Exceptional Expressions For Everyday Events

The focus of this discussion is focus! This versatile word can serve as a verb or a noun, and it is useful in quite a few specialized contexts such as math and physics.

The verb focus expresses the act of concentrating. A teacher may instruct his class to focus on a specific task, such as a reading assignment, or on a particular topic, like photosynthesis or the word for the day. If students are distracted, their teacher might even use the command, “Focus!”

Focus as a noun is the object or idea of central importance. In writing, the focus of a paper is the main point or thesis of the paper. The focus of a music lesson might be learning a new chord. A lost pet would be the focus of a search.

The word focus, furthermore, has specific meanings in geometry, in the study of earthquakes, in computing, and other scientific and technical fields. In physics, focus can be defined as the point at which rays of light or other radiation converge. In math, focus is the point from which a circle or a curve is generated.

Follow-Ups

• When you prepare for a test, are you concentrating or centering on your studies?
• Could the thesis of a paper be called the bulls eye?

The Spanish Connection

Focus comes from the Latin word focus. The definition of the original Latin focus was a “domestic hearth” or fireplace. Clearly the meaning of focus has changed quite a bit over time, although one can imagine that in early times the fireplace would have been the center of activity in a home. The Spanish word for focus is the cognate foco.

Word Changes

• Because of the Latin root, the plural of the noun focus has traditionally been foci, but focuses has become very common as well.
• The term “laser beam” comes from the technological processes associated with lasers. The light from a laser is highly focused, enabling some lasers to even burn through materials such as metal. If a person’s attention is described as laser-like, that means the person is focusing intensely.
Focus

Focus as in the central point
- attention
- focal point
- bulls eye
- center
- core
- locus
- thesis

Focus as in to concentrate
- concentrate
- center
- centralize
- direct
- fix
- engross
- cogitate
- think

COMMON PHRASES
- Maintain focus
- Out of focus
- Bring into focus

THE SPANISH CONNECTION
- to concentrate / concentrar
- to center / centrar
- to centralize / centralizar
- attention / atención

IDIOMS
- Buckle down
- Laser beam
- Caught me in their line of sight
Focus
Focus

Morphological Family for Focus

Inflected Endings
- focuses'
- focused'
- focusing'

Irregular Spelling
- foci'

Derivational Prefixes & Suffixes
- refocus'
- unfocused'

Compound Words
Focus used as a noun
- in focus
- focus group
- autofocus
- focal point
- focal length

°F Focus used as a noun
°F Focus used as a verb
Focus

Morphological Family for Focus