below.

Now use each word to fill in the gaps in the sentences below the table.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan!

Grimy	Recline	Dust
Flyer	Leaflet	Spotless
Pristine	Shove	Wire wool
Crockery	Rinse	Inspect
Traverse	Debris	Scurry

(One of the verbs should be used in past tense!)

After hours of cleaning, the kitchen was _____, not a single crumb in sight.

He used _____ to scrub the rust off the metal surface.

The beach was _____, with white sand and clear blue

water stretching as far as the eye could see.

The _____ contained all the information they needed about the museum's exhibits.

The storm left _____ scattered across the road, making it difficult to drive through.

She wiped the _____ off the old bookshelf, revealing the titles of long-forgotten novels.

He had to _____ the heavy box into the corner of the garage.

After a day of hiking, his shoes were covered in a _____ layer of mud.

The mouse _____ across the floor, disappearing into a small hole in the wall.

After a long day, he liked to _____ in his favourite chair and read a book.

She carefully arranged the _____ in the cupboard, making sure each plate and bowl was in its place.

Make sure to _____ the vegetables thoroughly before cooking.

The manager came by to _____ the work and make sure everything was up to standard.

She handed out a _____ to everyone passing by, promoting the upcoming charity event.

They had to _____ the dense forest to reach the hidden waterfall.

The Story Plot Points

Look at all the major plot points to the story.

Now put them all in the correct order. Number each plot point from 1 to 17.

You can find all the correct answers at the end of the lesson plan!

Reality Show on TV: *A reality show featuring perfect, beautiful people comes on, matching the narrator's desire for mindless entertainment.*

Cleaning the TV Screen: *Unable to ignore the dust, the narrator retrieves a cloth and cleans the TV screen, feeling a small sense of achievement.*

Cold Tea: *The narrator goes to make a fresh cup of tea after realizing the current one has gone cold.*

Turning Off the TV: *The narrator turns off the distracting reality show to focus better on the cleaning task.*

Noticing the Dust: *The narrator notices a fine layer of dust on the TV screen, disrupting their ability to relax.*

Feeling of Accomplishment: *The narrator finishes cleaning*

the TV stand and shelves, feeling a rush of accomplishment.

Clearing the Clutter: *The narrator pulls out various items crammed into the shelves and cleans the shelves thoroughly.*

Rinsing the Cloth: *The narrator goes to the kitchen to rinse the cloth and recalls a bucket stored in an old toilet in the garden.*

Kitchen Clean-up Realization: *As the sink fills with hot water, the narrator notices how filthy the inside of the cupboard, the floor, the table, the walls, and the windows are.*

Cleaning the Crockery: *The narrator inspects all the cups, bowls, and plates, deciding that everything needs to be cleaned.*

Retrieving the Bucket: *The narrator retrieves the bucket, fills it with hot water and washing-up liquid, and returns to clean the TV stand.*

Decision to Clean Everything: *The narrator resolves to clean the entire kitchen and possibly the whole house, turning the night into a marathon cleaning session.*

Inspecting the Cup: *The narrator notices an old tea stain on the cup and cleans it, leading to the thought that other cups and crockery might also need cleaning.*

Cleaning the Shelves: *After cleaning the top of the stand,*

the narrator notices dusty, grimy shelves and decides to clean them too.

Sleepless Determination: *The narrator anticipates staying up all night to clean, unable to sleep in a house that isn't spotless.*

Dust on the TV Stand: *The narrator notices dust on the TV stand and decides to clean it as well, leading to a deeper cleaning spree.*

Relaxation Setup: *The narrator sits down with a cup of tea on a Tuesday night, intending to relax and watch TV.*

Discussion Questions

What do you think about this story?

What are your thoughts about the narrator's evening?

Was this time well spent?

Could you relate to what the person in the story was doing? Why/why not?

Why do you think the narrator felt compelled to clean the TV screen instead of ignoring the dust?

Why not just make a plan to clean it when they have time? Why was it so urgent to them do you think?

Do you think the narrator enjoys cleaning, or were they just trying to avoid something else in their life? Explain your opinion.

How would you describe the narrator's personality based on their actions in the story?

Have you ever found yourself doing something similar to the narrator, like getting caught up in cleaning or organising something when you planned to relax? How did it make you feel?

In the story, the main character could not stop cleaning, once they started.

What would you have done? Would you have continued cleaning all through the night?

Or just relax and make a promise to yourself to do it later?

How important is a clean and tidy environment to you when you are trying to relax?

The narrator had to choose between organising the items on the floor and cleaning the shelves.

What would you have done in this situation? Why?

What do you think the story is trying to say about perfectionism or the desire to control one's environment?

How do you think the narrator felt at the end of the story?

Do you think they were satisfied with their decision to clean everything? Or do you think they regretted not relaxing?

How would you feel if you spent your entire evening cleaning instead of relaxing like the narrator? Would you feel accomplished or frustrated? Why?

Role Play

This is a role play activity.

There are two characters in the role play:

- **Lazy Jim/Lazy Jane**
- **Keen Kevin/Keen Kate**

You should get into pairs for this role play.
Now choose a character.

Lazy Jim/Lazy Jane

This person refuses to clean anything. They think cleaning is a complete waste of time as everything will only get dirty once again.

So, what is the point?

Keen Kevin/Keen Kate

This person loves to clean. They believe that the way to live a healthy and productive life is to ensure that everything in the house is squeaky clean.

They think cleaning should be done every day!

The Situation

Lazy Jim/Lazy Jane and Keen Kevin/Keen Kate share a house together.

They are good friends, but there is one big difference in their lives.

One loves to clean, while the other hates cleaning.

This has now come to a head, where the two people are now having a very serious discussion about cleaning — or not cleaning — the house.

What could the outcome be?

Take some time to prepare your role play.

When you are ready, show the class.

Your classmates should give you some feedback when you finish your role play.

Writing

This is a letter-writing exercise.

Dear Friend...

You are going to write a letter to your friend.

Your friend is very house-proud. They like to make sure their house is very clean.

But you think they might have become obsessed with cleaning the house.

Every time you visit, they are in the middle of cleaning the house.

Nothing ever seems clean enough.

So, you decide to write a letter to them.

You want to help them as this person is a very good friend.

But at the same time, you feel the need to be strict and truthful about what your friend is doing.

- *Is cleaning the house this much really a healthy thing to do?*
- *Could they not do other things in their life?*

Write your letter.

Now, in class, take turns to read out all your letters.
Your classmates and teacher should give you feedback.

Or, if you prefer, you can give your letter to your teacher for a full review.

True or False — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

How many did you get right?

The narrator wanted to relax and watch a serious documentary on TV.

False — *The narrator wanted to relax and watch mindless rubbish on the TV.*

The reality show featured people with perfect suntanned bodies on an island.

True.

The narrator ignored the dust on the TV screen and continued watching the show.

False — *The narrator got a rag and cleaned all the dust off the TV.*

The narrator used a brand new cloth to clean the TV screen.

False — *The narrator used an old rag to clean it.*

The narrator felt a small sense of accomplishment after cleaning the TV screen.

True.

The narrator decided to clean the TV stand after noticing it

was covered in dust.

True.

The bucket the narrator used was stored in the kitchen.

False — *The bucket was stored in the old toilet in the garden.*

The TV stand had only a few items on the shelves.

False — *There were many things on the shelves of the TV stand.*

The narrator turned off the TV because the reality show was too loud.

True.

The narrator didn't clean the shelves because it was too much work.

False — *The narrator cleaned all the shelves without thinking about it.*

The narrator was pleased with how clean everything looked after cleaning the shelves.

True.

The narrator's cup of tea was still hot when they finally sat down.

False — *The cup of tea was cold.*

The narrator noticed a small stain on the rim of the cup while walking to the kitchen.

True.

The narrator decided to clean only the kitchen and leave the other rooms for another day.

False — *The narrator decides to clean every room in the house.*

The narrator planned to clean the entire house because they couldn't rest in a filthy environment.

True.

What is the Correct Synonym — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

Were you successful?

Relax	Unwind
Mindless	Thoughtless
Reclined	Leaned
Speck	Particle
Rushed	Hurried
Grimy	Filthy
Stared	Gazed
Accomplishment	Achievement
Spotless	Immaculate
Disgusted	Repulsed
Debris	Clutter
Dump	Discard
Inspect	Examine
Pristine	Untarnished
Interfere	Disrupt

What is the Correct Antonym — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

Were you successful?

Clean	Dirty
Relax	Stress
Beautiful	Ugly
Perfect	Flawed
Ignore	Notice
Fresh	Stale
Small	Large
Hot	Cold
Enjoy	Dislike
Accomplishment	Failure
Tidy	Messy
Pristine	Tainted
Shine	Dull
Organise	Disorganise
Rush	Delay

Words and Meanings — Answers

Here are the correct answers below.

How many did you get right?

Recline: *To lean or lie back in a relaxed position with the back supported.*

Grimy: *Covered with or characterized by dirt, soot, or other grime; dirty.*

Deceased: *A person who has died; no longer living.*

Flyer: *A small handbill or leaflet intended for wide distribution, usually to advertise an event or product.*

Wire wool: *A bundle of fine, flexible metal strands used for cleaning, polishing, or smoothing surfaces.*

Pristine: *In its original condition; unspoiled or untouched; clean and fresh, as if new.*

Inspect: *To look at something closely, typically to assess its condition or to ensure that it meets certain standards.*

Scrubber: *A tool or device used for scrubbing or cleaning surfaces, often with bristles or abrasive materials.*

Traverse: *To travel across or through a particular area or stretch of land.*

Tidy: *To clean up or organize a space, making it neat and orderly.*

Achievement: *A thing done successfully, typically by effort, skill, or courage.*

Rinse: *To wash something with clean water, especially to remove soap, detergent, or dirt.*

Residue: *A small amount of something that remains after the main part has gone or been removed.*

Scurry: *To move quickly or hurriedly with short, rapid steps.*

Crockery: *Plates, dishes, cups, and other similar items made from earthenware or china.*

What is the Missing Word — Answers

These are the correct answers below.

Did you win?

Grimy: After a day of hiking, his shoes were covered in a grimy layer of mud.

Flyer: She handed out a flyer to everyone passing by, promoting the upcoming charity event.

Pristine: The beach was pristine, with white sand and clear blue water stretching as far as the eye could see.

Crockery: She carefully arranged the crockery in the cupboard, making sure each plate and bowl was in its place.

Traverse: They had to traverse the dense forest to reach the hidden waterfall.

Recline: After a long day, he liked to recline in his favourite chair and read a book.

Leaflet: The leaflet contained all the information they needed about the museum's exhibits.

Shove: He had to shove the heavy box into the corner of the garage.

Rinse: Make sure to rinse the vegetables thoroughly before cooking.

Debris: The storm left debris scattered across the road, making it difficult to drive through.

Dust: She wiped the dust off the old bookshelf, revealing the titles of long-forgotten novels.

Spotless: After hours of cleaning, the kitchen was spotless, not a single crumb in sight.

Wire wool: He used wire wool to scrub the rust off the metal surface.

Inspect: The manager came by to inspect the work and make sure everything was up to standard.

Scurry: The mouse scurried across the floor, disappearing into a small hole in the wall.

The Story Plot Points — Answers

This is the correct order of the events in the story.

Time for a celebration?

1. **Relaxation Setup:** *The narrator sits down with a cup of tea on a Tuesday night, intending to relax and watch TV.*
2. **Reality Show on TV:** *A reality show featuring perfect, beautiful people comes on, matching the narrator's desire for mindless entertainment.*
3. **Noticing the Dust:** *The narrator notices a fine layer of dust on the TV screen, disrupting their ability to relax.*
4. **Cleaning the TV Screen:** *Unable to ignore the dust, the narrator retrieves a cloth and cleans the TV screen, feeling a small sense of achievement.*
5. **Dust on the TV Stand:** *The narrator notices dust on the TV stand and decides to clean it as well, leading to a deeper cleaning spree.*
6. **Rinsing the Cloth:** *The narrator goes to the kitchen to rinse the cloth and recalls a bucket stored in an old toilet in the garden.*

7. Retrieving the Bucket: *The narrator retrieves the bucket, fills it with hot water and washing-up liquid, and returns to clean the TV stand.*

8. Cleaning the Shelves: *After cleaning the top of the stand, the narrator notices dusty, grimy shelves and decides to clean them too.*

9. Clearing the Clutter: *The narrator pulls out various items crammed into the shelves and cleans the shelves thoroughly.*

10. Turning Off the TV: *The narrator turns off the distracting reality show to focus better on the cleaning task.*

11. Feeling of Accomplishment: *The narrator finishes cleaning the TV stand and shelves, feeling a rush of accomplishment.*

12. Cold Tea: *The narrator goes to make a fresh cup of tea after realizing the current one has gone cold.*

13. Inspecting the Cup: *The narrator notices an old tea stain on the cup and cleans it, leading to the thought that other cups and crockery might also need cleaning.*

14. Cleaning the Crockery: *The narrator inspects all the cups, bowls, and plates, deciding that everything needs to be cleaned.*

15. **Kitchen Clean-up Realization:** *As the sink fills with hot water, the narrator notices how filthy the inside of the cupboard, the floor, the table, the walls, and the windows are.*

16. **Decision to Clean Everything:** *The narrator resolves to clean the entire kitchen and possibly the whole house, turning the night into a marathon cleaning session.*

17. **Sleepless Determination:** *The narrator anticipates staying up all night to clean, unable to sleep in a house that isn't spotless.*

Credits

This lesson plan is courtesy of ManWrites.

This content is copyright ManWrites 2024 —

ManWrites©2024

For more information, go to www.manwrites.com

Or join my mailing list below and I will send you more ESL teaching ideas.

[ManWrites Mailing List](#)