The Return Counter

C1 Advanced · Work · about 2 min of audio

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Name _____ Date _____

Part 1 — Fill the gaps while you listen

1. The busiest desk in Elian's depot faced a wall, because _____ parcels arrived with stories nobody had time to read.
2. He learned to recognize the _____ between a damaged purchase and a changed mind by the care with which tape was folded.
3. For seven years, he had sorted objects that crossed the city twice without ever _____ part of anyone's home.
4. Their labels promised _____ shopping, yet each return required inspection, repacking, and a decision about where a nearly new thing could go.
5. Elian kept no tally of regret, but he noticed that formal clothes _____ on Mondays often carried the faint crease of a long evening.
6. The depot's new software counted every movement, though it could not tell when a scuffed box had been _____ rescued from rain.
7. At closing time, he set aside usable lamps for a _____ workshop, where apprentices stripped them for parts instead of binning them.
8. That small exception mattered because efficiency was measured in minutes saved, while repair depended on noticing what the _____ left out.
9. He had once thought his work concerned discarded goods, but now he understood it as the hidden _____ of abundance.
10. When the last van _____, the empty shelves looked less like an ending than a pause before the city's next purchase.

Part 2 — Write every sentence you hear

1. _____

2. _____

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Answer key

Part 1 — the missing words

1. returned 2. difference 3. becoming 4. frictionless 5. returned 6. carefully 7. neighborhood 8. calculation 9. maintenance 10. departed

Part 2 — the full transcript

1. The busiest desk in Elian's depot faced a wall, because returned parcels arrived with stories nobody had time to read.
2. He learned to recognize the difference between a damaged purchase and a changed mind by the care with which tape was folded.
3. For seven years, he had sorted objects that crossed the city twice without ever becoming part of anyone's home.
4. Their labels promised frictionless shopping, yet each return required inspection, repacking, and a decision about where a nearly new thing could go.
5. Elian kept no tally of regret, but he noticed that formal clothes returned on Mondays often carried the faint crease of a long evening.
6. The depot's new software counted every movement, though it could not tell when a scuffed box had been carefully rescued from rain.
7. At closing time, he set aside usable lamps for a neighborhood workshop, where apprentices stripped them for parts instead of binning them.
8. That small exception mattered because efficiency was measured in minutes saved, while repair depended on noticing what the calculation left out.
9. He had once thought his work concerned discarded goods, but now he understood it as the hidden maintenance of abundance.
10. When the last van departed, the empty shelves looked less like an ending than a pause before the city's next purchase.

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