Everyday minor problems

VOCABULARY PRACTICE

ADVANCED | C1

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Match each incident-management term with its meaning.

1 preventive maintenance	____	a legal or practical responsibility for damage
2 diagnostic process	____	b underlying reason a problem occurred
3 root cause	____	c planned response if normal operation fails
4 failure mode	____	d work intended to prevent future breakdown
5 intermittent fault	____	e disappearance or destruction of digital information
6 user error	____	f methodical investigation of symptoms
7 contingency plan	____	g error caused by a person's action or omission
8 data loss	____	h way in which a system can cease to function
9 liability	____	i corrective action after harm or failure
10 remediation	____	j fault that cannot be reproduced consistently

2 Complete the incident-management collocations.

cause | **damage** | **data loss** | **fault** | **incident** | **liability** | **remedial action** | **service**

1 mitigate _____ through regular back-ups

2 isolate the root _____

3 reproduce an intermittent _____

4 assess the extent of the _____

5 restore _____ after an outage

6 document the _____ objectively

7 accept _____ for accidental damage

8 implement proportionate _____

3 Choose the concept that best captures the distinction.

1 An observed way a system fails, not its underlying reason: *failure mode / root cause*.

2 Action taken before breakdown, not after: *preventive maintenance / remediation*.

3 A structured investigation, not a guess: *diagnostic process / user error*.

4 A fault that appears unpredictably: *intermittent fault / total outage*.

5 A prepared alternative when normal service fails: *contingency plan / liability*.

6 Responsibility for compensating harm: *liability / data loss*.

7 Corrective work following an incident: *remediation / wear and tear*.

8 Loss caused by a mistaken action: *user error / root cause analysis*.

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4 Complete the case analysis with terms from the box.

contingency plan | data loss | diagnostic process | failure mode | intermittent fault | liability | preventive maintenance | remediation | root cause | user error

The initial **1** _____ was a sudden application crash, but the **2** _____ remained unclear. A structured **3** _____ found an **4** _____ in a damaged cable rather than simple **5** _____. Because the **6** _____ had not been tested, staff experienced temporary **7** _____. Responsibility and potential **8** _____ were documented without assigning premature blame. The agreed **9** _____ included cable replacement and verified back-ups, while improved **10** _____ was scheduled to reduce recurrence.

5 Read the text and answer the questions concisely.

Small incidents, system lessons

The label 'minor' describes immediate impact, not necessarily learning value. A loose handle, recurring crash or near fall may reveal weak inspection, ambiguous responsibility or poor reporting. Effective review avoids two errors: treating the individual closest to the event as the root cause, and proposing controls whose burden exceeds the risk. Instead, it reconstructs the sequence, identifies contributing conditions and selects proportionate changes. A useful record also distinguishes damage from ordinary wear and tear. The aim is neither blame nor zero risk, but a system that detects deterioration, recovers gracefully and learns before a minor failure becomes consequential.

1 Why can a minor incident have substantial learning value? _____

2 Which three weaknesses may it reveal? _____

3 What two review errors should be avoided? _____

4 Which three actions support an effective review? _____

5 What distinction should the record preserve? _____

6 What three system capacities are the ultimate aim? _____

6 Paraphrase using the expression in capitals.

1 Regular checks could have prevented the breakdown. **MAINTENANCE** _____

2 The team identified the underlying reason. **CAUSE** _____

3 Back-ups reduced the impact of lost files. **MITIGATED** _____

4 The report accepted responsibility for the damage. **LIABILITY** _____

OVER TO YOU

Write a **160-190 word** critical incident review. Explain how a minor failure can reveal a wider system weakness and recommend proportionate preventive action.

[ ] Use at least ten target terms or collocations. [ ] Separate event, cause and responsibility. [ ] Avoid both blame and excessive controls.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Incident-management terms

1 **d** 2 **f** 3 **b** 4 **h** 5 **j** 6 **g** 7 **c** 8 **e** 9 **a** 10 **i**

2 Incident-management collocations

1 **data loss** 2 **cause** 3 **fault** 4 **damage** 5 **service** 6 **incident** 7 **liability** 8 **remedial action**

3 Conceptual distinctions

1 **failure mode** 2 **preventive maintenance** 3 **diagnostic process** 4 **intermittent fault** 5 **contingency plan** 6 **liability** 7 **remediation** 8 **user error**

4 Case analysis

1 **failure mode** 2 **root cause** 3 **diagnostic process** 4 **intermittent fault** 5 **user error**
6 **contingency plan** 7 **data loss** 8 **liability** 9 **remediation** 10 **preventive maintenance**

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 It may reveal wider system weaknesses. 2 Weak inspection, ambiguous responsibility and poor reporting.
3 Blaming the nearest individual and imposing controls whose burden exceeds the risk. 4 Reconstruct the sequence, identify conditions and select proportionate changes. 5 Damage versus ordinary wear and tear. 6 Detect deterioration, recover gracefully and learn early.

6 Paraphrasing - possible answers

1 **Preventive maintenance** could have prevented the breakdown. 2 The team identified the **root cause**. 3 Back-ups **mitigated data loss**. 4 The report **accepted liability** for the damage.

Over to you: Answers will vary. Check conceptual precision, proportionality and evidence-based recommendations.