

# GORE VIDAL

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## THE READING / TAPESCRIPT

Gore Vidal was famous for speaking his mind on the hottest issues in America and around the world. He was a prolific novelist, essayist and screen and stage play writer. He also ran for the US Senate. He was related to former US President Jimmy Carter and Nobel Prize winner Al Gore. Vidal was a strong critic of the George W. Bush administration.

Vidal was born Eugene Luther Vidal Jr. in New York in 1925. His father worked in the US Air Force and his mother was an actress. He disliked his first name and changed it to Gore when he was a teenager. He was raised and educated in Washington D.C. and spent a great deal of time learning from his grandfather, Democratic Senator Thomas Gore.

Vidal's writing career began when he was nineteen. The book 'Williwaw' was about his experiences in the military. In 1948, aged 22, he wrote his ground-breaking 'The City and the Pillar', which shocked many Americans. It was the first American novel to focus on homosexuality. The New York Times refused to review his next five books. This established Vidal's reputation for his outspokenness.

For six decades Vidal wrote commentaries on American politics and society. He has a huge following of admirers, including critic Martin Amis, who said Vidal "is learned, funny and exceptionally clear-sighted. Even his blind spots are illuminating." Vidal was a member of the World Can't Wait organization, which demands the impeachment of George W. Bush for crimes against humanity. He died in August 2012.

**SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the words from the article on the left with their synonyms on the right. Are your answers the same as other students'?

*Paragraphs 1 and 2*

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. hottest      | a. reviewer     |
| 2. prolific     | b. brought up   |
| 3. critic       | c. most topical |
| 4. teenager     | d. lots         |
| 5. raised       | e. youth        |
| 6. a great deal | f. productive   |

*Paragraphs 3 and 4*

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 7. ground-breaking | g. image       |
| 8. novel           | h. pioneering  |
| 9. reputation      | i. reports     |
| 10. commentaries   | j. prosecution |
| 11. learned        | k. book        |
| 12. impeachment    | l. intelligent |

**PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article.

- |                                      |                                  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. speaking his                      | a. learning from his grandfather |
| 2. He was related to former          | b. mind                          |
| 3. a strong critic of the            | c. outspokenness                 |
| 4. He disliked his first             | d. humanity                      |
| 5. spent a great deal of time        | e. of admirers                   |
| 6. the first American novel to focus | f. George W. Bush administration |
| 7. The New York Times refused to     | g. on homosexuality              |
| 8. Vidal's reputation for his        | h. US President Jimmy Carter     |
| 9. He has a huge following           | i. name and changed it to Gore   |
| 10. crimes against                   | j. review his next five books    |

**LISTENING GAP FILL:**

Gore Vidal was famous for \_\_\_\_\_ on the hottest issues in America and around the world. He was \_\_\_\_\_, essayist and screen and stage play writer. He also ran for the US Senate. He is \_\_\_\_\_ US President Jimmy Carter and Nobel Prize winner Al Gore. Vidal was \_\_\_\_\_ the George W. Bush administration.

Vidal was born Eugene Luther Vidal Jr. in New York in 1925. His father \_\_\_\_\_ Air Force and his mother was an actress. He \_\_\_\_\_ and changed it to Gore when he was a teenager. He was \_\_\_\_\_ in Washington D.C. and \_\_\_\_\_ of time learning from his grandfather, Democratic Senator Thomas Gore.

Vidal's \_\_\_\_\_ when he was nineteen. The book 'Williwaw' was about his experiences in the military. In 1948, aged 22, he wrote \_\_\_\_\_ 'The City and the Pillar', which shocked many Americans. It was the first American \_\_\_\_\_ homosexuality. The New York Times refused to review his next five books. This established Vidal's \_\_\_\_\_ outspokenness.

For six decades Vidal wrote \_\_\_\_\_ American politics and society. He has a huge \_\_\_\_\_, including critic Martin Amis, who said Vidal "is learned, funny and exceptionally clear-sighted. Even \_\_\_\_\_ illuminating." Vidal was a member of the World Can't Wait organization, which demands the impeachment of George W. Bush \_\_\_\_\_ humanity. He died in August 2012.

## CHOOSE THE CORRECT WORD:

Delete the wrong word in each of the pairs in italics.

Gore Vidal was famous for speaking his *brain / mind* on the hottest *issues / tissues* in America and around the world. He was a prolific novelist, essayist and screen and stage play writer. He also ran *to / for* the US Senate. He was related to former US President Jimmy Carter and Nobel Prize winner Al Gore. Vidal was a strong *critic / criticism* of the George W. Bush administration.

Vidal was born Eugene Luther Vidal Jr. in New York in 1925. His father worked *in / on* the US Air Force and his mother was an actress. He disliked his *first / last* name and changed it to Gore when he was a teenager. He was *risen / raised* and educated in Washington D.C. and spent a *great / greatly* deal of time learning from his grandfather, Democratic Senator Thomas Gore.

Vidal's *writing / written* career began when he was nineteen. The book 'Williwaw' was about his experiences in the *militia / military*. In 1948, aged 22, he wrote his ground-breaking 'The City and the Pillar', which shocked many Americans. It was the first American *novel / novelty* to focus on homosexuality. The New York Times *refused / refusal* to review his next five books. This established Vidal's reputation for his outspokenness.

For *six / sixty* decades Vidal wrote commentaries on American politics and society. He has a huge *follower / following* of admirers, including critic Martin Amis, who said Vidal "is *learned / learning*, funny and exceptionally clear-sighted. Even his blind spots are illuminating." Vidal was a member of the World Can't Wait organization, which *supplies / demands* the impeachment of George W. Bush for crimes against humanity. He died in August 2012.

**SPELLING:**

These jumbled words are from the text. Spell them correctly.

*Paragraph 1*

1. ipnseagk his mind
2. He was a ocliipfr novelist
3. He was ereldta to former US President Jimmy Carter
4. a strong ctirci

*Paragraph 2*

5. He kdsdliei his first name
6. when he was a neetrgae
7. eriads and educated in Washington D.C.
8. espnt a great deal of time

*Paragraph 3*

9. his experiences in the maiyltir
10. ckesodh many Americans
11. reeviw his next five books
12. Vidal's itnoapuret for his outspokenness

*Paragraph 4*

13. American picotlis
14. He has a huge fwliongo of admirers
15. a ermebm of the World Can't Wait organization
16. crimes against uiyathnm

## PUT THE TEXT BACK TOGETHER

Number these lines in the correct order.

- ( ) an actress. He disliked his first name and changed it to Gore when he was a teenager. He was raised and
- ( **1** ) Gore Vidal was famous for speaking his mind on the hottest issues in America and around the world. He is a prolific
- ( ) novelist, essayist and screen and stage play writer. He also ran for the US Senate. He was related to former US
- ( ) Vidal's writing career began when he was nineteen. The book 'Williwaw' was about
- ( ) his experiences in the military. In 1948, aged 22, he wrote his ground-breaking 'The City and the Pillar', which shocked
- ( ) many Americans. It was the first American novel to focus on homosexuality. The New York Times refused to
- ( ) For six decades Vidal wrote commentaries on American
- ( ) politics and society. He has a huge following of admirers, including critic Martin Amis, who said Vidal "is learned,
- ( ) Vidal was born Eugene Luther Vidal Jr. in New York in 1925. His father worked in the US Air Force and his mother was
- ( ) President Jimmy Carter and Nobel Prize winner Al Gore. Vidal was a strong critic of the George W. Bush administration.
- ( ) funny and exceptionally clear-sighted. Even his blind spots are illuminating." Vidal was a member
- ( ) of the World Can't Wait organization, which demands the impeachment of
- ( ) educated in Washington D.C. and spent a great deal of time learning from his grandfather, Democratic Senator Thomas Gore.
- ( ) review his next five books. This established Vidal's reputation for his outspokenness.
- ( ) George W. Bush for crimes against humanity. He died in August 2012.

## SCRAMBLED SENTENCES

With your partner, put the words back into the correct order.

1. hottest speaking mind the issues his on

---

2. was President related Jimmy to Carter former He US

---

3. He it changed and name first his disliked

---

4. Washington was and in He raised educated

---

5. spent deal learning grandfather great time his a of from

---

6. was he when began career writing Vidal's nineteen

---

7. on focus to novel American first the homosexuality

---

8. Times refused next to his review five books The New York

---

9. admirers has huge of He a following

---

10. humanity against crimes for

---



## **GORE VIDAL DISCUSSION:**

### **STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)**

1. What do you know about Gore Vidal?
2. Would you like to have met Gore Vidal?
3. What would you like to know about Gore Vidal and why?
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

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## **GORE VIDAL DISCUSSION:**

### **STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)**

1. What did you learn from this text about Gore Vidal?
2. What questions would you like to have asked Gore Vidal?
3. What would his answers have been to those questions?
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_

# GORE VIDAL SURVEY:

Write five questions about Gore Vidal in the table. Do this in pairs/groups. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

Without your partner, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

Return to your original partner(s) and share and talk about what you found out. Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



## HOMEWORK

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find more information about Gore Vidal. Talk about what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. GORE VIDAL POSTER:** Make a poster showing the different stages of the life of Gore Vidal. Show your poster to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all find out similar things?

**4. MAGAZINE ARTICLE:** Write a magazine article about Gore Vidal. Include an imaginary interview with him. Write about what he does every day and what he thinks about.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Give each other feedback on your articles.

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to a Gore Vidal expert. Ask him/her three questions about his life. Give him three of your opinions on Mr Vidal. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your "Gore Vidal expert" partner(s) will try and answer your questions.

# ANSWERS

## SYNONYM MATCH:

Paragraphs 1 and 2

- |                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. hottest      | a. most topical |
| 2. prolific     | b. productive   |
| 3. critic       | c. reviewer     |
| 4. teenager     | d. youth        |
| 5. raised       | e. brought up   |
| 6. a great deal | f. lots         |

Paragraphs 3 and 4

- |                    |                |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 7. ground-breaking | g. pioneering  |
| 8. novel           | h. book        |
| 9. reputation      | i. image       |
| 10. commentaries   | j. reports     |
| 11. learned        | k. intelligent |
| 12. impeachment    | l. prosecution |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |                                      |                                  |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. speaking his                      | a. mind                          |
| 2. He was related to former          | b. US President Jimmy Carter     |
| 3. a strong critic of the            | c. George W. Bush administration |
| 4. He disliked his first             | d. name and changed it to Gore   |
| 5. spent a great deal of time        | e. learning from his grandfather |
| 6. the first American novel to focus | f. on homosexuality              |
| 7. The New York Times refused to     | g. review his next five books    |
| 8. Vidal's reputation for his        | h. outspokenness                 |
| 9. He has a huge following           | i. of admirers                   |
| 10. crimes against                   | j. humanity                      |

## ALL OTHER EXERCISES

Look at the text on page 2.