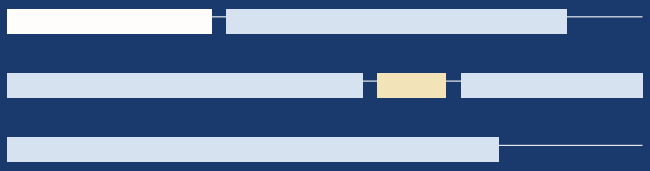
PHYSICS FIRST SERIES

GRE
VERBAL REASONING

A Diagnostic Manual

Every wrong answer has a name.



Text Completion · Sentence Equivalence · Reading Comprehension
Critical Reasoning · Vocabulary in Context

"The limits of my language mean the limits of my world."

— Ludwig Wittgenstein

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Generated from the GRE Verbal misconception-graph (`grev/nodes`).

Contents

How to use this manual **1**

How the Question Types Work **2**

1 Text Completion **3**

1.1 Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal 3

1.2 Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary 9

1.3 Text Completion: two blanks 16

1.4 Text Completion: three blanks 22

1.5 Text Completion: word charge and connotation 29

1.6 Text Completion: two competing signals 35

Answer Key — Text Completion 42

2 Sentence Equivalence **53**

2.1 Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs 53

2.2 Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms 59

2.3 Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning 66

Answer Key — Sentence Equivalence 74

3 Reading Comprehension **80**

3.1 Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage 80

3.2 Reading Comprehension: inference 87

3.3 Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail 95

3.4 Reading Comprehension: specific detail 103

3.5 Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context 110

3.6 Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude 117

3.7 Reading Comprehension: passage organization 125

Answer Key — Reading Comprehension 134

4 Critical Reasoning **146**

4.1 Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument 146

4.2 Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument 153

4.3 Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption 160

4.4 Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy 167

4.5 Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement 174

Answer Key — Critical Reasoning 183

5 Vocabulary in Context **190**

5.1 Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words 190

5.2 Vocabulary in context: connotation and register 196

5.3 Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms 202

5.4 Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 206

5.5 Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 209

5.6 Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 213

5.7 Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity 216

5.8 Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression 222

5.9 Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery 227

5.10 Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke 233

5.11 Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion 239

5.12 Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil 244

5.13 Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence 250

5.14 Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency 256

5.15 Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity 262

5.16 Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness 267

5.17 Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity 273

5.18 Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice 279

5.19 Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality 285

5.20 Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence 291

5.21 Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability 297

5.22 Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly 303

5.23 Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance 309
5.24 Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion 315
5.25 Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation 321
5.26 Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity 326
5.27 Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack 332
5.28 Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife 338
5.29 Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay 344
5.30 Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure 350
5.31 Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn 355
Answer Key — Vocabulary in Context 362

How to use this manual

The GRE Verbal Reasoning measure is delivered in **two sections** of multiple-choice questions. It tests three official question types — Text Completion, Sentence Equivalence, and Reading Comprehension — and rewards a graduate-level vocabulary and the ability to follow an argument. This manual adds two further tracks that sharpen the same skills: Critical Reasoning (the argument logic that underlies the hardest Reading questions) and a dedicated Vocabulary in Context bank.

This manual is built on one idea: **on this test, a wrong answer is not random — it is a specific, nameable mistake.** For every skill you will find:

- **The skill** — the rule or reading move, stated plainly.
- **The Approach** — *Read, Plan, Solve, Check* (RPSC), the same four-step habit used across the Physics First Series. Most points are lost not to missing knowledge but to careless slips; the *Check* step is where you catch them.
- **Common traps** — the handful of named wrong-answer patterns for that skill. Learn to recognize the trap and you eliminate the distractor.
- **Practice** — a bank of items, easy to hard, each with five choices (A–E). Answers, with the trap each wrong choice represents, are in the **Answer Key** at the end of each chapter.

Do not just note whether you were right. For each miss, name the trap you fell for. That is the whole method.

How the Question Types Work

Every Verbal question rewards the same core habit: read for a text's **logic** before you read the choices. Find the signal words that tell you how ideas relate — contrast (*although*, *yet*, *despite*), cause and effect (*because*, *therefore*), continuation (*and*, *moreover*) — and let that structure, not the most impressive-sounding word, decide the answer.

Text Completion gives you a passage of one to five sentences with one, two, or three blanks. Each blank is scored independently for meaning, but you earn credit only when *all* blanks are right. Solve the blank whose signal is clearest first, then work outward.

Sentence Equivalence gives you one blank and six choices; you choose the *two* words that both fit the sentence *and* produce the same meaning. A word that fits but has no synonym among the choices is a trap: the pair must agree.

Reading Comprehension and **Critical Reasoning** test whether you can state a passage's point in one sentence, separate the claim from its support, and see the unstated assumption an argument depends on. Before you look at the choices, say the point in language no stronger than the text uses — that summary is your anchor for central-idea, detail, inference, and function questions alike.

Vocabulary in Context builds the high-frequency word knowledge the whole section assumes. Learn each word by the sentence that fixes its meaning, not as an isolated flashcard: on the test you will always meet these words inside a context that points to the right sense.

Each track that follows opens with its own guidance, then works through the named traps skill by skill. Reading a text well *is* the "Read" step of Read, Plan, Solve, Check; everything that follows operates on the frame you build there.

TRACK 1

Text Completion

Solve the sentence by its logic, not its vocabulary

> *"The difference between the almost right word and the right word is really a large matter—'tis the difference between the lightning-bug and the lightning."*
>
> — Mark Twain

One to three blanks in a single passage; you must fill every blank correctly for the credit. The sentence's own logic — its signals and structure — fixes each answer, not which word sounds most impressive.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal

node: grev.tc.C1

The skill. A single-blank Text Completion is solved by the sentence's own logic, not by which word sounds impressive. First find the signal that tells you how the blank relates to the rest of the sentence: contrast words (although, but, far from, yet) demand a word opposite in meaning to the clue; continuation and cause words (because, since, indeed, and the dash of definition) demand a word that agrees with it. Predict a plain word or at least its charge (positive or negative) from the clue before reading the options. Then eliminate options that reverse the charge, that only match the topic without satisfying the logic, or that have the right general direction but the wrong specific meaning.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What is the blank's role, and what signal (contrast, cause, definition, continuation) tells you what must go there?

Plan. From the clue, predict a word or at least its charge (+/-) BEFORE looking at the options. Then match, and eliminate opposite-charge, off-topic, and wrong-specific-meaning words.

Solve. Choose the option closest to your prediction.

Check. Does my word obey the signal (although/because/the dash)? Is the charge right? Is it the specific meaning the clue demands, not merely a word about the same topic?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

opposite-charge.
Selects a word whose meaning runs opposite to what the sentence's logic requires — often a positive word where the clue calls for a negative one, or vice versa.

right-direction-wrong-word.
Selects a word with the correct general charge but the wrong specific meaning for the blank.

ignores-signal.
Overlooks the logical signal (contrast, cause, definition) and picks a word that fits a different, unsupported reading of the sentence.

topic-attractive.
Selects a word merely associated with the sentence's subject that does not satisfy the blank's logic.

Practice

1. *Signal: 'Although … generous with praise' sets up a contrast, so the blank must be negative — the reviews were harsh.*

Although the critic's reviews were often ___, colleagues noted that in person she was generous with praise and quick to encourage young writers.

(A) laudatory
(B) prolix
(C) equivocal
(D) caustic
(E) perfunctory

2. *Signal: 'did not merely cast doubt … it ___' escalates, so the blank must be a stronger, decisively negative action.*

The new evidence did not merely cast doubt on the theory; it ___ it, leaving few researchers willing to defend the old model.

(A) scrutinized
(B) reiterated
(C) eviscerated
(D) bolstered

(E) qualified

3. *Signal: the dash defines the blank — 'rarely spoke … fewest possible words' means habitually silent.*

Her ___ manner — she rarely spoke, and when she did, only in the fewest possible words — made her seem aloof to those who did not know her well.

(A) garrulous

(B) taciturn

(C) affable

(D) diffident

(E) candid

4. *Signal: 'cutting it short before the data could mature' defines the blank — to shorten by cutting.*

Because the funding was contingent on quick results, the researchers felt pressured to ___ their long-term study, cutting it short before the data could mature.

(A) replicate

(B) prolong

(C) truncate

(D) expedite

(E) salvage

5. *Signal: 'Far from being the ___ figure … willing to compromise' — 'far from' reverses the clue, so the blank means unwilling to compromise.*

Far from being the ___ figure his detractors described, the diplomat proved remarkably willing to compromise, abandoning positions he had once called nonnegotiable.

(A) pliable

(B) doctrinaire

(C) intransigent

(D) affable

(E) pragmatic

6. *Signal: 'Although … clarity' contrasts with the lectures, so the blank must be negative — to make ideas unclear.*

Although his prose was celebrated for its clarity, his lectures tended to ___ even simple ideas, burying them under jargon until listeners lost the thread.

(A) pontificate

(B) belabor

(C) obfuscate

(D) elucidate

(E) abridge

7. *Signal: the dash defines the blank — 'warm one hour, cold the next' means volatile and changeable.*

His moods were famously ___ — warm and expansive one hour, cold and withdrawn the next — so that no colleague could predict which man would greet them at the door.

(A) irascible

(B) phlegmatic

(C) affable

(D) mercurial

(E) gregarious

8. *Signal: 'a dull ledger of meals eaten and errands run' defines the blank — dull and ordinary.*

Readers who expected the novelist's diary to sparkle with wit were disappointed to find it thoroughly ___, a dull ledger of meals eaten and errands run.

(A) confessional

(B) esoteric

(C) prosaic

(D) turgid

(E) scintillating

9. *Signal: 'gently dismantling an assumption' defines the blank — to free students from a mistaken belief.*

The economist saw it as her duty to ___ students of the notion that markets are perfectly rational, gently dismantling an assumption most had never thought to question.

(A) indoctrinate

(B) berate

(C) vindicate

(D) disabuse

(E) apprise

10. *Signal: 'doubling back on itself through so many qualifications and digressions' defines the blank — winding and hard to follow.*

The argument was maddeningly ___, doubling back on itself through so many qualifications and digressions that few readers could trace its thread to the end.

(A) torturous

(B) tortuous

(C) linear

(D) verbose

(E) polemical

11. *Signal: 'Far from the ___ adversary … turned out to be genial' reverses the clue, so the blank means aggressively hostile.*

Far from the ___ adversary the press had led us to expect, the general turned out to be genial and self-deprecating, more eager to trade jokes than blows.

(A) supercilious

(B) truculent

(C) martial

(D) convivial

(E) affable

12. *Signal: 'would restore lungs the city had ruined' tells us the mountain air was thought healthful.*

Physicians once sent consumptive patients to the mountains, convinced that the crisp, dry air there was uniquely ___ and would restore lungs the city had ruined.

(A) temperate

(B) arid

(C) picturesque

(D) pernicious

(E) salubrious

13. *Signal: 'a lone inventor proposing … a city on Mars within the decade' defines the blank — grandly idealistic and impractical.*

The scheme was gloriously ___: a lone inventor proposing, from his suburban garage, to build a city on Mars within the decade.

(A) lucrative

(B) pragmatic

(C) quixotic

(D) eccentric

(E) grandiose

14. *Signal: 'Though … lavished millions … it was ___ … clerks' contrasts extravagance with the blank, so the blank means stingy.*

Though the firm lavished millions on its executive suites, it was maddeningly ___ when it came to the salaries of the clerks who kept it running.

(A) lucrative

(B) munificent

(C) capricious

(D) frugal

(E) parsimonious

15. *Signal: 'turning a tense standoff into a riot' tells us the remarks made the anger worse.*

Rather than calming the crowd, the mayor's dismissive remarks only ___ their anger, turning a tense standoff into a riot.

(A) belittle

(B) exacerbate

(C) mobilize

(D) assuage

(E) vindicate

16. *Signal: the dash defines the blank — 'toppling reputations … no canon was safe' means attacking cherished institutions.*

The young curator was thoroughly ___ — she delighted in toppling the reputations her predecessors had spent careers enshrining, and no canon was safe from her scrutiny.

(A) meticulous

(B) irreverent

(C) reverent

(D) iconoclastic

(E) avant-garde

17. *Signal: 'did not simply dislike … she ___ it' escalates, so the blank names a stronger, decisively negative act.*

The critic did not simply dislike the play; she ___ it, calling it the most tedious evening she had spent in a theater in twenty years.

(A) extolled

(B) excoriated

(C) attended

(D) critiqued

(E) tolerated

18. *Signal: 'shirked every task he could plausibly postpone' defines the blank — habitually lazy.*

They mistook his ___ air for serene detachment, but the truth was simpler: he shirked every task he could plausibly postpone.

(A) languid
(B) assiduous
(C) phlegmatic
(D) aloof
(E) indolent

19. *Signal: 'Far from the ___ prose … so dense and clotted' reverses the clue, so the blank means clear.*

Far from the ___ prose his admirers promised, the philosopher's sentences were so dense and clotted that I reread each paragraph three times and still groped for the point.

(A) pellucid
(B) succinct
(C) erudite
(D) turgid
(E) abstruse

20. *Signal: 'a relic staggering toward closure' defines the blank, and 'yet … filled its seats' confirms it — the theater was thought to be dying.*

Critics had written the theater off as ___, a relic staggering toward closure, yet a bold new director filled its seats within a season and proved the obituaries premature.

(A) venerable
(B) flourishing
(C) moribund
(D) antiquated
(E) avant-garde

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary

node: grev.tc.C2

The skill. At this level the trap is rarely a word you have never seen; it is two or three words that all point in roughly the right direction, so the winner is the one whose precise sense the sentence demands. Work the logic first: find the signal (contrast words like although, far from, yet; cause and definition words like because, since, and the explanatory dash or colon) and predict a plain word, or at minimum the required charge, before you read the choices. Then read every option for

its exact meaning, not its aura of sophistication. Eliminate words that reverse the charge, words that merely belong to the sentence's topic, and words that have the right direction but the wrong specific idea. Reserve special care for reversing signals ('far from,' 'not ... but'), which flip the charge of the word the blank must take.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What is the blank's role, and which signal (contrast, cause, definition, reversal) fixes the meaning it must take?

Plan. From the clue, predict a word or its charge BEFORE looking at options; then judge each option by its precise sense.

Solve. Choose the option whose exact meaning matches the prediction and obeys the signal.

Check. Is the charge right? Did a reversal ('far from,' 'not ... but') flip what I need? Is this the specific meaning the clue demands, not just a word about the topic?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

opposite-charge.
Selects a word whose meaning runs opposite to what the sentence's logic requires — a positive word where the clue calls for a negative one, or vice versa.

right-direction-wrong-word.
Selects a word with the correct general charge or region of meaning but the wrong specific sense for the blank.

ignores-signal.
Overlooks the logical signal (contrast, cause, definition, reversal) and picks a word that fits a different, unsupported reading of the sentence.

topic-attractive.
Selects a word merely associated with the sentence's subject that does not satisfy the blank's logic.

Practice

1. *Signal: the dash defines the blank — 'a sentence or two, never a word wasted' means sparing of words.*

   The senator's ___ replies — she answered every question in a sentence or two, never a word wasted — frustrated reporters hoping for a quotable flourish.

   (A) laconic

   (B) loquacious

   (C) eloquent

(D) guarded

(E) evasive

2. *Signal: 'before it hardened into accepted fact' plus a swift, detailed rebuttal shows he wants to kill the rumor decisively.*

Eager to ___ the rumor before it hardened into accepted fact, the spokesman issued a detailed rebuttal within the hour.

(A) mitigate

(B) propagate

(C) publicize

(D) scotch

(E) investigate

3. *Signal: 'Though … dismal … insisting … would reverse the trend' — the contrast demands a positive word: he stays hopeful.*

Though the early returns were dismal, the campaign manager remained ___, insisting that the districts yet to report would reverse the trend.

(A) loquacious

(B) despondent

(C) disingenuous

(D) phlegmatic

(E) sanguine

4. *Signal: the colon defines the blank — chart-topping one summer and forgotten the next means short-lived.*

Fame of that sort proved ___: the singer topped the charts one summer and was all but forgotten by the next.

(A) meteoric

(B) enduring

(C) ostentatious

(D) intermittent

(E) evanescent

5. *Signal: 'Far from being … his critics dismissed' negates the blank; since the plan was actually fully worked out, the blank must mean unformed or half-baked.*

Far from being the ___ proposal his critics dismissed, the plan proved fully worked out, every contingency anticipated and every objection already met.

(A) ambitious

(B) meticulous

(C) inchoate

(D) specious

(E) consummate

6. *Signal: 'his sobbing had softened to the occasional hiccup' tells us the voice calmed the child.*

The counselor's steady voice did much to ___ the frightened child, and within minutes his sobbing had softened to the occasional hiccup.

(A) assuage

(B) agitate

(C) distract

(D) counsel

(E) cajole

7. *Signal: the dash defines the blank — 'questioned every order and obeyed only those that suited him' means stubbornly resistant to authority.*

The ___ recruit — he questioned every order and obeyed only those that happened to suit him — soon exhausted the patience of his drill sergeant.

(A) compliant

(B) querulous

(C) raw

(D) diffident

(E) recalcitrant

8. *Signal: 'Far from ___ the founder … mocked him … plotted to undo' reverses the clue, so the blank means to revere.*

Far from ___ the founder whose portrait hung in the lobby, the new employees mocked him as a relic and quietly plotted to undo everything he had built.

(A) deride

(B) flatter

(C) supplant

(D) venerate

(E) commemorate

9. *Signal: the dash defines the blank — 'every phrase seemed to pour out smooth and honeyed' means sweet and flowing in sound.*

Her ___ voice — every phrase seemed to pour out smooth and honeyed — could make even a weather report sound like a lullaby.

(A) mellifluous
(B) articulate
(C) strident
(D) sonorous
(E) voluble

10. *Signal: 'No petition or protest could slow it … ran almost without human hands' tells us the process was unstoppable.*

No petition or protest could slow it; the march of automation across the factory floor proved ___, and within a decade the assembly line ran almost without human hands.

(A) mechanized
(B) sporadic
(C) inexorable
(D) surmountable
(E) gradual

11. *Signal: 'Although he had every reason to gloat … praising his rival' contrasts, so the blank means nobly generous.*

Although he had every reason to gloat, the champion was ___ in victory, praising his rival's courage and dismissing the years of insults as forgotten.

(A) triumphant
(B) condescending
(C) affable
(D) magnanimous
(E) vindictive

12. *Signal: 'half the lecture hall had drifted into open-mouthed sleep' defines the blank — sleep-inducing.*

The professor's ___ monotone had a predictable effect: by the twenty-minute mark, half the lecture hall had drifted into open-mouthed sleep.

(A) galvanizing
(B) tedious
(C) pedagogical
(D) soporific
(E) muffled

13. *Signal: 'a torrent of superlatives from a man who rarely offered more than a nod' defines the blank — gushingly effusive.*

Reviewers who knew the director's usual reticence were startled by his ___ praise for the newcomer's film, a torrent of superlatives from a man who rarely offered more than a nod.

(A) cinematic
(B) grudging
(C) voluble
(D) candid
(E) effusive

14. *Signal: 'Far from the ___ turncoat … betrayed no one' reverses the clue, so the blank means treacherous.*

Far from the ___ turncoat the tribunal painted, the officer had risked his life to smuggle warnings to both sides and betrayed no one.

(A) perfidious
(B) mercenary
(C) steadfast
(D) loyal
(E) clandestine

15. *Signal: 'feasted at his right hand one week and languished in a dungeon the next' defines the blank — given to sudden, unpredictable changes.*

The king's favor was notoriously ___: a courtier feasted at his right hand one week and languished in a dungeon the next, and no one could say what had turned him.

(A) constant
(B) arbitrary
(C) despotic
(D) capricious
(E) regal

16. *Signal: 'the jury needed no more to see the charges collapse' shows the brief argument was genuinely compelling, despite 'although … barely five minutes.'*

Although the defense lawyer spoke for barely five minutes, her argument was so ___ that the jury needed no more to see the charges collapse.

(A) cogent
(B) concise
(C) muddled
(D) specious
(E) eloquent

17. *Signal: 'Her grandmother saved string ... while the heir ... burning through the family fortune' contrasts thrift with the blank, so the blank means recklessly wasteful.*

Her grandmother saved string and reused envelopes, while the heir proved hopelessly ___, burning through the family fortune on yachts and gambling within three years.

(A) thrifty
(B) profligate
(C) hedonistic
(D) moneyed
(E) impulsive

18. *Signal: 'not merely critical; it was ___, a stream of personal insults so venomous' escalates, so the blank means bitterly abusive.*

The senator's response was not merely critical; it was ___, a stream of personal insults so venomous that even his allies winced.

(A) laudatory
(B) candid
(C) vituperative
(D) captious
(E) rhetorical

19. *Signal: the dash defines the blank — 'a week on coins, then a lurch into birdsong, then nothing' means aimless and unmethodical.*

His research was ___ — a week on medieval coins, then a sudden lurch into birdsong, then nothing at all — and it surprised no one that he finished no project he began.

(A) cursory
(B) desultory
(C) scholarly
(D) eclectic
(E) systematic

20. *Signal: 'Although the mediators had settled far thornier disputes ... stood exactly where they had begun' contrasts, so the blank means impossible to resolve.*

Although the mediators had settled far thornier disputes, this one proved ___, and after three years of talks the two sides stood exactly where they had begun.

(A) protracted
(B) intractable
(C) tractable

(D) vexing

(E) diplomatic

Text Completion: two blanks

node: grev.tc.C3

The skill. A two-blank sentence is two puzzles sharing one logic. Solve each blank on its own signal first — do not let a graceful-sounding pairing tempt you before you have checked both halves. For each blank, find its clue (a definition, a contrast, a cause) and predict a word or at least its charge; the connective between the clauses (yet, because, and, colon) tells you whether the two blanks agree or oppose. Because you must choose one paired option, the correct answer is the single pair that is right in BOTH blanks. The most seductive traps get one blank exactly right, which lulls you into accepting a wrong partner. Confirm the pairing satisfies each blank independently before you commit.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What does each blank need on its own, and does the connective make the two blanks agree or oppose?

Plan. Predict blank (i) and blank (ii) separately from their signals; then find the one pair correct in BOTH.

Solve. Select the pair whose (i) and (ii) each match their predictions.

Check. Did I verify BOTH blanks, or did a right first word make me overlook a wrong second one?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

opposite-charge.
The pair reverses the required charge or meaning of one blank — an antonym of what that blank's logic demands.

right-direction-wrong-word.
One word in the pair has the correct general charge but the wrong specific sense for its blank.

ignores-signal.
One word ignores its blank's signal (the contrast, cause, or definition), fitting a different, unsupported reading.

topic-attractive.
One word is merely associated with the sentence's subject and does not satisfy its blank's logic.

Practice

1. *Signal: 'both … and' with 'but': (i) matches 'marshaled impressive evidence' (careful, thorough); 'but … so timid that no one felt compelled to act' forces (ii) to mean bland or inoffensive.*

The committee's report was both (i)___ and (ii)___: it marshaled impressive evidence but drew from it conclusions so timid that no one felt compelled to act.

(A) (i) meticulous, (ii) rigorous

(B) (i) voluminous, (ii) anodyne

(C) (i) meticulous, (ii) bureaucratic

(D) (i) meticulous, (ii) trenchant

(E) (i) meticulous, (ii) anodyne

2. *Signal: 'each side interpreted it to suit itself' fixes (i) as ambiguous; 'merely ___ … rather than resolving it' fixes (ii) as postponed.*

Because the treaty's language was so (i)___, each side interpreted it to suit itself; the drafters' vaunted diplomacy had merely (ii)___ the conflict rather than resolving it.

(A) (i) circuitous, (ii) deferred

(B) (i) equivocal, (ii) inflamed

(C) (i) equivocal, (ii) resolved

(D) (i) grandiloquent, (ii) deferred

(E) (i) equivocal, (ii) deferred

3. *Signal: 'refuses to (i)' with 'earlier admirers airbrushed his cruelties, she records them' fixes (i) as idealize; 'unwilling to let his flaws ___ the genuine achievements' fixes (ii) as overshadow.*

The biographer refuses to (i)___ her subject: where earlier admirers airbrushed his cruelties, she records them without flinching, yet she is equally unwilling to let his flaws (ii)___ the genuine achievements the same pages document.

(A) (i) lionize, (ii) immortalize

(B) (i) scrutinize, (ii) eclipse

(C) (i) lionize, (ii) eclipse

(D) (i) lionize, (ii) burnish

(E) (i) lionize, (ii) catalogue

4. *Signal: 'expected the sequel to (i) its predecessor were surprised to find it not derivative but (ii)': reviewers expected imitation (i), and the surprise is originality (ii).*

Reviewers who expected the sequel to (i)___ its predecessor were surprised to find it not derivative but genuinely (ii)___, extending the earlier book's ideas in directions its author had only gestured toward.

(A) (i) recapitulate, (ii) voluminous

(B) (i) recapitulate, (ii) erudite

(C) (i) recapitulate, (ii) bestselling

(D) (i) transcend, (ii) seminal

(E) (i) recapitulate, (ii) seminal

5. *Signal: reality contradicts the reputation. 'what reads as effortless spontaneity is in fact the product of relentless revision' fixes (i) as apparent spontaneity and (ii) as laboriously polished.*

The essayist's reputation for (i)___ is largely undeserved; what reads as effortless spontaneity is in fact the product of relentless revision, each seemingly offhand phrase (ii)___ over many drafts.

(A) (i) verbosity, (ii) burnished

(B) (i) artlessness, (ii) proofread

(C) (i) artlessness, (ii) burnished

(D) (i) artlessness, (ii) excised

(E) (i) artifice, (ii) burnished

6. *Signal: 'struck many as' plus 'digressions' fixes (i) as wandering/disorganized; 'recognized a ___ structure beneath the digressions' contrasts to fix (ii) as ordered.*

Though the lecture struck many listeners as (i)___, those who followed its argument closely recognized a (ii)___ structure beneath the digressions.

(A) (i) desultory, (ii) tedious

(B) (i) desultory, (ii) systematic

(C) (i) methodical, (ii) systematic

(D) (i) desultory, (ii) labyrinthine

(E) (i) academic, (ii) systematic

7. *Signal: 'so ___ that ... pausing to untangle clauses within clauses' fixes (i) as ornate/convoluted and (ii) as hard to parse.*

Her prose was so (i)___ that readers accustomed to plainer fare found it (ii)___, forever pausing to untangle clauses nested within clauses.

(A) (i) baroque, (ii) evocative

(B) (i) baroque, (ii) tedious

(C) (i) spare, (ii) impenetrable

(D) (i) literary, (ii) impenetrable

(E) (i) baroque, (ii) impenetrable

8. *Signal: 'Beneath a ___ exterior lay an ambition so ___ that rivals who dismissed him as harmless were outmaneuvered.' (i) mild, (ii) relentless.*

Beneath a (i)___ exterior lay an ambition so (ii)___ that rivals who dismissed him as harmless were repeatedly outmaneuvered.

(A) (i) genial, (ii) considerable

(B) (i) genial, (ii) inscrutable

(C) (i) ambitious, (ii) unrelenting

(D) (i) genial, (ii) unrelenting

(E) (i) truculent, (ii) unrelenting

9. *Signal: 'Far from being the ___ partisan his enemies portrayed … remarkably ___, willing to borrow good ideas from any quarter.' (i) narrow/dogmatic, (ii) broad-minded.*

Far from being the (i)___ partisan his enemies portrayed, the reformer proved remarkably (ii)___, willing to borrow good ideas from any quarter.

(A) (i) doctrinaire, (ii) reformist

(B) (i) doctrinaire, (ii) amiable

(C) (i) doctrinaire, (ii) taciturn

(D) (i) doctrinaire, (ii) catholic

(E) (i) latitudinarian, (ii) catholic

10. *Signal: appositive definition 'a man who trims his convictions to whatever wind prevails' fixes (i) as opportunist; 'the author regards such ___ with contempt' fixes (ii) as fickleness.*

The novel's protagonist is a (i)___, a man who trims his convictions to whatever wind prevails; the author regards such (ii)___ with undisguised contempt.

(A) (i) politician, (ii) inconstancy

(B) (i) zealot, (ii) inconstancy

(C) (i) opportunist, (ii) inconstancy

(D) (i) opportunist, (ii) volubility

(E) (i) opportunist, (ii) cynicism

11. *Signal: 'Whereas her early paintings were ___, crowded with incident and ornament, the late canvases achieve a ___ that borders on emptiness.' (i) lavish, (ii) bareness.*

Whereas her early paintings were (i)___, crowded with incident and ornament, the late canvases achieve a (ii)___ that borders on emptiness.

(A) (i) profuse, (ii) obscurity

(B) (i) profuse, (ii) serenity

(C) (i) spare, (ii) austerity

(D) (i) painterly, (ii) austerity

(E) (i) profuse, (ii) austerity

12. *Signal: 'so ___ that neither delegation could find grounds to object; its very ___ was what allowed it to pass unamended.' (i) unobjectionable, (ii) inoffensiveness.*

The diplomat's proposal was so (i)___ that neither delegation could find grounds to object; its very (ii)___ was what allowed it to pass unamended.

(A) (i) provocative, (ii) blandness

(B) (i) unexceptionable, (ii) brevity

(C) (i) unexceptionable, (ii) complexity

(D) (i) unexceptionable, (ii) blandness

(E) (i) diplomatic, (ii) blandness

13. *Signal: 'branded ... a ___ ... revealed an unexpected ___, tackling mortality with real gravity.' (i) lightweight, (ii) seriousness.*

Critics who had branded the director a (i)___ were forced to reconsider when her new film revealed an unexpected (ii)___, tackling questions of mortality with real gravity.

(A) (i) dilettante, (ii) gravitas

(B) (i) cineaste, (ii) gravitas

(C) (i) dilettante, (ii) ambition

(D) (i) visionary, (ii) gravitas

(E) (i) dilettante, (ii) versatility

14. *Signal: 'Although the evidence ... had become ___, its adherents remained ___, dismissing every contrary finding.' (i) overwhelming, (ii) stubborn.*

Although the evidence against the theory had become (i)___, its adherents remained (ii)___, dismissing every contrary finding as an aberration.

(A) (i) scientific, (ii) obdurate

(B) (i) overwhelming, (ii) verbose

(C) (i) overwhelming, (ii) irresolute

(D) (i) overwhelming, (ii) obdurate

(E) (i) considerable, (ii) obdurate

15. *Signal: colon-explanation 'a man of inherited wealth ... had mastered the ___ of the common touch without sharing its origins' fixes (i) as feigned and (ii) as outward pose.*

The senator's populism was largely (i)___: a man of inherited wealth and elite schooling, he had mastered the (ii)___ of the common touch without sharing any of its origins.

(A) (i) political, (ii) semblance

(B) (i) theatrical, (ii) semblance

(C) (i) factitious, (ii) gravity

(D) (i) factitious, (ii) semblance

(E) (i) authentic, (ii) semblance

16. *Signal: 'A ___ in the lecture hall … became almost ___ in private, offering little more than monosyllables.' (i) captivating speaker, (ii) silent.*

(i)___ in the lecture hall, holding audiences rapt for hours, she became almost (ii)___ in private, offering little more than monosyllables to those who sought her out.

(A) (i) spellbinding, (ii) garrulous

(B) (i) spellbinding, (ii) morose

(C) (i) academic, (ii) taciturn

(D) (i) spellbinding, (ii) enigmatic

(E) (i) spellbinding, (ii) taciturn

17. *Signal: 'not ___ but ___, the cumulative result of decisions over generations rather than any single catastrophe.' (i) sudden, (ii) gradual.*

The historian argues that the empire's collapse was not (i)___ but (ii)___, the cumulative result of decisions taken over generations rather than any single catastrophe.

(A) (i) precipitate, (ii) protracted

(B) (i) gradual, (ii) incremental

(C) (i) precipitate, (ii) inevitable

(D) (i) imperial, (ii) incremental

(E) (i) precipitate, (ii) incremental

18. *Signal: 'extended only to those who could repay it … no charity at all but mere ___.' (i) self-interested, (ii) self-serving display.*

His philanthropy was thoroughly (i)___, its gifts calibrated to yield returns; such giving, the moralist insists, is no generosity at all but mere (ii)___ dressed in charitable clothes.

(A) (i) mercenary, (ii) sentimentality

(B) (i) disinterested, (ii) self-aggrandizement

(C) (i) mercenary, (ii) benefaction

(D) (i) mercenary, (ii) self-aggrandizement

(E) (i) mercenary, (ii) ostentation

19. *Signal: appositive 'he could reconcile the bitterest factions … this same gift for ___ sometimes shaded into a reluctance to take any firm stand.' (i) peacemaker, (ii) compromise.*

A born (i)___, he could reconcile the bitterest factions; yet this same gift for (ii)___ sometimes shaded into a reluctance to take any firm stand at all.

(A) (i) conciliator, (ii) eloquence

(B) (i) conciliator, (ii) accommodation

(C) (i) politician, (ii) accommodation

(D) (i) conciliator, (ii) capitulation

(E) (i) firebrand, (ii) accommodation

20. *Signal: 'Once dismissed as ___ … now regarded as ___, anticipating techniques that would dominate the century.' (i) unpleasant/incompetent, (ii) prophetic.*

Once dismissed as (i)___, the composer's dissonant experiments are now regarded as (ii)___, anticipating techniques that would dominate the century to come.

(A) (i) cacophonous, (ii) intricate

(B) (i) melodious, (ii) prescient

(C) (i) cacophonous, (ii) prescient

(D) (i) cacophonous, (ii) influential

(E) (i) atonal, (ii) prescient

Text Completion: three blanks

node: grev.tc.C4

The skill. A three-blank sentence rewards patience over speed. Do not read left to right hoping words fall into place; instead, find the blank whose signal is clearest — often one anchored by a definition, an example, or a sharp contrast — solve it first, and let the sentence's connectives chain you to the others. Predict each blank's word or charge before judging options. Because only one full option can be chosen, the correct triple must satisfy ALL THREE blanks; a triple that is perfect in two and wrong in one is still wrong. The hardest items place the decisive error in a single blank while the other two look right, so verify each blank in isolation before committing to a triple.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. Which blank has the clearest signal, and how do the connectives chain it to the other two?

Plan. Anchor on the clearest blank, predict it, then work outward predicting the others; keep only triples right in all three.

Solve. Select the triple whose (i), (ii), and (iii) each match their predictions.

Check. Did I confirm every blank, or did two right words let a wrong third slip through?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

opposite-charge.
The triple reverses the required charge or meaning of one blank — an antonym of what that blank's logic demands.

right-direction-wrong-word.
One word in the triple has the correct general charge but the wrong specific sense for its blank.

ignores-signal.
One word ignores its blank's signal (the contrast, cause, definition, or reversal), fitting a different, unsupported reading.

topic-attractive.
One word is merely associated with the sentence's subject and does not satisfy its blank's logic.

Practice

1. *Signal: a downward arc — 'initially … increasingly … by the time the last investor withdrew.' (i) starts positive, (ii) turns anxious, (iii) ends in open despair.*

Although the startup's founders were initially (i)___ about their prospects, a string of setbacks left them increasingly (ii)___, and by the time the last investor withdrew, even the most loyal among them had grown openly (iii)___.

(A) (i) sanguine, (ii) entrepreneurial, (iii) despondent

(B) (i) apprehensive, (ii) disquieted, (iii) despondent

(C) (i) sanguine, (ii) disquieted, (iii) loquacious

(D) (i) sanguine, (ii) disquieted, (iii) despondent

(E) (i) sanguine, (ii) disquieted, (iii) skeptical

2. *Signal: cause and consequence. 'journalists could not agree what she meant' fixes (i) as ambiguous; 'hoping to ___ the confusion' fixes (ii) as dispel; 'only ___ matters, contradicting on three points' fixes (iii) as worsened.*

Because the ambassador's remarks were so (i)___, journalists could not agree on what she had meant; her aides, hoping to (ii)___ the confusion, issued a clarification that only (iii)___ matters, contradicting the original statement on three key points.

(A) (i) Delphic, (ii) dispel, (iii) protracted

(B) (i) Delphic, (ii) dispel, (iii) compounded

(C) (i) pellucid, (ii) dispel, (iii) compounded

(D) (i) Delphic, (ii) chronicle, (iii) compounded

(E) (i) Delphic, (ii) dispel, (iii) publicized

3. *Signal: praise versus lament. 'every frame composed with a painter's care' fixes (i) as visual richness; 'lamenting its narrative ___' fixes (ii) as emptiness; 'lurched from scene to scene with a ___' fixes (iii) as abruptness.*

The critic praised the film's visual (i)___ while lamenting its narrative (ii)___: every frame was composed with a painter's care, yet the story lurched from scene to scene with an (iii)___ that no amount of beauty could redeem.

(A) (i) opulence, (ii) vacuity, (iii) symmetry

(B) (i) opulence, (ii) vacuity, (iii) abruptness

(C) (i) opulence, (ii) vacuity, (iii) luminosity

(D) (i) opulence, (ii) brevity, (iii) abruptness

(E) (i) austerity, (ii) vacuity, (iii) abruptness

4. *Signal: 'For all his reputation as a (i) ... surprisingly (ii)' demands a contrast — a rigid public image against private flexibility; 'bombast designed to (iii)' fixes the mask.*

For all his reputation as a (i)___, the senator in private was surprisingly (ii)___, conceding points to opponents and revising positions when the evidence warranted — behavior his public bombast was designed to (iii)___.

(A) (i) pragmatist, (ii) amenable, (iii) belie

(B) (i) ideologue, (ii) affable, (iii) belie

(C) (i) ideologue, (ii) amenable, (iii) belie

(D) (i) ideologue, (ii) amenable, (iii) amplify

(E) (i) ideologue, (ii) voluble, (iii) belie

5. *Signal: 'neither the (i) ... nor the (ii)' balances an inflated claim against a dismissal; the closing logic ('acknowledges its limits even as it credits its courage') fixes (iii) as measured.*

The memoir is neither the (i)___ its admirers claim nor the (ii)___ its detractors allege; its author is too honest to flatter herself and too shrewd to mistake candor for the whole of art, so the book earns a (iii)___ praise that acknowledges its limits even as it credits its courage.

(A) (i) paragon, (ii) travesty, (iii) literary

(B) (i) fiasco, (ii) travesty, (iii) tempered

(C) (i) paragon, (ii) travesty, (iii) unstinting

(D) (i) paragon, (ii) travesty, (iii) tempered

(E) (i) paragon, (ii) trifle, (iii) tempered

6. *Signal: 'admirable ... not ... a selective honesty that renders the whole account ___ despite its air of candor.' (i) forthcoming where admirable, (ii) reticent where not, (iii) untrustworthy.*

The general's memoirs are (i)___ where his conduct was admirable and (ii)___ where it was not, a selective honesty that renders the whole account (iii)___ despite its air of candor.

(A) (i) forthcoming, (ii) reticent, (iii) tendentious

(B) (i) forthcoming, (ii) reticent, (iii) exhaustive

(C) (i) forthcoming, (ii) laconic, (iii) tendentious

(D) (i) evasive, (ii) reticent, (iii) tendentious

(E) (i) forthcoming, (ii) reticent, (iii) military

7. *Signal: 'morale, long ___ under her predecessor's neglect, quickly ___; a demoralized staff became the envy of the company.' (i) inspiring, (ii) flagging, (iii) recovered.*

So (i)___ was the new manager that morale, long (ii)___ under her predecessor's neglect, quickly (iii)___; within months a demoralized staff had become the envy of the company.

(A) (i) managerial, (ii) moribund, (iii) rebounded

(B) (i) galvanizing, (ii) moribund, (iii) rebounded

(C) (i) galvanizing, (ii) moribund, (iii) fluctuated

(D) (i) galvanizing, (ii) buoyant, (iii) rebounded

(E) (i) galvanizing, (ii) latent, (iii) rebounded

8. *Signal: 'What looked like ___ was in fact careful ___: every apparent improvisation had been rehearsed, every seeming accident ___ in advance.' (i) spontaneity, (ii) design, (iii) planned.*

What looked from outside like (i)___ was in fact careful (ii)___: every apparent improvisation had been rehearsed, every seeming accident (iii)___ in advance.

(A) (i) spontaneity, (ii) calculation, (iii) orchestrated

(B) (i) recklessness, (ii) calculation, (iii) orchestrated

(C) (i) spontaneity, (ii) calculation, (iii) theatrical

(D) (i) spontaneity, (ii) improvisation, (iii) orchestrated

(E) (i) spontaneity, (ii) calculation, (iii) documented

9. *Signal: 'Though ___ by temperament-quick to embrace a beautiful idea-she trained herself to ___ every hypothesis, devising tests meant to ___ even her favorites.' (i) credulous, (ii) question, (iii) refute.*

Though (i)___ by temperament, quick to embrace a beautiful idea, the scientist trained herself to (ii)___ every hypothesis, devising tests meant to (iii)___ even her most cherished conjectures.

(A) (i) credulous, (ii) interrogate, (iii) publish

(B) (i) credulous, (ii) embellish, (iii) falsify

(C) (i) skeptical, (ii) interrogate, (iii) falsify

(D) (i) credulous, (ii) interrogate, (iii) discredit

(E) (i) credulous, (ii) interrogate, (iii) falsify

10. *Signal: recap 'dense yet lucid, tender yet unsentimental, spare yet complete' fixes (i) dense, (ii) tender, (iii) economical; each 'without being ___' gives the near-miss.*

The prose is (i)___ without being obscure, (ii)___ without being mawkish, and (iii)___ without being curt, a rare union of density, warmth, and economy.

(A) (i) concentrated, (ii) lachrymose, (iii) economical

(B) (i) concentrated, (ii) poignant, (iii) ornate

(C) (i) diffuse, (ii) poignant, (iii) economical

(D) (i) concentrated, (ii) poignant, (iii) economical

(E) (i) concentrated, (ii) poignant, (iii) literary

11. *Signal: 'Long portrayed as a ___ who stumbled into greatness … emerges as a ___ strategist, each lucky break the fruit of years of ___ preparation.' (i) bungler, (ii) shrewd, (iii) painstaking.*

Long portrayed as a (i)___ who stumbled into greatness, the inventor emerges from these papers as a (ii)___ strategist, each of his apparently lucky breaks the fruit of years of (iii)___ preparation.

(A) (i) bungler, (ii) inventive, (iii) meticulous

(B) (i) bungler, (ii) canny, (iii) protracted

(C) (i) mastermind, (ii) canny, (iii) meticulous

(D) (i) bungler, (ii) canny, (iii) meticulous

(E) (i) bungler, (ii) affable, (iii) meticulous

12. *Signal: colon glosses (i) as a bundle of contradictions; 'savaging any sloppy argument' fixes (ii) combative; 'ready to buy a vanquished opponent a drink' fixes (iii) gracious.*

His colleagues found him (i)___: (ii)___ in debate, savaging any argument he judged sloppy, yet unfailingly (iii)___ afterward, as ready to buy a vanquished opponent a drink as to demolish his reasoning.

(A) (i) paradoxical, (ii) pugnacious, (iii) vindictive

(B) (i) inscrutable, (ii) pugnacious, (iii) magnanimous

(C) (i) academic, (ii) pugnacious, (iii) magnanimous

(D) (i) paradoxical, (ii) pugnacious, (iii) magnanimous

(E) (i) paradoxical, (ii) fastidious, (iii) magnanimous

13. *Signal: 'sound in conception but ___ in execution: what designers intended as a ___ intervention became a byword for waste.' (i) sound, (ii) disastrous, (iii) prudent.*

The policy was (i)___ in conception but (ii)___ in execution: what its designers had intended as a (iii)___ intervention became, through poor administration, a byword for waste.

(A) (i) enlightened, (ii) calamitous, (iii) governmental

(B) (i) enlightened, (ii) calamitous, (iii) ambitious

(C) (i) enlightened, (ii) lackluster, (iii) judicious

(D) (i) misguided, (ii) calamitous, (iii) judicious

(E) (i) enlightened, (ii) calamitous, (iii) judicious

14. *Signal: 'aim was ___ rather than literal: to ___ the spirit even where doing so required ___ its letter, sacrificing verbal exactness to fidelity of effect.' (i) free, (ii) convey, (iii) departing from.*

The translator's aim was (i)___ rather than literal: to (ii)___ the spirit of the original even where doing so required (iii)___ its letter, sacrificing verbal exactness to fidelity of effect.

(A) (i) idiomatic, (ii) convey, (iii) annotating

(B) (i) idiomatic, (ii) convey, (iii) translating

(C) (i) idiomatic, (ii) convey, (iii) forsaking

(D) (i) verbatim, (ii) convey, (iii) forsaking

(E) (i) idiomatic, (ii) paraphrase, (iii) forsaking

15. *Signal: 'at midday when the heat ___ every living thing into stillness … grows suddenly ___ at dusk, when nocturnal creatures emerge to hunt.' (i) still, (ii) subdues, (iii) lively.*

The desert, (i)___ at midday when the heat (ii)___ every living thing into stillness, grows suddenly (iii)___ at dusk, when nocturnal creatures emerge to hunt beneath a cooling sky.

(A) (i) inert, (ii) lulls, (iii) verdant

(B) (i) inert, (ii) coaxes, (iii) teeming

(C) (i) inert, (ii) lulls, (iii) arid

(D) (i) frenetic, (ii) lulls, (iii) teeming

(E) (i) inert, (ii) lulls, (iii) teeming

16. *Signal: 'A more ___ historian would have hedged … but Ravenna states it ___, brushing aside the ___ a careful reading would demand.' (i) cautious, (ii) boldly, (iii) qualifications.*

A more (i)___ historian would have hedged such a claim, but Ravenna states it (ii)___, brushing aside the (iii)___ that a careful reading of the sources would demand.

(A) (i) reckless, (ii) baldly, (iii) caveats

(B) (i) circumspect, (ii) baldly, (iii) citations

(C) (i) circumspect, (ii) baldly, (iii) archives

(D) (i) circumspect, (ii) tersely, (iii) caveats

(E) (i) circumspect, (ii) baldly, (iii) caveats

17. *Signal: 'technically ___ yet emotionally ___, faultless precision but the whole strangely ___, as if mastered without being moved.' (i) flawless, (ii) cold, (iii) lifeless.*

The quartet's playing was technically (i)___ yet emotionally (ii)___, each note placed with faultless precision but the whole strangely (iii)___, as if the musicians had mastered the score without ever being moved by it.

(A) (i) impeccable, (ii) detached, (iii) inert

(B) (i) impeccable, (ii) fervent, (iii) inert

(C) (i) impeccable, (ii) detached, (iii) intricate

(D) (i) impeccable, (ii) detached, (iii) monotonous

(E) (i) impeccable, (ii) detached, (iii) virtuosic

18. *Signal: 'a ___ distinction the jury found ___; unable to follow reasoning so ___, they fell back on their impression of character.' (i) fine, (ii) baffling, (iii) abstruse.*

The defense rested on a (i)___ distinction that the jury found (ii)___; unable to follow reasoning so (iii)___, they fell back on their impression of the defendant's character.

(A) (i) subtle, (ii) impenetrable, (iii) abstruse

(B) (i) subtle, (ii) impenetrable, (iii) tenuous

(C) (i) legal, (ii) impenetrable, (iii) abstruse

(D) (i) obvious, (ii) impenetrable, (iii) abstruse

(E) (i) subtle, (ii) tedious, (iii) abstruse

19. *Signal: 'once dismissed as ___, a mere swamp; only later did they grasp its ___ role … filtering water and ___ floods.' (i) worthless, (ii) vital, (iii) preventing.*

Conservationists once dismissed the wetland as (i)___, a mere swamp; only later did they grasp its (ii)___ role in the region's ecology, filtering water and (iii)___ floods that would otherwise devastate the coast.

(A) (i) expendable, (ii) indispensable, (iii) weathering

(B) (i) expendable, (ii) indispensable, (iii) forestalling

(C) (i) marshy, (ii) indispensable, (iii) forestalling

(D) (i) expendable, (ii) negligible, (iii) forestalling

(E) (i) expendable, (ii) indispensable, (iii) predicting

20. *Signal: 'neither ___, imposing her voice on every sentence, nor ___, passing flaws along untouched, but ___-intervening where writing falters yet effacing herself where it succeeds.' (i) domineering, (ii) passive, (iii) discerning.*

A good editor, she maintained, is neither (i)___, imposing her own voice on every sentence, nor (ii)___, passing flaws along untouched, but (iii)___, intervening decisively where the writing falters yet effacing herself where it succeeds.

(A) (i) overbearing, (ii) supine, (iii) discriminating

(B) (i) meticulous, (ii) supine, (iii) discriminating

(C) (i) overbearing, (ii) supine, (iii) editorial

(D) (i) self-effacing, (ii) supine, (iii) discriminating

(E) (i) overbearing, (ii) supine, (iii) prolific

Text Completion: word charge and connotation

node: grev.tc.C5

The skill. Every Text Completion clue carries a charge — a positive, negative, or neutral pull — and the fastest way to narrow five options is to fix that charge before you weigh precise meanings. Read the sentence for the word or phrase that colors the blank (a word of praise, of blame, of relief, of alarm) and decide whether the blank must be positive or negative to keep the sentence consistent. Then sort the options by their connotation: a word can name the right topic yet carry the wrong charge, and eliminating on charge alone often removes two or three choices at once. Only after the surviving words share the correct charge do you choose among them by specific meaning. Beware words whose dictionary sense seems neutral but whose connotation is decidedly loaded, and beware picking a strongly charged word when the clue is mild.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What word or phrase colors the blank, and does the sentence's logic make the blank positive, negative, or neutral?

Plan. Fix the required charge first. Strike every option whose connotation carries the wrong charge, then choose among survivors by specific meaning.

Solve. Select the option whose connotation matches the required charge and whose meaning fits the clue.

Check. Is the charge right, not merely the topic? Is the intensity matched to the clue rather than needlessly extreme or too faint?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

wrong-charge.
Selects a word whose connotation carries the opposite charge from what the coloring clue requires — a negative word where the clue is favorable, or vice versa.

connotation-blind.
Judges a word by its bare dictionary sense and misses that its connotation is loaded, so a word that seems neutral actually carries a charge the sentence forbids.

intensity-mismatch.
Gets the charge right but the strength wrong — an extreme word where the clue is mild, or a faint word where the clue is emphatic.

topic-attractive.
Selects a word tied to the sentence's subject that ignores the required charge altogether.

Practice

1. *Signal: 'won every reader's affection' colors the blank favorably, so the blank must be positive.*

Reviewers agreed that the memoir's ___ tone, warm without ever turning sentimental, won every reader's affection.

(A) confessional
(B) clinical
(C) genial
(D) rhapsodic
(E) acerbic

2. *Signal: 'dismissed the findings' and 'without deigning to read them' color the blank with contempt, so it must be negative.*

The senior chemist dismissed the graduate students' findings as ___, waving the pages aside without deigning to read them.

(A) quantitative
(B) preliminary
(C) flawed
(D) seminal
(E) puerile

3. *Signal: 'to the relief of the exhausted delegates' colors the blank favorably — the speech was mercifully short, a positive quality here.*

To the relief of the exhausted delegates, the closing address was ___, sparing them the interminable perorations of previous years.

(A) measured
(B) grandiloquent
(C) curt
(D) laconic
(E) extemporaneous

4. *Signal: 'so evenhanded that neither faction could claim him' colors the blank positively — the historian's fairness is being praised.*

The historian earned a reputation for ___ judgment, so evenhanded that neither faction could claim him as its partisan.

(A) dispassionate
(B) tendentious
(C) indifferent
(D) categorical
(E) documentary

5. *Signal: 'not the boon its backers proclaimed' flips the charge — 'boon' is positive, so the blank must name a subtle negative, an outward good that is really harmful.*

Skeptics warned that the subsidy was not the boon its backers proclaimed but a ___ gift, one whose hidden costs would outlast its benefits.

(A) conditional
(B) fiscal
(C) insidious
(D) ruinous
(E) salutary

6. *Signal: 'never wounding' and 'meant to make the prose stronger' color the blank favorably, so it must be positive.*

The veteran editor's ___ suggestions, never wounding and always meant to make the prose stronger, left new writers eager rather than defensive.

(A) caustic
(B) salutary
(C) rapturous
(D) workmanlike
(E) exhaustive

7. *Signal: 'stoking fears they knew to be baseless' colors the blank with malice, so it must be negative.*

Critics charged that the senator's speeches were deliberately ___, stoking fears they knew to be baseless in order to win votes.

(A) rhetorical
(B) incendiary
(C) temperate
(D) pointed
(E) voluble

8. *Signal: 'issuing clear orders while everyone around him gave way to panic' colors the blank favorably — steady calm, so it must be positive.*

In the chaos of the evacuation, the captain remained ___, issuing clear orders while everyone around him gave way to panic.

(A) imperturbable
(B) nautical
(C) frantic
(D) valorous
(E) detached

9. *Signal: 'recycling plots and phrases from a dozen better-known books' colors the blank with disparagement, so it must be negative.*

Far from breaking new ground, the novel struck reviewers as ___, recycling plots and phrases from a dozen better-known books.

(A) familiar
(B) prolix
(C) pathbreaking
(D) hackneyed
(E) abominable

10. *Signal: 'prided itself' and 'finding deep contentment in the barest of necessities' color the blank favorably — frugal simplicity as a virtue, so it must be positive.*

The commune's way of life was proudly ___: it wasted nothing and found deep contentment in the barest of necessities.

(A) miserly
(B) self-flagellating
(C) agrarian
(D) profligate
(E) ascetic

11. *Signal: 'quietly eroding a trust that had once seemed unbreakable' colors the blank with harm, so it must be negative.*

Years of small deceptions had a ___ effect on the marriage, quietly eroding a trust that had once seemed unbreakable.

(A) corrosive
(B) salutary
(C) gradual

(D) cataclysmic

(E) marital

12. *Signal: 'patient, conciliatory … turned bitter adversaries into willing partners' colors the blank favorably — soothing skill, so it must be positive.*

The negotiator's ___ approach — patient, conciliatory, and quick to find common ground — turned bitter adversaries into willing partners.

(A) emollient

(B) obsequious

(C) beatific

(D) abrasive

(E) bilateral

13. *Signal: 'dissent was crushed, the press was muzzled, and a heavy fear settled' colors the blank with oppression, so it must be negative.*

Under the new governor's ___ rule, dissent was crushed, the press was muzzled, and a heavy fear settled over the province.

(A) tyrannical

(B) genocidal

(C) benevolent

(D) provincial

(E) firm

14. *Signal: 'cross-checking every date against three separate sources' and 'earned the trust of even skeptical historians' color the blank favorably — admirable care, so it must be positive.*

The biographer's ___ attention to detail, cross-checking every date against three separate sources, earned the trust of even skeptical historians.

(A) cavalier

(B) pedantic

(C) biographical

(D) obsessive

(E) scrupulous

15. *Signal: 'a fantasy of perpetual motion that violated the most basic laws of physics' colors the blank with impossibility, so it must be negative.*

Engineers dismissed the inventor's proposal as ___, a fantasy of perpetual motion that violated the most basic laws of physics.

(A) ambitious

(B) misguided
(C) feasible
(D) mechanical
(E) chimerical

16. *Signal: 'warmth' and 'strangers left feeling like old friends' color the blank favorably, so it must be positive.*

The innkeeper greeted every weary traveler with such ___ warmth that perfect strangers left feeling like old friends.

(A) unctuous
(B) commercial
(C) effusive
(D) affable
(E) surly

17. *Signal: 'even specialists struggled to extract a single clear claim' colors the blank with obscurity, so it must be negative.*

The treatise, though learned, was so ___ that even specialists struggled to extract a single clear claim from its tangled prose.

(A) technical
(B) abstruse
(C) lucid
(D) unintelligible
(E) scholarly

18. *Signal: 'rebuilding her company from nothing' after 'bankruptcy and public ridicule' colors the blank favorably — resilience, so it must be positive.*

Despite bankruptcy and public ridicule, the founder proved remarkably ___, rebuilding her company from nothing within five years.

(A) stubborn
(B) brittle
(C) invincible
(D) entrepreneurial
(E) indomitable

19. *Signal: 'praise they plainly did not mean in hopes of winning his favor' colors the blank with servile insincerity, so it must be negative.*

The courtiers surrounding the young king were uniformly ___, showering him with praise they plainly did not mean in hopes of winning his favor.

(A) sycophantic
(B) deferential
(C) courtly
(D) idolatrous
(E) forthright

20. *Signal: 'its strength' and 'conveys complex ideas without fuss or ornament' color the blank favorably — plain clarity prized as a virtue, so it must be positive.*

Her prose never dazzles; its strength is a ___ clarity that conveys complex ideas without fuss or ornament.

(A) pedestrian
(B) unpretentious
(C) expository
(D) florid
(E) sublime

Text Completion: two competing signals

node: grev.tc.C6

The skill. Harder single-blank sentences carry two clues, not one, and the second clue can qualify, sharpen, or seem to pull against the first. The right word must satisfy both signals at once, so a word that answers only the nearest clue will often fail the other. Read the whole sentence and hold both signals in mind: a contrast word may set the direction while a following phrase narrows which precise negative or positive word will do, or a concession clause may pull one way while the main clause pulls another and the blank must honor the winner. When two clues appear to conflict, the sentence almost always intends them to be reconciled by a single word that captures the tension — a word meaning outwardly one thing and inwardly another, or agreeable in one respect and limited in the other. Test each option against both clues; discard any word that obeys one signal while violating the second.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What are the TWO signals in this sentence, and how must the blank answer to both at once?

Plan. Name both clues. Predict a word that reconciles them, then reject options that satisfy only the nearer clue and break the farther one.

Solve. Choose the option that honors both signals simultaneously.

Check. Does my word obey the second clue as fully as the first? If the two clues seem to conflict, does my word capture the tension rather than collapse it to one side?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

nearest-clue-only.
Selects a word that satisfies the closest or most obvious signal while ignoring or violating the second clue in the sentence.

collapses-tension.
When two clues pull against each other, picks a one-sided word that answers one clue fully instead of the word that reconciles both.

over-reconciles.
Reaches for a middling or hedging word to 'split the difference,' when the sentence in fact demands a precise word that both clues jointly point to.

topic-attractive.
Selects a word linked to the subject matter that answers neither signal's actual logic.

Practice

1. *Signal 1: 'Although ... admired' sets a contrast, so the blank is negative. Signal 2: 'so ___ that students hesitated to ask questions' specifies WHICH negative — forbiddingly severe.*

Although the professor was widely admired, her manner in seminar was so ___ that even confident students hesitated to ask questions.

(A) unassuming
(B) erudite
(C) meandering
(D) gracious
(E) austere

2. *Signal 1: 'praised for its ambition' is positive. Signal 2: 'the execution ___' plus 'left the argument in pieces' is strongly negative — the two clauses pull opposite ways, and the blank must be the negative that reconciles them.*

Praised for its ambition, the study was nonetheless ___ in its execution, and a single overlooked variable left its central argument in pieces.

(A) slipshod
(B) ambitious
(C) meticulous
(D) uneven
(E) empirical

3. *Signal 1: 'charming in company' is positive. Signal 2: 'yet … alone … grew ___' plus 'brooding on slights' is negative. The blank must name a gloomy inwardness that coexists with public charm.*

Charming in company, the composer grew unexpectedly ___ when alone, brooding for hours on slights that others had long forgotten.

(A) restive
(B) morose
(C) prolific
(D) convivial
(E) serene

4. *Signal 1: 'far from settling the dispute' negates and points negative. Signal 2: 'the ruling only ___ it, inviting a decade of appeals' specifies the negative — it muddled rather than clarified.*

Far from settling the dispute, the court's ruling only ___ it, its tangled reasoning inviting a decade of contradictory appeals.

(A) obfuscated
(B) resolved
(C) adjudicated
(D) litigated
(E) complicated

5. *Signal 1: 'never openly rude' rules out overt hostility. Signal 2: 'a ___ courtesy that … conveyed contempt' demands a word for politeness that is itself the vehicle of scorn — the two clues meet in a single loaded word.*

He was never openly rude; his weapon was a ___ courtesy, an exaggerated politeness whose very perfection conveyed the contempt he would not voice.

(A) supercilious
(B) ceremonial
(C) effusive
(D) guarded
(E) boorish

6. *Signal 1: 'Although … brilliant' sets a contrast, so the blank is negative. Signal 2: 'so ___ … that colleagues avoided any project requiring his collaboration' specifies WHICH negative — off-puttingly harsh.*

Although undeniably brilliant, the researcher was so ___ in debate that colleagues quietly avoided any project requiring his collaboration.

(A) collaborative

(B) abrasive

(C) insightful

(D) difficult

(E) empirical

7. *Signal 1: 'With almost no funding' names a limitation. Signal 2: 'rivaling the productivity of institutions many times its size' demands a large positive; the blank must honor both.*

With almost no funding, the lab's output was nonetheless ___, rivaling the productivity of institutions many times its size.

(A) meager

(B) respectable

(C) prodigious

(D) experimental

(E) lavish

8. *Signal 1: 'generosity ... every lavish gift' looks benevolent. Signal 2: 'bound its recipient to repay him ... with loyalty' reveals ulterior motive; the blank must capture generosity-as-strategy.*

His generosity was more ___ than it first appeared: every lavish gift quietly bound its recipient to repay him one day with loyalty.

(A) philanthropic

(B) spontaneous

(C) measured

(D) magnanimous

(E) calculating

9. *Signal 1: 'Far from timid ... not ... any failure of nerve' rules out cowardice. Signal 2: 'her caution sprang from hard-won experience' demands reasoned wariness; the blank must satisfy both.*

Far from timid, she was merely ___: her caution sprang from hard-won experience, not from any failure of nerve.

(A) circumspect

(B) hesitant

(C) cowardly

(D) experienced

(E) reckless

10. *Signal 1: 'quick and much enjoyed ... sparkling' marks cleverness. Signal 2: 'cruel ... left ... target ... stung' marks bite; the blank must be brilliant and cutting together.*

Quick and much enjoyed, his wit had a ___ edge — sparkling and cruel at once — that left more than one target quietly stung.

(A) harmless
(B) genial
(C) mordant
(D) pointed
(E) verbal

11. *Signal 1: 'rigorously scholarly' keeps its depth. Signal 2: 'general readers followed its arguments as easily as specialists' demands accessibility; the blank must reconcile rigor with clarity.*

Rigorously scholarly yet never forbidding, the history was ___ enough that general readers followed its arguments as easily as specialists did.

(A) lucid
(B) erudite
(C) serviceable
(D) historiographical
(E) simplistic

12. *Signal 1: 'blustering threats' promises boldness. Signal 2: 'backing down the instant anyone pushed back' reveals cowardice; the blank must name the spinelessness the bluster concealed.*

For all his blustering threats, the manager proved utterly ___ when the moment for action came, backing down the instant anyone pushed back.

(A) menacing
(B) pusillanimous
(C) belligerent
(D) managerial
(E) cautious

13. *Signal 1: 'wildly popular' is positive. Signal 2: 'erasing within a single year the gains of a decade' is strongly negative; the blank must be the harm that coexists with the popularity.*

Though the reforms were wildly popular at first, their long-term effects proved ___, erasing within a single year the gains of a decade.

(A) mixed
(B) beneficial
(C) acclaimed
(D) legislative
(E) deleterious

14. *Signal 1: 'ease ... looked like careless spontaneity' presents effortlessness. Signal 2: 'concealed years of grinding, invisible rehearsal' reveals labor; the blank must mean effort disguised as ease.*

Her onstage ease was entirely ___: what looked like careless spontaneity in fact concealed years of grinding, invisible rehearsal.

(A) theatrical
(B) improvised
(C) studied
(D) spontaneous
(E) polished

15. *Signal 1: 'a commercial failure' is negative. Signal 2: 'shaping the work of directors for a generation' demands vast influence; the blank must honor both at once.*

A commercial failure on release, the film nonetheless exerted a ___ influence, shaping the work of directors for a generation to come.

(A) seminal
(B) modest
(C) lucrative
(D) negligible
(E) commercial

16. *Signal 1: 'No longer the naive idealist' marks a change away from trust. Signal 2: 'quick to suspect a hidden motive' demands settled cynicism; the blank must satisfy both.*

No longer the naive idealist of his youth, the senator had grown ___, quick to suspect a hidden motive behind even the most generous offer.

(A) credulous
(B) jaundiced
(C) wary
(D) idealistic
(E) senatorial

17. *Signal 1: 'praised his honesty' is positive. Signal 2: 'no regard for the feelings they crushed' is negative; the blank must be honesty carried to a wounding excess.*

Admirers praised his honesty, but his candor could turn ___, blurting hard truths with no regard for the feelings they crushed.

(A) tactless
(B) considerate
(C) forthright

(D) loquacious

(E) direct

18. *Signal 1: 'equipment ... hopelessly outdated' names a limitation. Signal 2: 'still set the standard for the entire field' demands rigorous methods; the blank must reconcile the two.*

Their equipment was hopelessly outdated, yet their methods were so ___ that the data they produced still set the standard for the entire field.

(A) instrumental

(B) exacting

(C) adequate

(D) haphazard

(E) obsolete

19. *Signal 1: 'placid surface she presented' shows outward calm. Signal 2: 'a fury she could barely contain' reveals inner rage; the blank must mean a calm that only masks turmoil.*

Her composure was entirely ___: the placid surface she presented to the board was stretched taut over a fury she could barely contain.

(A) placid

(B) feigned

(C) corporate

(D) genuine

(E) fragile

20. *Signal 1: 'seductively elegant ... looked compelling at a glance' marks surface plausibility. Signal 2: 'dissolved the moment any evidence was demanded' marks falsity; the blank must be plausible-yet-false.*

Seductively elegant, the whole argument rested on a single ___ premise — one that looked compelling at a glance yet dissolved the moment any evidence was demanded.

(A) compelling

(B) syllogistic

(C) specious

(D) irrefutable

(E) questionable

Answer Key — Text Completion

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q8
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q9
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q10
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** ignores-signal; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** ignores-signal; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q13
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q14
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q16
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — read the logical signal — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q14
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** ignores-signal; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q18
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** ignores-signal; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(D)** ignores-signal; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q9
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(D)** ignores-signal; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: two blanks — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q2
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** ignores-signal; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q7
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(C)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(D)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q14
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q15
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** ignores-signal; **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge; **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-charge; **(C)** ignores-signal; **(D)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q18
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** ignores-signal; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** right-direction-wrong-word.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: three blanks — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** right-direction-wrong-word; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** opposite-charge; **(E)** ignores-signal.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q1
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** connotation-blind; **(D)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** wrong-charge.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** connotation-blind; **(C)** intensity-mismatch; **(D)** wrong-charge.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(B)** wrong-charge; **(C)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-charge; **(C)** connotation-blind; **(D)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(D)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** wrong-charge.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-charge; **(C)** intensity-mismatch; **(D)** connotation-blind; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q7
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** connotation-blind.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** connotation-blind.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q9
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(E)** intensity-mismatch.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q10
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(B)** intensity-mismatch; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** wrong-charge.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-charge; **(C)** connotation-blind; **(D)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** connotation-blind; **(C)** intensity-mismatch; **(D)** wrong-charge; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** intensity-mismatch; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** connotation-blind.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q14
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-charge; **(B)** connotation-blind; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** intensity-mismatch.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q15
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(B)** intensity-mismatch; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q16
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** wrong-charge.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(B)** wrong-charge; **(C)** intensity-mismatch; **(D)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** connotation-blind; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** intensity-mismatch; **(E)** wrong-charge.

Text Completion: word charge and connotation — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** connotation-blind; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** wrong-charge; **(E)** intensity-mismatch.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** nearest-clue-only; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** collapses-tension; **(D)** nearest-clue-only.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** nearest-clue-only; **(C)** collapses-tension; **(D)** over-reconciles; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** over-reconciles; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** nearest-clue-only; **(E)** collapses-tension.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** collapses-tension; **(C)** nearest-clue-only; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** over-reconciles.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q5
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** topic-attractive; **(C)** nearest-clue-only; **(D)** over-reconciles; **(E)** collapses-tension.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** collapses-tension; **(C)** nearest-clue-only; **(D)** over-reconciles; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** nearest-clue-only; **(B)** over-reconciles; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** collapses-tension.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** collapses-tension; **(C)** over-reconciles; **(D)** nearest-clue-only.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** over-reconciles; **(C)** nearest-clue-only; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** collapses-tension.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** collapses-tension; **(B)** nearest-clue-only; **(D)** over-reconciles; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** nearest-clue-only; **(C)** over-reconciles; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** collapses-tension.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q12
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** collapses-tension; **(C)** nearest-clue-only; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** over-reconciles.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** over-reconciles; **(B)** collapses-tension; **(C)** nearest-clue-only; **(D)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q14
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(B)** collapses-tension; **(D)** nearest-clue-only; **(E)** over-reconciles.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** over-reconciles; **(C)** collapses-tension; **(D)** nearest-clue-only; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** collapses-tension; **(C)** over-reconciles; **(D)** nearest-clue-only; **(E)** topic-attractive.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** collapses-tension; **(C)** nearest-clue-only; **(D)** topic-attractive; **(E)** over-reconciles.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q18
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** topic-attractive; **(C)** over-reconciles; **(D)** collapses-tension; **(E)** nearest-clue-only.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** nearest-clue-only; **(C)** topic-attractive; **(D)** collapses-tension; **(E)** over-reconciles.

Text Completion: two competing signals — Q20

Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** nearest-clue-only; **(B)** topic-attractive; **(D)** collapses-tension; **(E)** over-reconciles.

TRACK 2

Sentence Equivalence

Two words, one meaning, one sentence

"Words are, of course, the most powerful drug used by mankind."
— Rudyard Kipling

One blank, six choices, and you pick the two *that both complete the sentence and yield the same meaning. A single right synonym is not enough; the pair must agree.*

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs

node: grev.se.E1

The skill. Sentence Equivalence gives you one sentence with a single blank and asks for the TWO words that complete it so as to produce two sentences alike in meaning. That double requirement is the whole trick: each of the two words must fit the sentence's logic, AND the two words must mean nearly the same thing, so that swapping one for the other leaves the sentence saying the same thing. A word that fits but has no matching partner cannot be right, and a pair of true synonyms that does not fit the sentence cannot be right either. In this single-select adaptation each option IS a pair of words, and exactly one pair satisfies both conditions at once — both words fit, and the two are genuine synonyms. To find it, first predict the meaning the blank needs from the clue; then judge each pair on two tests. Reject a pair whose words each fit but do not mean the same thing (the two sentences would differ), reject a pair of synonyms that does not fit the clue, reject a pair where only one word fits, and reject a synonymous pair that carries the charge opposite to what the sentence demands. The winning pair passes both tests together: fit and equivalence.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What meaning does the blank need — and which pair supplies TWO words that both fit AND mean the same thing?

Plan. Predict the needed meaning from the clue. Apply two tests to each pair: do both words fit, and are the two genuine synonyms? Only the pair passing both survives.

Solve. Choose the single pair that both fits the sentence and is truly synonymous.

Check. Would swapping the pair's two words leave the sentence's meaning unchanged? Have I rejected pairs that fit-but-aren't-synonyms, that are synonyms-but-don't-fit, that fit only halfway, or that reverse the charge?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

pair-not-synonymous.
Selects a pair whose two words each fit the sentence but do not mean the same thing, so the two completed sentences would differ in meaning — violating equivalence.

synonyms-but-unfit.
Selects a pair of genuine synonyms that does not fit the sentence's logic, satisfying equivalence but not fit.

one-word-fits.
Selects a pair in which only one word fits the blank while the other does not, so the pair cannot yield two like-meaning sentences.

opposite-charge-pair.
Selects a synonymous pair that fits the topic but carries the charge opposite to what the clue requires.

Practice

1. *Signal: 'a maturity far beyond her years' is admiring, so the blank must mean 'praise highly' — and the pair must be two synonyms for praise.*

Critics were quick to ___ the young pianist, whose debut recital revealed a maturity far beyond her years.

(A) acclaim and question
(B) commend and evaluate
(C) extol and laud
(D) denigrate and disparage
(E) postpone and defer

2. *Signal: 'refused even to consider a concession' means stubbornly unyielding, so the pair must be two synonyms for immovable.*

Negotiators grew frustrated by the minister's ___ stance; on every point of substance he refused even to consider a concession.

(A) verbose and prolix

(B) adamant and affable

(C) pliable and tractable

(D) stubborn and shrewd

(E) intransigent and obdurate

3. *Signal: 'dazzling for a week and forgotten by the next' means short-lived, so the pair must be two synonyms for fleeting.*

The fame of a viral sensation is notoriously ___, dazzling for a week and forgotten by the next.

(A) perennial and enduring

(B) abstruse and recondite

(C) brief and dazzling

(D) ephemeral and evanescent

(E) transitory and coveted

4. *Signal: 'spared no one' and 'winced at the sharpness' mean bitingly harsh, so the pair must be two synonyms for cutting.*

The critic's ___ wit spared no one; even her admirers winced at the sharpness of her reviews.

(A) verdant and lush

(B) gentle and benign

(C) caustic and mordant

(D) acerbic and genial

(E) trenchant and playful

5. *Signal: 'Far from clarifying' reverses the direction, so the blank must mean 'obscure/hard to understand' — the pair must be two synonyms for impenetrably unclear.*

Far from clarifying the theory, the appendix only rendered it more ___; readers emerged more confused than when they began.

(A) dense and tedious

(B) recondite and abstruse

(C) lucid and perspicuous

(D) garrulous and loquacious

(E) convoluted and celebrated

6. *Signal: 'spinning out each brief errand into an hour of unsolicited reminiscence' means excessively talkative, so the pair must be two synonyms for talkative.*

The old sailor was insufferably ___, spinning out each brief errand into an hour of unsolicited reminiscence.

(A) garrulous and loquacious
(B) talkative and tiresome
(C) frugal and thrifty
(D) reticent and taciturn
(E) voluble and cantankerous

7. *Signal: 'checked and rechecked against the archive' and 'a model of scholarship' mean tirelessly diligent, so the pair must be two synonyms for diligent.*

Her ___ attention to every footnote, checked and rechecked against the archive, made the edition a model of scholarship.

(A) painstaking and haphazard
(B) negligent and slipshod
(C) nomadic and itinerant
(D) assiduous and sedulous
(E) diligent and meticulous

8. *Signal: 'a citizen without one seemed a curiosity' means found everywhere, so the pair must be two synonyms for widespread.*

By the end of the decade the smartphone had become so ___ that a citizen without one seemed a curiosity.

(A) ubiquitous and pervasive
(B) omnipresent and obsolete
(C) common and indispensable
(D) candid and forthright
(E) scarce and uncommon

9. *Signal: 'eroding the workers' health long before anyone traced the cause' means harmful, so the pair must be two synonyms for harmful.*

Prolonged exposure to the fumes proved ___, eroding the workers' health long before anyone traced the cause.

(A) deleterious and pernicious
(B) noxious and benign
(C) salutary and beneficial
(D) boisterous and rowdy
(E) harmful and insidious

10. *Signal: 'years of unchecked spending' and 'budgets … exhausted months before the fiscal year closed' mean recklessly wasteful, so the pair must be two synonyms for wasteful.*

The new director inherited a department made ___ by years of unchecked spending, where budgets were exhausted months before the fiscal year closed.

(A) extravagant and frugal

(B) wasteful and disorganized

(C) thrifty and economical

(D) brusque and curt

(E) prodigal and profligate

11. *Signal: 'sitting for hours in silence and rebuffing every attempt to cheer him' means gloomy and sullen, so the pair must be two synonyms for gloomy.*

After the verdict he grew ___, sitting for hours in silence and rebuffing every attempt to cheer him.

(A) withdrawn and bitter

(B) morose and saturnine

(C) buoyant and cheerful

(D) sullen and gregarious

(E) nimble and agile

12. *Signal: 'a single misstep meant a fatal fall' means fearlessly bold, so the pair must be two synonyms for daring.*

Only the most ___ of the explorers volunteered to cross the ridge in winter, when a single misstep meant a fatal fall.

(A) opaque and murky

(B) valiant and timorous

(C) audacious and intrepid

(D) timid and craven

(E) daring and experienced

13. *Signal: 'quick and sidelong whenever he thought no one was watching' means stealthy and secretive, so the pair must be two synonyms for stealthy.*

The clerk's ___ glances toward the safe, quick and sidelong whenever he thought no one was watching, first aroused the auditor's suspicion.

(A) furtive and surreptitious

(B) nervous and secretive

(C) clandestine and overt

(D) brazen and unconcealed

(E) florid and ornate

14. *Signal: 'bowing at every remark and echoing each opinion the prince expressed' means fawning and servile, so the pair must be two synonyms for fawning.*

The courtier's ___ manner — bowing at every remark and echoing each opinion the prince expressed — disgusted the more independent nobles.

(A) obsequious and servile

(B) turbulent and tumultuous

(C) flattering and calculated

(D) haughty and disdainful

(E) sycophantic and imperious

15. *Signal: 'gilded everywhere, mirrored on every wall' announcing wealth means showy, so the pair must be two synonyms for showy.*

The mansion's ___ decor — gilded everywhere, mirrored on every wall — announced its owner's wealth to anyone who stepped inside.

(A) showy and understated

(B) arid and parched

(C) ostentatious and flamboyant

(D) lavish and tasteless

(E) modest and restrained

16. *Signal: 'the same unhurried voice he used on a calm morning' even as crisis deepened means calm and composed, so the pair must be two synonyms for calm.*

Even as the crisis deepened, the captain remained ___, issuing orders in the same unhurried voice he used on a calm morning.

(A) composed and frantic

(B) calm and decisive

(C) flustered and agitated

(D) sordid and squalid

(E) placid and serene

17. *Signal: 'half-finished allusions that scholars have puzzled over for a century' means mysteriously puzzling, so the pair must be two synonyms for puzzling.*

The poet's final letters were maddeningly ___, full of half-finished allusions that scholars have puzzled over for a century.

(A) mystifying and mundane

(B) transparent and plain

(C) puzzling and unfinished

(D) bountiful and plentiful

(E) enigmatic and cryptic

18. *Signal: 'found their grants cut and their lectures cancelled' means openly hostile, so the pair must be two synonyms for hostile.*

The climate for dissent had turned openly ___; scholars who questioned the official line found their grants cut and their lectures cancelled.

(A) succinct and pithy

(B) hostile and unpredictable

(C) hospitable and welcoming

(D) adversarial and congenial

(E) antagonistic and inimical

19. *Signal: 'outlasting distance, quarrels, and the slow drift of forty years' means long-lasting, so the pair must be two synonyms for lasting.*

Their friendship proved ___, outlasting distance, quarrels, and the slow drift of forty years.

(A) transient and momentary

(B) garish and gaudy

(C) enduring and abiding

(D) durable and fleeting

(E) lasting and rare

20. *Signal: 'double shifts sustained for months without complaint' means tireless, so the pair must be two synonyms for tireless.*

The nurses' ___ effort through the long epidemic — double shifts sustained for months without complaint — earned the town's lasting gratitude.

(A) pungent and acrid

(B) unremitting and sporadic

(C) languid and listless

(D) tireless and selfless

(E) indefatigable and unflagging

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms

node: grev.se.E2

The skill. Sentence Equivalence gives you one sentence with a single blank, but each option is a PAIR of words, and a correct choice must pass two tests at once: both words must fit the sentence's

meaning, and the two words must be near-synonyms, so that either one alone would produce essentially the same sentence. Solve it the way you solve any completion: read the sentence's logic, predict the meaning the blank needs, and note its charge (positive or negative). Then judge every pair on both tests. The traps are engineered to fail exactly one test — a pair of true synonyms whose shared meaning does not fit the logic, or a pair that both fit but mean different things and so are not interchangeable — and a pair also fails the moment even one of its two words is wrong. Choose the single pair that satisfies both fit and synonymy.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. Each option is a pair. What meaning and charge does the blank need, and which pair is both fitting AND synonymous?

Plan. Predict the blank's meaning from the sentence's logic before reading options. Test every pair twice: do both words fit? are the two words near-synonyms? Reject any pair that fails either test.

Solve. Choose the one pair that passes both the fit test and the synonym test.

Check. Would either word alone give the same sentence? If not, the pair is not equivalent. Does the shared meaning obey the sentence's signal and charge?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

synonymous-but-ill-fitting.
The pair's two words are genuine synonyms of each other, but their shared meaning does not satisfy the sentence's logic, so the pair fails the fit test.

fitting-but-not-synonymous.
Both words could plausibly complete the sentence, but they mean different things, so they are not interchangeable and the pair fails the synonym test.

single-word-trap.
Only one word of the pair fits; the other has the wrong meaning or charge and is not its synonym, so the pair fails on its second word.

opposite-charge-pair.
The two words are synonyms of each other but carry the charge opposite to what the sentence requires, reversing its logic.

Practice

1. *Signal: 'so ___ that even devoted students found their attention wandering long before the final slide' calls for a negative word meaning boringly long and tiring. The correct choice must be a pair that both fits AND whose two words are synonyms.*

   The lecture was so ___ that even the professor's most devoted students found their attention

wandering long before the final slide.

(A) riveting and gripping
(B) confusing and lengthy
(C) terse and laconic
(D) tedious and wearisome
(E) tedious and profound

2. *Signal: 'Far from being the ruthless negotiator … yielding on point after point until the deal collapsed under its own concessions' means the blank is positive-for-yielding — inclined to give in. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

Far from being the ruthless negotiator his rivals had warned about, Mr. Okafor proved unexpectedly ___, yielding on point after point until the deal collapsed under its own concessions.

(A) timid and inexperienced
(B) obdurate and intractable
(C) gregarious and sociable
(D) compliant and shrewd
(E) acquiescent and compliant

3. *Signal: critics 'expected … more austere' but were 'surprised by' textures that 'layered melody upon countermelody until the ear could scarcely follow' — the blank is positive and means richly abundant or lavish. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

Critics who expected the composer's late work to grow more austere were surprised by its ___ textures, which layered melody upon countermelody until the ear could scarcely follow.

(A) sumptuous and dissonant
(B) raucous and strident
(C) opulent and sumptuous
(D) spare and unadorned
(E) intricate and unfamiliar

4. *Signal: the dash defines the blank — 'a handful of anecdotes dressed up in the language of statistics' means the evidence was weak and insubstantial. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

The committee's report, for all its show of rigor, rested on ___ evidence — a handful of anecdotes dressed up in the language of statistics.

(A) tenuous and flimsy
(B) flimsy and exhaustive
(C) voluminous and copious
(D) incontrovertible and irrefutable

(E) anecdotal and secondhand

5. *Signal: 'What the biographer presents as candor the reader may come to see as mere ___: a calculated display of frankness meant less to reveal the subject than to disarm suspicion of what remains hidden' — the blank is negative and means a studied, artificial show. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

What the biographer presents as candor the reader may come to see as mere ___: a calculated display of frankness meant less to reveal the subject than to disarm suspicion of what remains hidden.

(A) affectation and pretense

(B) sincerity and earnestness

(C) reticence and taciturnity

(D) strategy and vanity

(E) pretense and disclosure

6. *Signal: 'the smallest interruption … could provoke a thunderous rebuke' calls for a word meaning quick-tempered. The correct choice must be a pair that both fits AND whose two words are synonyms.*

Age had made the old judge ___; the smallest interruption in his courtroom could provoke a thunderous rebuke.

(A) itinerant and nomadic

(B) irascible and choleric

(C) irritable and imperious

(D) testy and affable

(E) placid and easygoing

7. *Signal: 'dancing at every wedding and outlasting guests half her age' calls for a word meaning lively and full of energy. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

At eighty she remained remarkably ___, dancing at every wedding and outlasting guests half her age.

(A) opaque and murky

(B) spirited and lethargic

(C) languid and torpid

(D) energetic and cheerful

(E) vivacious and sprightly

8. *Signal: 'no taunt, no setback, no sudden reversal ever seemed to ruffle him' calls for a word meaning unshakeably calm. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

What unsettled his opponents most was his ___ composure: no taunt, no setback, no sudden reversal ever seemed to ruffle him.

(A) excitable and skittish

(B) imperturbable and unflappable

(C) florid and ornate

(D) unruffled and volatile

(E) steady and confident

9. *Signal: 'won praise from every quarter of the divided town' calls for a word meaning praiseworthy. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

The volunteers' ___ efforts to rebuild the school won praise from every quarter of the divided town.

(A) deplorable and reprehensible

(B) praiseworthy and tireless

(C) admirable and negligible

(D) arid and parched

(E) laudable and commendable

10. *Signal: 'far more than the lawyers had expected to extract' calls for a word meaning abundant. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

The witness offered ___ detail — dates, names, overheard remarks — far more than the lawyers had expected to extract.

(A) brusque and curt

(B) plentiful and scanty

(C) copious and profuse

(D) meager and sparse

(E) abundant and precise

11. *Signal: 'suspended the term and spoke of second chances' when the maximum was expected calls for a word meaning merciful and mild. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

Expecting the maximum sentence, the defendant was astonished by so ___ a judge, who suspended the term and spoke of second chances.

(A) merciful and cautious

(B) severe and punitive

(C) sodden and drenched

(D) forgiving and vindictive

(E) lenient and clement

12. *Signal: 'promising each faction exactly what it wished to hear while planning to betray them all' calls for a word meaning two-faced and deceptive. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

Beneath his genial surface the manager was thoroughly ___, promising each faction exactly what it wished to hear while planning to betray them all.

(A) candid and guileless

(B) dishonest and forthright

(C) deceptive and ambitious

(D) duplicitous and deceitful

(E) sprightly and nimble

13. *Signal: 'a bare cell, a single meal, no comfort beyond a wooden stool' calls for a word meaning austere and self-denying. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

The monk's ___ existence — a bare cell, a single meal, no comfort beyond a wooden stool — struck the visiting journalists as almost inhuman.

(A) turgid and bombastic

(B) luxurious and sumptuous

(C) ascetic and spartan

(D) frugal and lavish

(E) austere and solitary

14. *Signal: 'teaching a term here and a season there, never keeping the same address for a full year' calls for a word meaning wandering. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

For a decade he led an ___ life, teaching a term here and a season there, never keeping the same address for a full year.

(A) candid and frank

(B) nomadic and sedentary

(C) unsettled and impoverished

(D) itinerant and peripatetic

(E) settled and rooted

15. *Signal: 'not the result of shoddy assembly; no amount of careful manufacture could remove it' calls for a word meaning built into the thing itself. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

The flaw was ___ to the design itself, not the result of shoddy assembly; no amount of careful manufacture could remove it.

(A) extrinsic and external

(B) inherent and intrinsic

(C) garish and lurid

(D) fundamental and obvious

(E) innate and incidental

16. *Signal: 'trading jokes and inquiries after each other's families' despite disagreement calls for a word meaning warmly friendly. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

Though they disagreed on nearly everything, the two senators remained ___ in private, trading jokes and inquiries after each other's families.

(A) cordial and affable

(B) frosty and aloof

(C) friendly and candid

(D) sodden and waterlogged

(E) genial and hostile

17. *Signal: 'mending old coats and balking at any purchase she judged unnecessary' calls for a word meaning thrifty and sparing. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

Raised in hard times, she stayed ___ even after the fortune came, mending old coats and balking at any purchase she judged unnecessary.

(A) extravagant and spendthrift

(B) sparing and profligate

(C) thrifty and cautious

(D) vociferous and clamorous

(E) frugal and economical

18. *Signal: 'a decade in prison for offenses that had once drawn a modest fine' calls for a word meaning harshly severe. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

The new penalties were widely condemned as ___: a decade in prison for offenses that had once drawn a modest fine.

(A) stringent and lenient

(B) prolix and verbose

(C) harsh and unprecedented

(D) lax and permissive

(E) draconian and severe

19. *Signal: 'three sentences at most' that fits 'without crowding the headline' calls for a word meaning brief and to the point. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

The editor demanded a ___ summary — three sentences at most — that would fit above the fold without crowding the headline.

(A) brief and readable

(B) succinct and concise

(C) verbose and long-winded

(D) opulent and lavish

(E) terse and rambling

20. *Signal: 'wore the trappings of logic … yet collapsed the moment one examined its false first assumption' calls for a word meaning only apparently valid, actually false. Need a synonymous, fitting pair.*

The argument was ___: it wore the trappings of logic — premises, inferences, a confident conclusion — yet collapsed the moment one examined its false first assumption.

(A) specious and spurious

(B) fallacious and sound

(C) sonorous and resonant

(D) flawed and elaborate

(E) cogent and valid

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning

node: grev.se.E3

The skill. Sentence Equivalence asks you to choose the option that best completes a single-blank sentence, but each option is a PAIR of words, and a correct choice must pass two tests at once: both words must fit the sentence, and the two must be near-synonyms, so either alone would yield essentially the same sentence. The added difficulty here is nuance: the word the sentence wants often appears in a less common, secondary sense — arresting can mean striking rather than stopping, to brook can mean to tolerate, to temper can mean to moderate, to flag can mean to weaken, pedestrian can mean dull. A correct pair may look wrong if you test only a word's everyday meaning, and a distractor may bait you with that everyday meaning instead. Read the sentence's logic, ask what meaning the blank truly needs, and be willing to recover a word's secondary sense before you judge fit and synonymy. Choose the single pair that passes both tests in the sense the sentence demands.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. Each option is a pair, and the word the sentence wants may be in a secondary sense. What meaning does the blank actually need?

Plan. Predict the needed meaning from the sentence's logic. For each word, recover any secondary sense before judging. Then apply both SE tests — fit and synonymy — in that sense.

Solve. Choose the pair whose two words share the needed (possibly secondary) meaning and both fit.

Check. Am I testing each word in its relevant sense, not just its everyday one? Are the two words truly interchangeable here?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

primary-sense-trap.
Judges a word only by its common, primary meaning and so misreads its fit — either rejecting the correct secondary sense or selecting a pair that fits only the everyday meaning.

fitting-but-not-synonymous.
Both words could plausibly complete the sentence, but they mean different things, so they are not interchangeable and the pair fails the synonym test.

synonymous-but-ill-fitting.
The two words are genuine synonyms, but their shared meaning does not fit the sentence's logic — often the right topic but the wrong idea.

single-word-trap.
Only one word of the pair fits; its partner has the wrong meaning or the opposite charge and is not its synonym, so the pair fails on its second word.

Practice

1. *Signal: the portrait 'seemed to follow visitors across the room, halting even the most hurried among them' — the blank means striking, attention-seizing. Note the needed word may use a secondary sense: 'arresting' meaning striking, not stopping.*

The gallery's centerpiece was an ___ portrait whose gaze seemed to follow visitors across the room, halting even the most hurried among them.

(A) arresting and forgettable
(B) arresting and striking
(C) garish and gaudy
(D) detaining and immobilizing
(E) striking and enormous

2. *Signal: a general 'of famous severity' who dismisses officers merely for questioning an order would ___ no dissent — the blank means to tolerate. Recover the secondary senses: to brook = to tolerate; to countenance = to permit.*

A commander of famous severity, the general would ___ no dissent in the ranks, dismissing officers who so much as questioned an order.

(A) chronicle and record

(B) countenance and instigate

(C) ford and traverse

(D) brook and countenance

(E) tolerate and pardon

3. *Signal: 'softening the boldest claims until they could survive a skeptic's scrutiny' — the blank means to moderate. Recover the secondary senses: to temper = to moderate; to qualify = to limit or soften a statement.*

The editor urged the young essayist to ___ her sweeping generalizations, softening the boldest claims until they could survive a skeptic's scrutiny.

(A) qualify and inflate

(B) soften and abandon

(C) harden and strengthen

(D) annotate and gloss

(E) temper and qualify

4. *Signal: 'their once-steady strides shortening as fatigue overtook them' — the blank means to lose strength, to tire. Recover the secondary sense: to flag = to weaken, not to signal or a banner.*

Toward the marathon's final miles even the seasoned runners began to ___, their once-steady strides shortening as fatigue overtook them.

(A) weaken and stumble

(B) wane and surge

(C) flag and wane

(D) scatter and disperse

(E) signal and gesture

5. *Signal: 'page after page of unremarkable observation, enlivened by not a single original thought' — the blank means dull and commonplace. Recover the secondary sense: pedestrian = unimaginative, not 'on foot.'*

For a thinker so celebrated, his memoir is curiously ___: page after page of unremarkable observation, enlivened by not a single original thought.

(A) prosaic and luminous

(B) abstruse and recondite

(C) pedestrian and prosaic

(D) ambulatory and itinerant

(E) dull and derivative

6. *Signal: 'halting its spread before it reached the capital' — the blank means to restrain or hold back. Recover the secondary sense: to check = to curb or restrain, not to examine or mark.*

Only a strict quarantine could ___ the epidemic's advance, halting its spread before it reached the capital.

(A) examine and inspect

(B) tally and count

(C) check and curb

(D) restrain and accelerate

(E) slow and eradicate

7. *Signal: 'the principle from which all her other commitments followed' — the blank means chief or foremost. Recover the secondary sense: cardinal = principal, not the bird or the color red.*

Honesty was the ___ virtue of her moral code, the principle from which all her other commitments followed.

(A) principal and trivial

(B) crimson and scarlet

(C) cherished and enduring

(D) innate and inborn

(E) cardinal and principal

8. *Signal: 'so the topic hung unspoken over the entire dinner' — the blank means to raise or introduce a subject. Recover the secondary sense: to broach = to bring up, not to pierce a cask.*

No one dared ___ the delicate subject of the inheritance, so the topic hung unspoken over the entire dinner.

(A) revisit and settle

(B) introduce and suppress

(C) tap and pierce

(D) conclude and finish

(E) broach and raise

9. *Signal: 'a defeat that rankled for years' — the blank means irritating or vexing. Recover the secondary sense: galling = irritating, from gall meaning to chafe or annoy, not bile.*

It was especially ___ to lose to a rival who had trained half as hard, a defeat that rankled for years.

(A) tiring and wearying

(B) galling and vexing

(C) vexing and gratifying

(D) acrid and sour

(E) humbling and painful

10. *Signal: 'a gift the faculty called unmatched in a generation' — the blank means remarkable or extraordinary. Recover the secondary sense: singular = exceptional, not merely single or sole.*

Her ___ talent for languages set her apart from every other student, a gift the faculty called unmatched in a generation.

(A) innate and celebrated

(B) exceptional and unremarkable

(C) sole and solitary

(D) singular and exceptional

(E) bizarre and outlandish

11. *Signal: 'certain that the next quarter would reverse the slide' — the blank means optimistic or confident. Recover the secondary sense: sanguine = hopeful, not blood-red.*

Even as sales fell, the founder remained ___ about the company's future, certain that the next quarter would reverse the slide.

(A) candid and forthright

(B) calm and defiant

(C) sanguine and optimistic

(D) hopeful and resigned

(E) florid and ruddy

12. *Signal: 'rationing every drop against the days ahead' — the blank means to conserve or use sparingly. Recover the secondary sense: to husband = to manage frugally, not a spouse.*

Stranded with only a week's water, the survivors learned to ___ their meager supplies, rationing every drop against the days ahead.

(A) conserve and squander

(B) wed and marry

(C) husband and conserve

(D) cultivate and till

(E) ration and distribute

13. *Signal: 'emerging from each downturn leaner but intact' — the blank means to endure or come through. Recover the secondary sense: to weather = to withstand, not to erode or to forecast.*

The old firm had ___ every recession for a century, emerging from each downturn leaner but intact.

(A) withstood and succumbed

(B) endured and outgrown

(C) eroded and worn

(D) chronicled and recorded

(E) weathered and withstood

14. *Signal: 'stripped of every ornament, delivers each scene in a handful of plain, unadorned sentences' — the blank means austere or unembellished. Recover the secondary sense: spare = plain and lean, not extra or surplus.*

The novel's ___ prose, stripped of every ornament, delivers each scene in a handful of plain, unadorned sentences.

(A) merciful and lenient

(B) austere and ornate

(C) precise and vivid

(D) spare and austere

(E) surplus and extra

15. *Signal: 'buoyant one hour, sullen the next, then suddenly cheerful again' — the blank means volatile or changeable. Recover the secondary sense: mercurial = given to sudden mood changes, not made of mercury or merely quick.*

His ___ temperament made him impossible to predict: buoyant one hour, sullen the next, then suddenly cheerful again.

(A) cheerful and sunny

(B) mercurial and volatile

(C) swift and rapid

(D) spirited and difficult

(E) volatile and stable

16. *Signal: 'giving the whole scene a sudden pulse of life' — the blank means to bring to life or animate. Recover the secondary sense: to quicken = to enliven, not merely to speed up.*

A single vivid detail can ___ an otherwise lifeless paragraph, giving the whole scene a sudden pulse of life.

(A) lengthen and improve

(B) quicken and enliven

(C) accelerate and hasten

(D) enliven and deaden

(E) sharpen and hone

17. *Signal: 'sparing neither village nor field in its savage rampage' — the blank means fierce or deadly. Recover the secondary sense: fell (adjective) = fierce and cruel, not the past tense of fall.*

In the old ballad a ___ beast lays waste to the countryside, sparing neither village nor field in its savage rampage.

(A) fallen and toppled

(B) ferocious and gentle

(C) fell and savage

(D) roaming and hungry

(E) ancient and timeworn

18. *Signal: 'a bias so blatant that even his allies winced' — the blank means utter or flagrant. Recover the secondary sense: rank (adjective) = glaring and absolute, not foul-smelling or arranged in a row.*

To promote his nephew over far abler candidates was ___ favoritism, a bias so blatant that even his allies winced.

(A) rank and gross

(B) petty and shameless

(C) flagrant and subtle

(D) orderly and arrayed

(E) rancid and putrid

19. *Signal: 'she absorbed the repertoire long before she could read a note' — the blank means deeply immersed or imbued. Recover the secondary sense: steeped = saturated or imbued, from steeping rather than from a steep slope.*

Raised in a household ___ in classical music, she absorbed the repertoire long before she could read a note.

(A) steeped and immersed

(B) sloping and precipitous

(C) immersed and estranged

(D) boiled and brewed

(E) raised and schooled

20. *Signal: 'honed by decades of tasting, let her identify a wine's region and vintage from a single sip' — the blank means discerning or perceptive. Recover the secondary sense: discriminating = showing refined judgment, not prejudiced.*

A ___ palate, honed by decades of tasting, let her identify a wine's region and vintage from a single sip.

(A) experienced and famous

(B) hungry and ravenous

(C) discerning and undiscriminating

(D) discriminating and discerning

(E) prejudiced and biased

Answer Key — Sentence Equivalence

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q1
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** one-word-fits; **(B)** pair-not-synonymous; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair; **(E)** synonyms-but-unfit.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(B)** one-word-fits; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** pair-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge-pair; **(B)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(C)** pair-not-synonymous; **(E)** one-word-fits.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(B)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** one-word-fits; **(E)** pair-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** pair-not-synonymous; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(E)** one-word-fits.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** pair-not-synonymous; **(C)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair; **(E)** one-word-fits.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** one-word-fits; **(B)** opposite-charge-pair; **(C)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(E)** pair-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** one-word-fits; **(C)** pair-not-synonymous; **(D)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(E)** opposite-charge-pair.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** one-word-fits; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(E)** pair-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q10
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** one-word-fits; **(B)** pair-not-synonymous; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** synonyms-but-unfit.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** pair-not-synonymous; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** one-word-fits; **(E)** synonyms-but-unfit.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q12
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(B)** one-word-fits; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair; **(E)** pair-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** pair-not-synonymous; **(C)** one-word-fits; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair; **(E)** synonyms-but-unfit.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q14
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(C)** pair-not-synonymous; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair; **(E)** one-word-fits.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q15
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** one-word-fits; **(B)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(D)** pair-not-synonymous; **(E)** opposite-charge-pair.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** one-word-fits; **(B)** pair-not-synonymous; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** synonyms-but-unfit.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** one-word-fits; **(B)** opposite-charge-pair; **(C)** pair-not-synonymous; **(D)** synonyms-but-unfit.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(B)** pair-not-synonymous; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** one-word-fits.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q19
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge-pair; **(B)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(D)** one-word-fits; **(E)** pair-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: synonymous pairs — Q20
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonyms-but-unfit; **(B)** one-word-fits; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** pair-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge-pair; **(B)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(E)** single-word-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(B)** opposite-charge-pair; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** single-word-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** single-word-trap; **(B)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q5
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-charge-pair; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(E)** single-word-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(C)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(D)** single-word-trap; **(E)** opposite-charge-pair.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q8
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge-pair; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** single-word-trap; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge-pair; **(B)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(C)** single-word-trap; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(B)** opposite-charge-pair; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** single-word-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge-pair; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(E)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q13
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(B)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** single-word-trap; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(E)** opposite-charge-pair.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge-pair; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(E)** single-word-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-charge-pair; **(C)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(E)** single-word-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-charge-pair; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** single-word-trap; **(B)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(C)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(D)** opposite-charge-pair.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(C)** opposite-charge-pair; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(E)** single-word-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: trap synonyms — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(E)** opposite-charge-pair.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q1
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** single-word-trap; **(C)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** primary-sense-trap; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** primary-sense-trap; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** single-word-trap; **(B)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(C)** primary-sense-trap; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(E)** primary-sense-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** single-word-trap; **(B)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** primary-sense-trap; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** primary-sense-trap; **(B)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(D)** single-word-trap; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** single-word-trap; **(B)** primary-sense-trap; **(C)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** primary-sense-trap; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(C)** single-word-trap; **(D)** primary-sense-trap; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** primary-sense-trap; **(E)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(B)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(D)** single-word-trap; **(E)** primary-sense-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q12
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** single-word-trap; **(B)** primary-sense-trap; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** single-word-trap; **(B)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(C)** primary-sense-trap; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(C)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(E)** primary-sense-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(C)** primary-sense-trap; **(D)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(E)** single-word-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(C)** primary-sense-trap; **(D)** single-word-trap; **(E)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q17
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** primary-sense-trap; **(B)** single-word-trap; **(D)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(E)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q18
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(C)** single-word-trap; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(E)** primary-sense-trap.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** primary-sense-trap; **(C)** single-word-trap; **(D)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(E)** fitting-but-not-synonymous.

Sentence Equivalence: nuance and secondary meaning — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** fitting-but-not-synonymous; **(B)** synonymous-but-ill-fitting; **(C)** single-word-trap; **(E)** primary-sense-trap.

TRACK 3

Reading Comprehension

Reading for the point and its support

> *"Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, but to weigh and consider."*
>
> — Francis Bacon

Passages of one to several paragraphs followed by questions on the central point, supporting detail, inference, and the function of a sentence within the argument.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage

node: grev.rc.R1

The skill. A primary-purpose question asks what the passage as a whole is doing, not merely what it mentions. Read for structure: does the passage introduce a view and then revise it, weigh two positions, explain a phenomenon, or defend a claim? State that overall function in a short phrase using verbs like present, revise, contrast, explain, argue, or qualify. Then test each option: the right answer captures the whole passage in measured language. Wrong answers name a single supporting detail (too narrow), overstate the passage's commitment (too extreme), keep the topic but misstate the emphasis or tone (distortion), or raise something the passage never addresses or that contradicts it (out of scope).

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What is the passage as a whole DOING — presenting, revising, contrasting, explaining, or arguing?

Plan. Summarize the overall move in a short verb phrase in measured language. Test options against the whole, not a single sentence.

Solve. Choose the option that names the whole-passage purpose.

Check. Is my choice the overall purpose (not a detail)? Is its strength matched to the text? Does it keep the right emphasis and stay in scope?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

detail-as-purpose.
Names a single supporting detail, example, or the superseded view as if it were the passage's overall purpose (too narrow).

too-extreme.
Overstates the passage's commitment, using stronger verbs or claims (prove, condemn, refute entirely) than the measured text supports.

distortion/wrong-emphasis.
Keeps the topic but misstates the passage's emphasis, tone, or the direction of its argument.

out-of-scope.
Names something the passage never addresses, or that contradicts it.

Practice

1. *Historians once treated the medieval guild primarily as an economic institution — a cartel that fixed prices and restricted entry to a trade. More recent scholarship, however, emphasizes the guild's social functions: it insured members against illness, arranged funerals, and enforced standards of conduct that had little to do with profit. On this view, reducing the guild to a price-fixing body mistakes one of its activities for its purpose.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) describe the daily routines of a medieval artisan.
(B) demonstrate that medieval guilds fixed the prices of goods.
(C) prove that guilds served no economic purpose whatsoever.
(D) condemn earlier historians for their negligence.
(E) present a revised understanding of an institution's function.

2. *It is tempting to credit the sudden flowering of a scientific field to a single brilliant experiment. Yet the historian who looks closely usually finds that the decisive experiment succeeded only because a dozen quieter advances — better instruments, cheaper materials, a shared vocabulary — had already made its result legible to other researchers. The breakthrough, in short, is often less a cause than a symptom of a field ready to move.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) argue that individual experiments never matter to scientific progress.
(B) identify the single most important experiment in a field's history.
(C) celebrate the lone genius behind a famous discovery.
(D) qualify a common assumption about how scientific breakthroughs occur.
(E) recommend that scientists invest more in laboratory instruments.

3. *Critics have long debated whether the novel's abrupt ending is a flaw or a deliberate effect. Those who call it a flaw point to loose threads the author never resolves. But this objection assumes that resolution is the measure of a good ending. The novel's refusal to tie its threads may instead enact its central theme — that some losses admit no closure — and so the very feature critics fault could be the source of the book's power.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) concede that the ending is, on balance, a serious flaw.

(B) compare the novel with others that end abruptly.

(C) list the plot threads that the novel leaves unresolved.

(D) defend a disputed feature of a work by reinterpreting its function.

(E) establish that the novel is the finest of its era.

4. *Economists studying charitable giving once assumed that donors respond mainly to efficiency — the fraction of a gift that reaches its stated cause. Survey after survey, however, finds that donors give more when they can picture a single beneficiary than when told how many people a gift will help, even if the larger number represents far greater good. The finding does not prove donors irrational; it suggests that giving is driven less by calculation than by a felt connection.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) urge charities to publicize the number of people they help.

(B) explain how charities calculate their operating efficiency.

(C) offer evidence that revises an assumption about what motivates donors.

(D) report the exact fraction of a typical gift that reaches its cause.

(E) prove that donors behave irrationally when they give.

5. *For years the wetland was managed to keep water levels constant, on the theory that stability protects wildlife. Yet the marsh's rarest birds began to disappear under this regime, while species adapted to seasonal flooding thrived elsewhere. Managers now suspect that the fluctuation they had worked to suppress was not a threat to the ecosystem but a condition of it, and they have begun to reintroduce the very cycles they once engineered away.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) trace how evidence overturned a management practice and prompted its reversal.

(B) prove that stable water levels are always harmful to wetlands.

(C) compare wetland management with forest management.

(D) praise managers for having designed a stable-water regime.

(E) identify which bird species are rarest in the wetland.

6. *Astronomers cannot see most exoplanets directly; the glare of a parent star drowns out any planet's feeble light. Instead they watch for the star to dim slightly and at regular intervals as*

an unseen world crosses its face, or for the star to wobble as a planet's gravity tugs it back and forth. Neither method reveals what a planet looks like, yet together they have turned the detection of other worlds from a matter of speculation into a routine of careful measurement.

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) prove that directly photographing an exoplanet is impossible.

(B) describe how a star dims when a planet passes across its face.

(C) explain the indirect methods by which astronomers detect planets they cannot see.

(D) argue that the detection of exoplanets remains largely speculative.

(E) assess whether any detected exoplanet could support life.

7. *A translator of poetry faces a choice with no clean solution. Render the literal sense faithfully, and the music of the original — its meter, its rhymes, the weight of its sounds — falls away. Preserve that music, and the plain meaning must bend to fit. Some translators now argue that the honest course is to admit the loss openly, offering not a replacement for the poem but a candid record of what could and could not survive the crossing into another tongue.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) compare the difficulty of translating poetry with that of translating prose.

(B) prove that poetry cannot be translated at all.

(C) characterize a fundamental dilemma that confronts the translator of poetry.

(D) explain why rhyme is especially hard to reproduce in another language.

(E) recommend that translators always preserve a poem's literal meaning.

8. *City planners long defended parks on aesthetic grounds, as green relief from brick and stone. Recent studies point to a plainer benefit: residents who live within a short walk of a park report lower rates of anxiety and take more daily exercise, even after differences in income are accounted for. The finding recasts the park from an ornament — pleasant but optional — into something closer to a piece of public-health infrastructure, as worthy of steady funding as a clinic.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) present evidence that reframes how the value of urban parks should be understood.

(B) prove that parks matter more to a city than its clinics do.

(C) report the exercise habits of people who live near parks.

(D) describe how a city chooses sites for building new parks.

(E) defend the traditional view that parks are chiefly ornamental.

9. *The novice imagines that a jazz solo is invented from nothing in the moment, a pure outpouring of feeling. The seasoned player knows better. Years of practice lay down a store of phrases, scales, and rhythmic figures so thoroughly learned that they can be summoned without conscious*

thought; improvising is the art of recombining this stored material to fit a passing chord. What sounds like spontaneous freedom is in fact a freedom earned by long and deliberate preparation.

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) list the scales and rhythmic figures a soloist practices.

(B) celebrate the untutored emotion behind a great solo.

(C) prove that no genuine spontaneity exists anywhere in jazz.

(D) trace the historical origins of jazz as a genre.

(E) correct a naive view of what musical improvisation involves.

10. *The Roman road was not built for the ordinary traveler. Its remarkable straightness and durable paving served first the movement of armies and the couriers of the state, who needed to reach a frontier or carry an order with speed and certainty. That merchants and pilgrims later crowded these roads was a by-product, welcome but unintended. To read the network as a work of commercial planning is to mistake the uses a thing acquired for the purpose it was designed to serve.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) prove that merchants never traveled on the Roman roads.

(B) compare Roman roads with the road networks of later empires.

(C) describe the paving techniques that made Roman roads durable.

(D) distinguish the roads' original military purpose from the uses they later acquired.

(E) argue that the roads were principally instruments of commerce.

11. *A coral reef looks like stone, but each polyp shelters algae that photosynthesize within its tissues, trading sugars for shelter and for the polyp's waste. When the water warms too far, the coral expels these tenants and turns bone-white; deprived of its partner's food, it may starve. What appears to be a single animal is thus a partnership, and the reef's fragility in a warming sea follows directly from the delicacy of that inner bargain.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) describe the process by which coral turns white.

(B) recommend measures for cooling the world's oceans.

(C) prove that warming seas will destroy every coral reef on Earth.

(D) explain how a partnership inside the coral accounts for the reef's vulnerability to warming.

(E) argue that a coral polyp is a single, self-sufficient organism.

12. *Museums that acquired antiquities a century ago often insist that they rescued objects that might otherwise have been lost, and that their galleries make world heritage available to all. Advocates of return counter that safekeeping does not confer ownership, and that an object severed from its origin loses part of its meaning even as it is preserved. The dispute, they suggest, is less about the physical condition of the objects than about who has the right to speak for them.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) compare the collections held by two rival museums.

(B) endorse the museums' argument that safekeeping justifies ownership.

(C) present the opposing positions in a debate over returning antiquities.

(D) recount how one particular museum obtained its antiquities.

(E) prove that museums have no legitimate claim to any antiquity.

13. *When photography first appeared, critics denied it could be an art: a photograph, they said, was merely a mechanical trace of whatever stood before the lens, no more a work of imagination than a footprint in mud. Its defenders replied that the photographer chooses the moment, the angle, the light, and the frame, and that these choices shape the image as surely as a painter's brush shapes a canvas. The camera records, but a person decides what the record will contain.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) trace the technical development of the camera.

(B) prove that photography is a greater art than painting.

(C) concede that a photograph is only a mechanical record.

(D) rebut the claim that photography involves no artistic judgment.

(E) list the choices a photographer makes in composing an image.

14. *Physicians once pictured the bacteria of the human gut as harmless freeloaders at best and dangerous invaders at worst. Newer work portrays them as collaborators: they break down fibers the body cannot digest, synthesize certain vitamins, and help train the immune system to tell friend from foe. Disturbing this community with the careless use of antibiotics, some researchers warn, may carry costs that a narrower focus on killing pathogens had long kept out of view.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) prove that antibiotics should never be prescribed to anyone.

(B) explain the chemical steps by which gut bacteria synthesize vitamins.

(C) present a revised understanding of the role gut bacteria play in health.

(D) describe how gut bacteria are transmitted from person to person.

(E) defend the older view of gut bacteria as mere freeloaders.

15. *A census seems a neutral act of counting, but the categories it uses are choices with consequences. To sort a population by occupation, by religion, or by language is to decide which differences among people the state will make visible and which will disappear from its records. Historians of the census therefore read its forms less as mirrors held up to a society than as instruments that helped bring particular versions of that society into official being.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) prove that every census ever taken was deliberately falsified.

(B) explain how modern censuses protect the privacy of respondents.

(C) describe the occupational categories used in one particular census.

(D) argue that a census's categories actively shape the society it appears merely to record.

(E) defend the census as a neutral mirror of a society.

16. *The height of a Gothic cathedral was not vanity for its own sake. The pointed arch and the flying buttress, by carrying the roof's thrust outward and down through slender stone, freed the walls from their old burden of support. Walls no longer had to be thick and dark; they could open into vast windows of colored glass. The soaring interior that overwhelms a visitor was, in engineering terms, the reward for solving a problem in the distribution of weight.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) explain how structural innovations produced the height and light characteristic of Gothic churches.

(B) trace the spread of the Gothic style across Europe.

(C) argue that the cathedral's height was pursued purely for display.

(D) describe the colored glass set into a cathedral's windows.

(E) prove that Gothic cathedrals are the greatest buildings ever raised.

17. *How a small songbird, migrating alone at night for the first time, finds a wintering ground it has never seen has puzzled biologists for a century. Experiments in planetariums show that the birds orient by the pattern of the stars; other work suggests they also sense the Earth's magnetic field and can fall back on it when clouds hide the sky. No single cue seems indispensable; the bird appears to carry several instruments and to trust whichever the night allows.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) argue that bird navigation remains a complete mystery.

(B) explain how a bird orients itself by the pattern of the stars.

(C) prove that birds rely on the magnetic field above every other cue.

(D) describe the several cues by which a migrating bird finds its way.

(E) compare the migration of songbirds with that of whales.

18. *The same folk tale, collected in villages a thousand miles apart, will differ in a hundred small ways: the villain changes shape, the reward changes name, a forest becomes a desert. To the early collectors these variations were corruptions, distortions of some lost original they hoped to reconstruct. Later folklorists reversed the judgment. The variation, they held, is not decay but life — the mark of a story kept alive by being retold, each teller reshaping it to fit a listening room.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) explain the methods folklorists use to record tales in the field.

(B) defend the early collectors' view of variation as corruption.

(C) prove that no original version of any folk tale ever existed.

(D) catalog the ways a single folk tale can differ between villages.

(E) present a reversal in how scholars have interpreted the variation among folk tales.

19. *A simple model predicts that raising the minimum wage must cost jobs: make labor dearer, and employers will buy less of it. Yet when economists compared neighboring counties on either side of a state line after one state raised its wage, employment in the affected businesses scarcely moved. The result does not overturn the law of demand, but it suggests that the labor market is more complicated than the simple model allows, with employers able to absorb higher wages in ways the model leaves out.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) present evidence that complicates a simple prediction about the minimum wage.

(B) recommend the exact level at which the minimum wage should be set.

(C) prove that raising the minimum wage never costs a single job.

(D) defend the simple model's prediction that higher wages destroy jobs.

(E) describe the method of comparing counties across a state line.

20. *An archive can seem to speak with the plain authority of fact, yet it holds only what someone once thought worth writing down and worth keeping. The letters of the powerful survive; the lives of the poor, the enslaved, and the illiterate leave few papers of their own and appear, if at all, in documents composed about them by others. To read an archive well, then, is to attend not only to what it contains but to the silences its very survival has produced.*

The primary purpose of the passage is to

(A) describe the kinds of letters that powerful people left behind.

(B) praise the archive as a plain and complete record of the past.

(C) explain the techniques used to preserve fragile old documents.

(D) prove that archives are worthless as sources of historical truth.

(E) argue that an archive's silences must be read as carefully as its contents.

Reading Comprehension: inference

node: grev.rc.R2

The skill. An inference question asks not what the passage says but what it commits you to — a claim the passage supports without stating outright. Read for what must be true if the passage is true, then choose the option that follows from the text by a short, safe step. The right answer stays inside the passage's evidence and matches its strength, neither reaching past it nor merely repeating a line. Four kinds of wrong answer recur, and naming them protects you: an inference

that reaches further than the evidence allows (too strong — watch for all, never, only, complete); a statement about something the passage never takes up (out of scope); a claim that runs against what the passage says (contradiction); and a statement that is true in the wider world, or that merely restates a premise the passage assumes, but that the passage itself gives you no grounds to infer (true but not implied). When two options both look defensible, prefer the modest, fully supported claim over the impressive one.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What does the passage commit me to that it does not state — what must be true if the passage is true?

Plan. Summarize the passage's claim, then take one short, safe step beyond it. Match each option to the evidence and to its strength.

Solve. Choose the option the passage supports without overreaching.

Check. Is my choice supported by the text (not merely true in the world)? Is its strength matched to the passage? Does it stay in scope and agree with the passage?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

too-strong.
Draws an inference stronger than the evidence — a universal or absolute (all, never, only, complete) where the passage supports only a limited claim.

out-of-scope.
Names something the passage never addresses, so the text offers no grounds to infer it.

contradicts.
States a claim that runs counter to what the passage says.

true-but-not-implied.
A statement true in the wider world, or one that merely restates a premise the passage assumes, but that the passage gives no grounds to infer as its own conclusion.

Practice

1. *Ice cores drilled from polar sheets trap tiny bubbles of ancient air, and the ratio of oxygen isotopes in the surrounding ice varies with the temperature at which the snow originally fell. Because each annual layer can be counted like a tree ring, researchers can assign a date to any depth and read off the corresponding temperature. The deepest cores now recovered extend this record beyond 800,000 years — well past the point at which any other continuous archive of the atmosphere survives.*

   The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

   (A) A single core can supply both the date of a given layer and the temperature of the snow

that formed it.

(B) Tree rings can reveal past rainfall as well as a tree's age.

(C) Dating a layer depends on matching it against established tree-ring chronologies.

(D) Deep-core drilling has grown substantially cheaper in recent decades.

(E) Ice cores provide a complete record of Earth's climate over the past 800,000 years.

2. *When the Dutch masters of the seventeenth century painted domestic interiors, they lavished attention on the maps hung upon the back walls of their rooms. Modern viewers tend to read these maps as mere decoration, but for the original audience they carried a charge of civic pride: the same commerce that filled a household with silver and porcelain had been made possible by the Dutch mastery of the seas that the maps recorded. A painting of a quiet room could thus double as a quiet boast.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Every object in these interiors was meant as a symbol of national power.

(B) Paintings that included maps sold for higher prices than those without.

(C) An object a modern viewer dismisses as decorative may have carried a definite meaning for the painting's first audience.

(D) The original audience, like modern viewers, treated the maps as mere decoration.

(E) The seventeenth-century Dutch were a leading seafaring and trading power.

3. *A creole language emerges when children born into a community of adults who share no common tongue transform the makeshift pidgin they hear into a full grammar of their own. What is striking is that creoles arising in places as distant as the Caribbean and the Pacific converge on similar structural features, though the vocabularies they draw upon have nothing in common. Some linguists take this convergence as a window onto the mental machinery that every human child brings to the task of acquiring a language.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) A creole's grammatical structure is not fixed by the languages that supplied its words.

(B) Children learn languages more easily than adults do.

(C) All human languages share one identical underlying grammar.

(D) Creoles are today spoken by more people than the pidgins they replaced.

(E) Creoles in distant regions differ from one another in their basic structure.

4. *Before the railway, the price of grain in an inland town was governed almost entirely by its own local harvest; a poor season meant hunger, a good one meant grain too cheap to be worth carting to a distant market. The railway dissolved this isolation. Once a town could send and receive grain cheaply, its prices began to track those of far-off cities, rising and falling with harvests hundreds of miles away. Abundance and scarcity, once local facts, had become national ones.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Grain was a staple food in these inland towns.

(B) After the railway, a town's grain prices depended only on its own harvest.

(C) Building the railways required large amounts of investment capital.

(D) After the railway, a good local harvest no longer guaranteed low grain prices in a town.

(E) The railway erased all price differences in grain between towns.

5. *It is often said that a scientific theory must be falsifiable — that it must forbid some observation, so that finding one would refute it. Yet the history of science shows that a theory contradicted by an experiment is rarely discarded on the spot. Researchers first suspect the apparatus, the assistant, or some overlooked interference, and only after such defenses are exhausted do they turn against the theory itself. A single hostile result, in practice, refutes nothing; it merely opens a negotiation.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Scientific theories can never be refuted by experiment.

(B) Most experiments are ruined by faulty laboratory equipment.

(C) Falsifiability was proposed to separate science from non-science.

(D) A theory is abandoned the moment an experiment contradicts it.

(E) Whether an observation counts as refuting a theory is not settled by the observation alone.

6. *The slopes of an active volcano are among the most dangerous places to farm, yet they are often densely cultivated. Ash from past eruptions weathers into a soil unusually rich in the minerals that crops require, and this fertility can support harvests far larger than the surrounding lowlands allow. Generation after generation, families weigh the memory of a distant eruption against the near certainty of a good yield, and choose to stay.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Some farmers accept the risk of an eruption because of the yields the volcanic soil provides.

(B) Modern warning systems now give farmers ample time to flee an eruption.

(C) Crops require minerals in order to grow.

(D) Volcanic soil produces larger harvests than any other kind of soil on Earth.

(E) Farmers avoid the slopes of active volcanoes because of the danger.

7. *Before the printing press, a scribe copying a text spelled words much as he pleased, and the same word might appear three ways on a single page. Print changed the incentives. A printer who set a page of type could strike thousands of identical copies, and the labor of composing that type rewarded settling on one spelling and reusing it. Over the decades, the spellings that the busiest presses happened to favor hardened into the ones readers came to expect.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Scribes before printing had followed strict and uniform rules of spelling.

(B) Uniform spelling makes a text easier for readers to understand.

(C) The spellings that became standard were not necessarily chosen for being more correct.

(D) Every modern spelling can be traced back to a single early printer.

(E) Printers earned larger profits than the scribes they replaced.

8. *In a well-designed drug trial, some patients receive the medicine and others an identical-looking pill with no active ingredient. Often the second group improves too, sometimes markedly. This is why a new drug is judged not by whether patients taking it get better but by whether they get better than the patients on the dummy pill. A treatment that merely matches the dummy has, for all the trial can show, added nothing of its own.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Dummy pills are as effective as most real medicines.

(B) Some illnesses resolve on their own without any treatment at all.

(C) Most new drugs fail to outperform the dummy pill in trials.

(D) A drug is judged effective as soon as patients taking it improve.

(E) A patient's improvement while taking a drug is not by itself evidence that the drug worked.

9. *In an age before photography, to have one's portrait painted was costly, and the cost itself was part of the point. A large canvas, an expensive pigment such as ultramarine, the days of a sought-after painter's time — each announced that the sitter could command such things. The likeness mattered, but so did the display of resources that commissioning it required. A portrait hung in a hall told visitors not only how its subject looked but what its subject could afford.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) The cost of a portrait was incidental to its purpose.

(B) Only the wealthiest members of society ever had their portraits painted.

(C) Portrait painters were the best-paid artists of their day.

(D) Ultramarine was ground from a rare stone imported over long distances.

(E) A portrait could communicate something about its subject beyond mere physical appearance.

10. *A foraging honeybee that has found a rich patch of flowers returns to the dark hive and performs a looping dance on the vertical comb. The angle of the dance's straight run, measured against gravity, encodes the direction of the flowers relative to the sun; the length of that run encodes the distance. Hivemates who follow the dancer, touching her with their antennae, then fly out and arrive at a source they have never seen.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) A bee must see a food source directly before it can fly to it.

(B) Honeybees can tell apart the colors of different flowers.

(C) A bee that misreads the dance by any margin will fail to find the flowers.

(D) A honeybee can convey the location of a food source to bees that have not visited it.

(E) Honeybees are essential pollinators of many flowering plants.

11. *The merchants who sailed between Arabia and the coast of India did not choose their sailing dates freely. For half the year the monsoon blows steadily toward India, and for the other half it reverses and blows back; a ship that missed its season could wait months for the wind to turn. Trade across that ocean therefore moved to a fixed rhythm, and a port's busiest weeks were set less by demand than by the calendar of the winds.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) The timing of this sea trade was governed largely by the seasons rather than by the merchants' preferences.

(B) Monsoon winds arise from the uneven heating of land and sea.

(C) No ship ever crossed this ocean against the prevailing monsoon.

(D) Merchants could set sail across the ocean at any time of the year they wished.

(E) The goods carried on these ships were mainly spices and textiles.

12. *A person fluent in two languages does not simply switch one off while using the other; both remain active, and the brain must continually suppress the words of the language not in use. Some psychologists propose that this constant exercise of suppression sharpens a more general capacity for ignoring distraction. If they are right, an ability honed in the narrow task of speaking might quietly carry over into tasks that have nothing to do with words.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Most people in the world speak more than one language.

(B) Learning a third language is easier for those who already speak two.

(C) Bilingual people outperform others at every kind of mental task.

(D) A mental skill developed through language use might aid tasks unrelated to language.

(E) When a bilingual person speaks one language, the other becomes entirely inactive.

13. *The actors of the ancient Greek stage wore large masks with fixed, exaggerated expressions. In a theater that seated thousands on an open hillside, no spectator in the back rows could have read a human face, but a bold mask carried across the distance. The mask also let three actors, changing masks between scenes, share a dozen roles among them. What a modern audience might take for a crude device was in fact a precise answer to the conditions of the ancient performance.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) The mask was well suited to the practical demands of performing in a large open-air theater.

(B) The actors in the ancient Greek theater were exclusively men.

(C) Spectators in the back rows could clearly read the actors' facial expressions.

(D) Audiences paid an admission fee to attend these performances.

(E) Greek plays could not have been staged in any form without masks.

14. *A warm current flowing north along a coastline can carry the mildness of the tropics into latitudes that would otherwise freeze. Ports on such a coast stay ice-free through winters that lock harbors solid only a little farther inland, where no such current reaches. The sea, in these places, does more than border the land; it imports a climate, and a shift in the current's path would be felt on shore long before anyone traced the cause.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Ice-free ports handle more trade than ports that freeze in winter.

(B) Two places at a similar latitude can have very different winter climates.

(C) Warm water is less dense than cold water.

(D) Ocean currents are the only thing that determines a coast's climate.

(E) A coastal town's winters are unaffected by the currents that pass offshore.

15. *A merchant ship that sank with its cargo can tell a historian more than a warehouse ledger. The ledger records what a merchant meant to buy; the wreck preserves what was actually aboard on a single day — the mix of goods, their origins, the coins used to pay for them, all sealed together the moment the ship went down. Unlike a document, which is written to be read and may flatter or omit, the cargo of a wreck was never composed for anyone's eyes.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Most merchant ships of the period sank before completing their voyages.

(B) The cargo of a wreck was carefully arranged to impress later observers.

(C) A wreck's cargo can offer evidence less shaped by intention than a written record is.

(D) Saltwater corrodes many metals over long periods of time.

(E) Written records are worthless to a historian who can study wrecks.

16. *Recalling a memory was long imagined as replaying a recording — the stored trace read out unchanged, then filed away as it was. Recent experiments complicate the picture. A memory, once retrieved, seems to enter a brief unstable state before it is stored again, and details introduced during that window can be woven into the memory itself. To remember, on this view, is not simply to retrieve the past but to rewrite it a little each time.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) People who have sharper memories tend to be more successful in life.

(B) Eyewitness testimony sometimes proves mistaken in court.

(C) The act of recalling a memory can change the memory that is stored.

(D) A memory, once retrieved, is always stored again exactly as it was before.

(E) No memory is ever recalled the same way twice.

17. *The sonnet gives a poet only fourteen lines and a fixed scheme of rhyme, and a beginner is apt to feel the form as a cage. Practiced poets often report the opposite. The requirement to reach a rhyme by a certain point, or to turn the argument at the ninth line, pushes them toward words and connections they would never have stumbled on in open prose. The constraint, they say, does not silence invention but provokes it.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) A sonnet has fourteen lines.

(B) A strict formal constraint can prompt a poet to invention rather than prevent it.

(C) Poems written in fixed forms are always better than poems written freely.

(D) The sonnet was the most popular verse form of its century.

(E) Experienced poets find that the sonnet's rules stifle their invention.

18. *On a steep hillside, rain runs off fast, stripping soil and seed before either can do its work. The farmers who cut a slope into level terraces were not chiefly after tidy steps; each terrace catches the water that would have rushed downhill, holding it long enough to soak in and sparing the soil behind its wall. Where the technique took hold, land too steep to plow safely became land that could feed a village for centuries.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) The terraces were built mainly for their orderly appearance.

(B) Building the terraces required the coordinated labor of many households.

(C) Water flows downhill under the force of gravity.

(D) Terracing made it possible to farm slopes that would otherwise have been too steep to cultivate.

(E) Terraced fields yield more grain than any flat field ever could.

19. *The first person to own a telephone owned a useless object: there was no one to call. Each additional subscriber, however, made every existing telephone more valuable, since it added one more person who could be reached. A telephone's worth to any one owner thus depended not on the device itself but on how many others had already bought one — a peculiarity that let an early lead in subscribers compound into a lead rivals struggled to overcome.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) Early telephones were too expensive for most households to afford.

(B) A telephone's usefulness to its owner grew as more other people acquired telephones.

(C) The telephone eventually replaced the telegraph for most messages.

(D) A telephone's value to its owner was fixed regardless of how many others owned one.

(E) A telephone network with more subscribers can never be overtaken by a rival.

20. *A fleshy fruit is an expensive thing for a plant to make, and the plant gets nothing to eat from it. The payoff comes later. An animal drawn to the fruit swallows the hard seeds within and carries them, unharmed, wherever it wanders before they pass through and fall to the ground, often far from the parent and wrapped in a little fertilizer. The plant, in effect, pays an animal in sugar to plant its offspring at a distance.*

The passage most strongly implies which of the following?

(A) The plant benefits from making fruit because animals carry its seeds away from the parent.

(B) Fruit-eating animals prefer sweeter fruits to less sweet ones.

(C) Sugar is produced in plants through photosynthesis.

(D) A seed cannot germinate unless an animal has first eaten the fruit around it.

(E) The plant draws nourishment directly from the fruit it produces.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail

node: grev.rc.R3

The skill. A function question asks what a specified sentence or detail DOES for the passage, not what it says. Do not paraphrase the sentence; identify its job. Read the sentences around it: does the target support a claim, offer an example of it, concede a point before turning against it, qualify a generalization by naming an exception, answer an anticipated objection, or supply the cause of an effect just asserted? State that role as a verb phrase (to concede, to exemplify, to qualify, to rebut, to explain). Then test each option. Wrong answers restate the sentence's literal content instead of its function, assign a plausible-sounding role the sentence does not actually perform (often reversing its direction), overstate what the sentence accomplishes, or name a function that would require material the passage never raises.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What JOB does this sentence or detail do for the passage — support, exemplify, concede, qualify, rebut, or explain — as opposed to what it merely says?

Plan. Read the neighboring sentences to fix the target's role, and name that role as a verb phrase before reading the options.

Solve. Choose the option that names the function the sentence actually performs.

Check. Have I named a function, not a paraphrase? Does the direction match (concede vs. assert, qualify vs. deny)? Is the strength matched to the text, and does it stay in scope?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

literal-restatement.
Names what the sentence SAYS (a paraphrase of its content) rather than the JOB it does for the passage's argument.

wrong-function.
Assigns a plausible rhetorical role the sentence does not perform — often reversing its direction, as by calling a concession a claim or a rebuttal a concession.

too-extreme.
Overstates what the sentence accomplishes, claiming it proves, refutes, or denies more than the measured text supports.

out-of-scope.
Names a function that would require material or a purpose the passage never raises.

Practice

1. *The earliest cells left no fossils of their metabolism, so any account of how life first harnessed energy must be inferred rather than observed. Some biochemists reconstruct these pathways by identifying reactions present in nearly every branch of life, on the assumption that such ubiquity signals great antiquity. Admittedly, a reaction could become universal simply by conferring an advantage late and then spreading quickly. Still, when a pathway is both universal and energetically primitive, its distribution offers the best evidence we have of what the first metabolisms were like.*

The author includes the sentence beginning "Admittedly, a reaction could become universal" primarily in order to

(A) demonstrate that the reconstruction method is fundamentally unreliable.
(B) concede a possible weakness in the ubiquity-based method before reaffirming its usefulness.
(C) provide a concrete example of an energetically primitive reaction.
(D) restate the assumption that a reaction's ubiquity indicates its antiquity.
(E) introduce an alternative technique for dating ancient biochemical reactions.

2. *A translator confronts a peculiar bind: the more faithfully she renders a poem's literal sense, the more she risks losing the music that made it a poem at all. Consider a line whose power in the original depends on a pun that has no counterpart in the target language. A footnote can explain the double meaning, but explanation is not experience; the reader learns what the joke was without ever laughing. The translator must therefore decide, line by line, which of a work's inseparable virtues to sacrifice.*

The reference to "a line whose power in the original depends on a pun" functions primarily to

(A) prove that puns can never be conveyed in any other language.
(B) define the quality that makes a set of words musical.
(C) recommend the footnote as the translator's most reliable tool.
(D) supply a concrete example of the general difficulty the author has just asserted.

(E) concede that literal fidelity is ultimately preferable to preserving music.

3. *Cities that build more housing generally see rents rise more slowly than cities that build little, a pattern advocates cite when they call for loosening construction rules. The relationship, however, is not mechanical. A city that adds thousands of units may still grow more expensive if it simultaneously becomes a magnet for high earners, whose arrival lifts demand faster than supply expands. New construction eases prices only against a fixed appetite for a place; where that appetite itself is swelling, building may soften an increase without reversing it.*

The sentence "A city that adds thousands of units may still grow more expensive" serves primarily to

(A) restate the advocates' call for loosening construction rules.

(B) qualify the opening generalization by naming a condition under which it need not hold.

(C) concede that loosening construction rules reliably backfires.

(D) present statistical data on the migration patterns of high earners.

(E) deny that new construction has any effect on the price of housing.

4. *Historians of the early recording industry once assumed that phonographs simply captured performances that would have happened anyway. The format, though, quietly reshaped the music itself. Because a wax cylinder could hold only a few minutes of sound, bandleaders trimmed long improvisations and tightened arrangements to fit. Songs that had sprawled in the dance hall arrived on record compact and pre-planned. The technology meant to preserve a style thus became an unacknowledged editor of it, rewarding a concision the live setting had never demanded.*

The detail that "a wax cylinder could hold only a few minutes of sound" is included primarily in order to

(A) suggest that bandleaders resented the constraints of the new technology.

(B) prove that live performances were artistically superior to recordings.

(C) establish the precise year in which the phonograph was first invented.

(D) explain the mechanism by which the recording format altered the music.

(E) restate the historians' original assumption about what phonographs did.

5. *The placebo effect is often dismissed as mere wishful thinking, a patient's report unmoored from any bodily change. Yet in trials where patients received an inert pill openly labeled as such, some still improved — and improved along measurable axes, not merely in what they said. One might object that these patients were simply eager to please the researchers. But the same benefits appeared when responses were gathered anonymously, by staff with no stake in the outcome. Whatever the placebo effect is, it is not reducible to a courtesy extended to a hopeful physician.*

The sentence "But the same benefits appeared when responses were gathered anonymously" functions primarily to

(A) concede that the placebo effect is, after all, merely wishful thinking.

(B) answer a possible objection to the evidence the author has just offered.

(C) prove that inert pills can cure serious disease.

(D) recommend that every clinical trial gather patient responses anonymously.

(E) restate the definition of the placebo effect given at the outset.

6. *Geologists once dated lake sediments by counting the annual layers, or varves, that settle in still water: dark silt in winter, pale silt in summer. The method assumes one such couplet forms each year. Consider a lake fed by two seasonal floods rather than one; it may lay down two couplets in a single year, inflating any count that trusts the assumption. Careful workers therefore check varve tallies against independent markers, such as a datable ash layer from a known eruption, before treating a count as a calendar.*

The reference to "a lake fed by two seasonal floods" functions primarily to

(A) supply an example of a condition under which the counting assumption breaks down.

(B) concede that varve counting is more reliable than dating by ash layers.

(C) prove that varve counting can never yield an accurate date.

(D) introduce a separate technique for dating volcanic eruptions.

(E) restate the assumption that one couplet of sediment forms each year.

7. *Young songbirds of many species learn their songs by imitating an adult tutor, and a bird reared in silence produces only a rough, abnormal song. Granted, a few species sing normally even when raised in isolation, their songs apparently written into the genome. Yet these exceptions are rare, and even they often refine an innate template by listening to themselves. For most songbirds the evidence still points to learning, not instinct, as the chief sculptor of the adult song.*

The sentence beginning "Granted, a few species sing normally" primarily serves to

(A) concede an apparent exception before reaffirming that learning shapes most songs.

(B) offer a specific example of a bird raised in silence.

(C) recommend that researchers rear songbirds in isolation for study.

(D) establish that song is genetically fixed in most songbird species.

(E) restate the claim that young songbirds imitate an adult tutor.

8. *Basic models predict that a higher minimum wage should reduce employment, yet several studies find little job loss after modest increases. Because many local labor markets are dominated by a few large employers, wages there already sit below what a competitive market would set. A mandated raise in such a market can pull pay toward the competitive level without pricing workers out, since employers were underpaying to begin with. The textbook prediction holds only where employers lack this power to suppress wages.*

The sentence beginning "Because many local labor markets are dominated" chiefly serves to

(A) concede that minimum-wage increases always reduce employment.

(B) explain why the predicted job losses may fail to appear.

(C) prove that raising the minimum wage can never cost a single job.

(D) compare wage levels across different countries.

(E) restate the textbook prediction that higher wages reduce employment.

9. *The blue in many Renaissance paintings came from ultramarine, ground from lapis lazuli imported at great cost, and its presence is often read as a sign of a wealthy patron. That inference must be handled with care. Some workshops reserved true ultramarine for a patron's face or a saint's robe while filling broad skies with cheaper azurite, so a single blue background tells us little. Only a pigment analysis of the costly passages, not a glance at the overall palette, can confirm what a patron actually paid for.*

The sentence beginning "Some workshops reserved true ultramarine" primarily serves to

(A) concede that azurite was prized above ultramarine.

(B) qualify the inference by naming a case in which it can mislead.

(C) restate the claim that ultramarine signals a wealthy patron.

(D) describe the trade routes by which lapis lazuli reached Europe.

(E) prove that blue pigment never indicates a patron's wealth.

10. *Experiments show that a leading question can implant details a witness never saw, which casts doubt on confident testimony. One might protest that volunteers in a laboratory, unlike real witnesses, simply guess whatever will satisfy the experimenter. But the distortion persists when witnesses are warned that some questions may mislead and are paid for accuracy rather than agreement. The false memory, it seems, is not a performance staged for the researcher but a genuine reshaping of what the witness recalls.*

The sentence beginning "But the distortion persists when witnesses are warned" functions primarily to

(A) concede that laboratory volunteers merely guess to please the experimenter.

(B) recommend that courts forbid all leading questions.

(C) answer an anticipated objection to the experimental evidence.

(D) restate that leading questions can implant details a witness never saw.

(E) prove that eyewitness testimony is always worthless.

11. *Astronomers detect many planets by watching a star dim slightly as a planet crosses in front of it. Because the depth of the dip depends on how much starlight the planet blocks, a larger planet against a given star produces a deeper dimming. From the fraction of light lost, then, observers can estimate the planet's size relative to its star. A shallow dip that repeats every few days typically signals a small world circling in a tight orbit.*

The sentence beginning "Because the depth of the dip depends" chiefly serves to

(A) explain how the planet's size can be inferred from the dimming.

(B) describe how planets first condense from a disk of gas and dust.

(C) concede that the transit method cannot detect small planets.

(D) restate that planets are found by watching a star dim.

(E) prove that the dimming reveals the planet's exact chemical composition.

12. *A language rarely borrows words at random; it borrows where its own vocabulary runs thin. English, having absorbed a wave of French after the Norman conquest, acquired a second layer of terms for prestige and administration. Take the pairing of 'cow' and 'beef': the animal kept its plain native name in the mouths of those who raised it, while the meat took a French name at the table of those who ate it. Such doublets map, word by word, the social contours of who did what.*

The reference to "the pairing of 'cow' and 'beef"' functions primarily to

(A) recount the military course of the Norman conquest.

(B) concede that English in fact borrowed its words at random.

(C) restate the claim that a language borrows to fill gaps in its vocabulary.

(D) prove that every English food term derives from French.

(E) provide a concrete example of the vocabulary layering just described.

13. *Stopping antibiotics early is often blamed for breeding resistant bacteria, and patients are urged to finish every prescribed course. The rationale is not always sound. For some infections a shorter course clears the illness while giving resistant strains less time to gain a foothold, so a longer course can do more harm than good. The right length depends on the specific infection, and the blanket rule 'always finish the bottle' oversimplifies a question that turns on biology, not obedience.*

The sentence beginning "For some infections a shorter course clears" primarily serves to

(A) concede that stopping antibiotics early always breeds resistance.

(B) prove that completing a course of antibiotics is never beneficial.

(C) recommend a particular drug for a bacterial infection.

(D) restate the advice that patients should finish every prescribed course.

(E) qualify the standard advice by naming cases in which it does not hold.

14. *The asteroid impact at the end of the Cretaceous is widely credited with ending the dinosaurs, and a global layer of iridium marks the blow. To be fair, massive volcanic eruptions in India were already stressing the biosphere in the same era, and some researchers assign them a share of the damage. Even so, the abruptness of the extinction, falling precisely at the impact layer, keeps the asteroid at the center of most accounts, with the eruptions cast as an aggravating background.*

The sentence beginning "To be fair, massive volcanic eruptions" primarily functions to

(A) date the earliest appearance of the dinosaurs.

(B) offer a specific example of an iridium-rich rock layer.

(C) restate the claim that an asteroid impact ended the dinosaurs.

(D) establish that volcanism, not the asteroid, caused the extinction.

(E) concede a competing cause before restoring the asteroid to primacy.

15. *On a modern piano no interval except the octave is perfectly in tune, a compromise that puzzles newcomers. Because a keyboard offers only twelve fixed pitches per octave, it cannot supply the slightly different tunings that pure harmony would demand in every key. Tuners therefore spread the unavoidable error evenly, detuning each interval a little so that no key sounds worse than any other. The result sacrifices pure intervals to gain the freedom to play in all keys on a single instrument.*

The sentence beginning "Because a keyboard offers only twelve fixed pitches" chiefly serves to

(A) explain why the instrument cannot be perfectly in tune in every key.

(B) prove that the piano is musically inferior to other instruments.

(C) concede that pure harmony is impossible on any instrument whatsoever.

(D) recommend a specific procedure for tuning a piano.

(E) restate the observation that no interval but the octave is perfectly in tune.

16. *In many societies a lavish gift obligates the receiver to give back more, so generosity operates as a bid for status. A skeptic might say such exchanges are simply barter dressed up in ceremony. But barter settles a debt and ends a relationship, whereas these gifts deliberately leave the ledger unbalanced, binding giver and receiver in a tie that must be renewed. The aim is not to complete a transaction but to keep one perpetually open.*

The sentence beginning "But barter settles a debt and ends a relationship" functions primarily to

(A) rebut the skeptic's claim by contrasting gifts with barter.

(B) describe the goods most often given as ceremonial gifts.

(C) prove that barter never occurs in any such society.

(D) restate the claim that a lavish gift obligates a larger return.

(E) concede that these exchanges are merely barter in disguise.

17. *A catalyst speeds a reaction without being consumed, so a small amount can transform vast quantities of material. Because the catalyst offers the reacting molecules an easier path, one with a lower energy barrier to cross, more of them carry enough energy to react at a given temperature. The catalyst emerges unchanged at the end, free to usher the next molecules through. This is why industry prizes catalysts: a little can do the work of a great deal of heat.*

The sentence beginning "Because the catalyst offers the reacting molecules an easier path" chiefly serves to

(A) concede that catalysts are gradually used up in the process.

(B) prove that catalysts make heating entirely unnecessary in industry.

(C) list the metals most commonly used as industrial catalysts.

(D) restate that a catalyst is not consumed by the reaction.

(E) explain how the catalyst speeds up the reaction.

18. *The printing press is often said to have spread literacy across Europe almost overnight. The picture deserves tempering. In the first decades most printed books were in Latin and priced beyond ordinary means, so their readership scarcely differed from that of the manuscripts they replaced. Only as printers turned to cheap works in local languages did a broader public begin to read. The press made mass literacy possible, but it did not deliver that literacy on arrival.*

The sentence beginning "In the first decades most printed books were in Latin" primarily serves to

(A) concede that manuscripts reached a wider public than printed books did.

(B) qualify the claim of an overnight spread by noting an early limit on it.

(C) restate the claim that the press spread literacy almost overnight.

(D) prove that the printing press had no effect on literacy at all.

(E) identify the inventor of the printing press.

19. *Some species influence an ecosystem far out of proportion to their numbers; ecologists call them keystones. Remove the sea otter from a kelp forest, and the sea urchins it once ate multiply and graze the kelp down to a barren floor, taking countless other species with it. The otter is scarce, yet its predation holds the whole community in balance. A keystone's importance, then, is measured not by abundance but by the size of the gap its absence would open.*

The reference to the sea otter and the kelp forest functions primarily to

(A) concede that abundant species matter more than scarce ones.

(B) explain how kelp forests first become established.

(C) illustrate the keystone concept with a specific case.

(D) prove that removing any predator will destroy an ecosystem.

(E) restate the definition of a keystone species given at the outset.

20. *A theory earns scientific standing, on one influential view, only if some possible observation could prove it false. A critic may object that scientists cling to good theories even when observations clash, patching them rather than discarding them. Yet this response misreads the standard, which demands not that a theory be abandoned at the first anomaly but that it forbid something, that it stake a claim the world could in principle violate. A theory compatible with every conceivable outcome forbids nothing, and so explains nothing.*

The sentence beginning "Yet this response misreads the standard" functions primarily to

(A) restate the view that a scientific theory must be falsifiable.

(B) answer the critic's objection by clarifying what the criterion actually demands.

(C) recount the life of the thinker who first proposed the view.

(D) concede that scientists should discard a theory at its first anomaly.

(E) prove that every currently accepted theory is in fact unfalsifiable.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail

node: grev.rc.R4

The skill. A specific-detail question is answered by explicit information in the passage, so your job is to locate the relevant statement and match it, not to reason beyond it. Find the words in the text that address the question and read them exactly, noting scope words (only, most, not, unlike) that fix the claim's limits. The right answer restates what the passage says, often in different words, without adding to it. Wrong answers contradict or reverse an explicit statement, extend a stated fact into a stronger or absolute claim the passage never makes, assert information the passage simply does not provide, or attach a real detail to the wrong subject or conflate two separate facts. When two options tempt you, return to the sentence and prefer the one you can point to.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. Which sentence in the passage explicitly addresses this question, and exactly what does it say — including its scope words?

Plan. Locate the relevant line, read it precisely, and predict the answer from the text before scanning options.

Solve. Choose the option that restates the passage's explicit statement without adding to or reversing it.

Check. Can I point to the exact words that support my choice? Does any option contradict the text, overreach beyond it, go outside it, or misattribute a detail?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

contradicts-text.
Selects a statement that reverses or conflicts with something the passage explicitly says.

overreach.
Extends a stated fact into a stronger, broader, or absolute claim the passage does not make.

out-of-scope.
Asserts information the passage never provides, however plausible it may sound.

distortion/detail-swap.
Attaches a real detail to the wrong subject, or conflates two separate facts from the passage.

Practice

1. *Tardigrades survive complete desiccation by replacing the water in their cells with a class of proteins found in no other animal. As the creature dries, these proteins form a glassy matrix that holds cellular structures in place, preventing the collapse that would otherwise destroy them. The state is fully reversible: add water, and within hours the animal resumes activity. Notably, the proteins do not repair damage after the fact; they forestall it, which is why survival depends on the animal drying slowly enough for the matrix to form.*

According to the passage, the proteins that allow tardigrades to survive desiccation

(A) could indefinitely preserve the cells of any organism into which they were introduced.

(B) rebuild the glassy matrix after the animal has been rehydrated.

(C) evolved from proteins that other extremophiles use to survive extreme heat.

(D) prevent cellular damage from occurring rather than repairing it afterward.

(E) occur in a wide range of animal species besides the tardigrade.

2. *The Venetian arsenal, at its height, could assemble a fully rigged galley in a single day — a feat achieved not by haste but by standardization. Ships moved down a canal past fixed stations, each of which fitted the same prescribed component: here the oars, there the sails, further on the provisions. Parts were made to uniform measure, so that any piece would fit any hull. Visitors marveled that men who never designed a whole ship could nonetheless produce one, each knowing only his own repeated task.*

The passage indicates that the speed of the Venetian arsenal's production was chiefly the result of

(A) the ability of each worker to design and build an entire ship.

(B) a production method that no later society ever managed to equal.

(C) the standardization of interchangeable parts and repeated tasks.

(D) the plentiful supply of timber available in the Venetian lagoon.

(E) the extraordinary haste with which the workers labored.

3. *In a study of how juries reach verdicts, researchers found that the order in which evidence is presented can shape the outcome more than its content does. When strong evidence came first, jurors formed an early impression and read later, weaker items as confirming it; when the same items arrived in reverse, the early weak evidence anchored a tentative verdict that stronger later evidence struggled to dislodge. The total body of evidence was identical in both conditions. What differed was only sequence — and yet the verdicts diverged sharply.*

According to the passage, the two experimental conditions differed in

(A) the order in which the same evidence was presented to jurors.

(B) the total quantity of evidence that the jurors had to weigh.

(C) the instructions the presiding judge gave to the jurors.

(D) the jurors' ability to remember the evidence accurately.

(E) which particular items counted as strong and which as weak.

4. *The flying buttress is often admired as a decorative flourish, but its origin was strictly structural. A tall stone vault pushes outward as well as down, and without resistance the walls beneath it would splay and fall. The buttress intercepts this outward thrust, carrying it along an arch to a freestanding pier set apart from the wall. Only later did masons, having solved the problem of stability, begin to elaborate the buttresses with pinnacles and tracery — ornament added to a form that function had already fixed.*

The passage states that masons added pinnacles and tracery to flying buttresses

(A) after the structural problem of stability had already been solved.

(B) before the buttresses had come to serve any structural purpose.

(C) a decorative habit that soon spread to secular buildings as well.

(D) in response to demands from wealthy church patrons.

(E) in order to strengthen the buttresses' resistance to the vault's thrust.

5. *Coral reefs build themselves from the skeletons of countless polyps, but the living veneer is thin — a film of tissue over a vast limestone graveyard. The polyps depend on algae that live within them and supply, through photosynthesis, most of the energy the coral needs. When water warms beyond a narrow tolerance, the coral expels these algae, losing both its color and its principal food source. A bleached reef is not yet dead; if temperatures fall soon enough, the algae can return. But a coral starved too long exhausts its reserves, and the limestone is left to erode.*

According to the passage, a coral that has bleached

(A) can be restored to health only through direct human intervention.

(B) has already died, and its limestone has begun to erode.

(C) may recover if water temperatures fall soon enough for the algae to return.

(D) no longer requires any external source of energy to survive.

(E) expelled its algae in response to water that had grown unusually cold.

6. *An octopus changes color using pigment sacs called chromatophores, each ringed by tiny muscles. When the muscles contract, the sac stretches wide and its color shows; when they relax, the sac shrinks to a dot and all but vanishes. The animal works these muscles directly through its nervous system, which is why the color shift is nearly instantaneous. Strikingly, octopuses are colorblind, so they match their surroundings without being able to see the very hues they produce.*

According to the passage, an octopus can change color nearly instantaneously because

(A) its nervous system generates new pigment sacs on demand.

(B) its chromatophore sacs enlarge on their own without any muscular action.

(C) it can adopt any color faster than any other animal.

(D) the surrounding water is warm enough to accelerate the change.

(E) it controls the sacs' muscles directly through its nervous system.

7. *Roman harbor concrete has survived two thousand years in seawater that would crumble modern equivalents. Its secret lay in the mix: volcanic ash combined with lime and seawater to form rare minerals that actually grew stronger over time. Where cracks opened, seawater seeping in triggered fresh mineral growth that sealed them. Modern concrete, by contrast, is designed to resist water entirely, so a crack once formed only widens. The Roman recipe, long thought lost, is now studied by engineers hoping to build more durable seawalls.*

According to the passage, Roman harbor concrete differed from modern concrete in that

(A) it was far cheaper to produce than modern concrete.

(B) its durability came from iron rods embedded in the volcanic ash.

(C) seawater entering its cracks triggered new mineral growth that sealed them.

(D) it was designed, like modern concrete, to keep water out entirely.

(E) it will endure forever under any conditions whatsoever.

8. *A foraging honeybee that finds a rich patch of flowers returns to the hive and performs a waggle dance on the vertical comb. The angle of the dance relative to straight up encodes the direction of the food relative to the sun; the duration of the waggle run encodes the distance. Nestmates crowd close, reading the dance in the dark by touch and sound rather than sight. A patch farther off yields a longer waggle run, and the bees adjust their flight accordingly.*

According to the passage, which of the following is true of the honeybee's waggle dance?

(A) The dance can guide bees to a food source anywhere on Earth.

(B) The duration of the waggle run encodes the food's direction.

(C) The dance is performed only by the hive's oldest foragers.

(D) Nestmates read the dance by sight rather than by touch and sound.

(E) The duration of the waggle run encodes the distance to the food.

9. *Recovered from a Roman-era shipwreck, the Antikythera mechanism is a corroded lump of bronze gears that once modeled the motions of the heavens. Turning a hand crank advanced dozens of interlocking wheels, which displayed the positions of the sun and moon and predicted eclipses. Nothing of comparable intricacy survives from the next thousand years. The device does not tell time as a clock does; it is a calculator of astronomical cycles, and its precision suggests a long tradition of such work now otherwise lost.*

The passage indicates that the Antikythera mechanism

(A) predicted eclipses and displayed the positions of the sun and moon.

(B) was driven by falling weights rather than a hand crank.

(C) served chiefly as a clock for telling the time of day.

(D) was constructed by a named Greek astronomer.

(E) was the most complex machine ever built in the ancient world.

10. *Life around deep-sea hydrothermal vents thrives in total darkness, beyond the reach of sunlight. Its foundation is not photosynthesis but chemosynthesis: bacteria that draw energy from the hydrogen sulfide gushing out of the vents. Giant tube worms, lacking mouths and guts, house colonies of these bacteria inside their bodies and live on the food the bacteria make. When a vent falls dormant and its chemicals cease, the community around it starves and disperses, following the heat elsewhere.*

According to the passage, the giant tube worms near hydrothermal vents obtain their food by

(A) absorbing hydrogen sulfide directly through their own skin for energy.

(B) producing more food than any ecosystem at the surface.

(C) capturing prey with their mouths and guts.

(D) housing colonies of chemosynthetic bacteria inside their bodies.

(E) migrating seasonally toward the sunlit surface.

11. *The Rosetta Stone carries the same decree in three scripts: Greek, demotic, and hieroglyphic. Because scholars could still read Greek, they had, in effect, a translation of the unknown scripts beside them. Progress nonetheless came slowly. The breakthrough was the realization that hieroglyphs were not purely symbolic but partly phonetic, spelling out sounds, especially in the foreign royal names, which had no native symbols. From those names decipherers worked outward to the rest of the writing system.*

According to the passage, a key insight that enabled the decipherment of hieroglyphs was that they

(A) could be read fluently as soon as the stone was found.

(B) were partly phonetic, spelling out sounds rather than being purely symbolic.

(C) were entirely symbolic, each sign standing for a whole idea.

(D) were translated directly from the demotic rather than the Greek text.

(E) were carved more deeply than the demotic script beside them.

12. *Before vaccination, smallpox killed a large share of those it infected and scarred many survivors. Country lore held that milkmaids who had caught cowpox, a mild disease of cattle, never afterward took the deadlier smallpox. Testing the folk belief, a physician deliberately exposed a boy first to cowpox and then to smallpox; the boy did not sicken. The word 'vaccine' itself derives from vacca, the Latin for cow. The practice spread despite early resistance from those who found infecting the healthy repugnant.*

According to the passage, the folk belief that prompted the experiment held that

(A) milkmaids were especially likely to die of smallpox.

(B) cowpox spread more easily than smallpox among children.

(C) survivors of smallpox could never afterward catch cowpox.

(D) milkmaids who had caught cowpox did not later take smallpox.

(E) cowpox granted immunity to every known disease.

13. *Living things absorb carbon-14 from the air, but at death the intake stops and the isotope decays at a fixed rate, halving roughly every 5,700 years. By measuring how much carbon-14 remains in an old bone or timber, researchers estimate how long ago the organism died. The method has a ceiling: after about ten half-lives so little carbon-14 is left that the reading becomes unreliable. For older material, scientists must turn to isotopes that decay more slowly.*

According to the passage, carbon dating grows unreliable for very old material because

(A) groundwater invariably washes the isotope out of old bone.

(B) carbon-14 is taken up from the soil rather than from the air.

(C) the method cannot date anything older than a single human lifetime.

(D) after about ten half-lives too little carbon-14 remains to measure reliably.

(E) organisms keep absorbing carbon-14 long after they die.

14. *Migratory birds navigate by several cues at once. Many can sense the Earth's magnetic field, using it as a compass when overcast skies hide the stars. On clear nights, though, they prefer to steer by the rotation of the star patterns overhead, which they learn as nestlings. Young birds raised under a false planetarium sky, turned about the wrong point, later orient to that false pole. The magnetic sense serves as a backup, consulted when the celestial cues fail.*

According to the passage, migratory birds depend on the Earth's magnetic field chiefly

(A) throughout the entire length of every migration.

(B) on clear nights, in preference to the stars.

(C) as the cue they learn as nestlings under a rotating sky.

(D) when overcast skies conceal the stars.

(E) in order to locate feeding grounds along the route.

15. *A sourdough starter is a living culture of wild yeast and bacteria kept alive by regular feeding with flour and water. The yeast produces the gas that makes the bread rise; the bacteria produce the acids that give it a tang and, incidentally, help preserve it. The two organisms coexist because each tolerates conditions the other creates. Commercial baker's yeast leavens faster but yields none of the sourness, since it works without the acid-making bacteria.*

According to the passage, the sour tang of sourdough bread comes from

(A) the particular variety of flour used to feed the starter.

(B) commercial baker's yeast, which yields the same sourness.

(C) acids strong enough to preserve the loaf indefinitely.

(D) the wild yeast, which is the organism that makes the acids.

(E) acids produced by the bacteria in the starter.

16. *The aurora appears when charged particles from the sun, funneled by the Earth's magnetic field toward the poles, collide with gases high in the atmosphere. Each gas glows its own color: oxygen yields green and, higher still, red, while nitrogen adds blue and purple fringes. The lights therefore cluster in rings around the magnetic poles, not the geographic ones. During strong solar storms the rings widen, and the aurora grows visible far closer to the equator than usual.*

According to the passage, the green and red colors of the aurora are produced by

(A) nitrogen, which the passage credits with the green and red glow.

(B) oxygen high in the atmosphere.

(C) the magnetic field itself as it funnels the particles.

(D) sunlight reflected upward from polar ice.

(E) gases that glow the identical color at every altitude.

17. *The florets of a sunflower head spiral outward in two interlocking sets of curves, one winding clockwise and the other counterclockwise. Count the spirals in each direction and you typically find consecutive numbers from the Fibonacci sequence, such as 34 and 55. The arrangement is not decorative but efficient: placing each new floret at a fixed angle from the last packs the greatest number of seeds into the available space. The same angle governs the leaves of many plants, spacing them so that upper leaves shade lower ones as little as possible.*

According to the passage, the spiral arrangement of a sunflower's florets serves to

(A) guarantee that no two florets ever touch one another.

(B) ornament the flower head without serving any practical purpose.

(C) attract one particular species of pollinating insect.

(D) shade the seeds from excessive sunlight.

(E) pack the greatest number of seeds into the available space.

18. *The floor of the ocean is youngest at the mid-ocean ridges and grows older with distance from them. Molten rock wells up along a ridge, hardens, and is carried slowly outward as new material forms behind it, like a pair of conveyor belts moving in opposite directions. The rock records the Earth's magnetic field as it cools, and because that field has reversed many times, the seafloor carries symmetrical stripes of alternating polarity on either side of the ridge. These stripes were decisive evidence for seafloor spreading.*

According to the passage, the floor of the ocean is youngest

(A) where the water above it is deepest.

(B) at the greatest distance from the mid-ocean ridges.

(C) at the mid-ocean ridges.

(D) everywhere younger than any rock found on the continents.

(E) where the magnetic stripes stop alternating in polarity.

19. *A camera obscura is nothing but a dark room with a small hole in one wall. Light from the sunlit scene outside passes through the hole and casts an image of that scene, upside down, on the opposite wall. The smaller the hole, the sharper but dimmer the image. Renaissance artists are thought to have traced such projections to capture accurate perspective, though the device itself adds nothing to the scene; it merely gathers and orders light that was already there.*

According to the passage, shrinking the hole of a camera obscura yields an image that is

(A) tinted toward the red end of the spectrum.

(B) sharper but dimmer.

(C) brighter but blurrier.

(D) perfectly sharp no matter how large the room.

(E) turned right-side up rather than inverted.

20. *Sleep does more than rest the body; it helps fix the day's learning into lasting memory. During deep sleep the brain appears to replay the neural patterns of waking experience, strengthening the connections that encode them. Studies find that people who sleep after learning a task recall it better than those kept awake the same number of hours. The benefit is specific to what was recently learned; sleep does not improve memories that were already well established days before.*

According to the passage, the memory benefit of sleep applies to

(A) information presented only during sleep itself.

(B) every memory a person has ever formed.

(C) memories of emotionally distressing events alone.

(D) chiefly memories formed days earlier and already secure.

(E) material that was learned recently, not memories already well established.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context

node: grev.rc.R5

The skill. A vocabulary-in-context question asks what a word means AS THE PASSAGE USES IT, not what it most often means or what it means in isolation. Many GRE-level words carry several established senses; the context selects one. Read the sentence and its neighbors, find the words that pin down the intended sense, and predict a plain substitute you could drop into the sentence without changing its meaning. Then test the options by substitution. Wrong answers offer a genuine but contextually inapplicable dictionary sense, the meaning opposite to the one the context requires, a word merely associated with the topic or a near-neighbor that is not the actual meaning, or the word's most familiar everyday sense, which misfits a more specialized use. The correct choice is the one the surrounding sentence licenses.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. Which of the word's several senses does THIS sentence require — what nearby words pin it down?

Plan. Predict a plain substitute from the context before reading the options, then test each option by dropping it into the sentence.

Solve. Choose the option whose meaning the surrounding sentence actually licenses.

Check. Does my choice fit when substituted? Have I rejected the merely common sense, the opposite sense, the other-dictionary sense, and the topically related near-miss?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

wrong-dictionary-sense.
A genuine, established meaning of the word that does not fit the sentence's context.

opposite-sense.
A meaning opposite to the one the context requires.

related-but-wrong.
A word or sense merely associated with the topic, or a near-neighbor, that is not the meaning as used.

too-common-sense.
The word's most familiar everyday meaning, which misfits this more specialized use.

Practice

1. *The wound-healing cascade normally proceeds in tidy stages, but in chronic ulcers it stalls midway. Inflammatory cells arrive and never leave; the tissue neither closes nor advances to scarring. Researchers describe such wounds as arrested — held indefinitely in a stage meant to be transient. The therapeutic aim, then, is not to speed an ongoing process but to release one that has stopped: to unstick cells frozen in a loop and let the sequence resume its normal course.*

As used in the passage, "arrested" most nearly means

(A) seized the attention of
(B) hastened toward completion
(C) infected by pathogens
(D) taken into legal custody
(E) halted in its progress

2. *The philosopher's later writings temper the severity of his youthful system. Where he had once insisted that moral rules admit no exceptions, he now allows that circumstance may soften their application and that a wise judge weighs the particular case. Commentators dispute*

whether this marks a genuine change of mind or merely a mellowing of tone. Either way, the uncompromising voice of the early work gives way to something more accommodating.

As used in the passage, "temper" most nearly means

(A) harden metal by heating and cooling

(B) intensify or make more severe

(C) a sudden outburst of anger

(D) moderate or soften

(E) a person's habitual disposition

3. *The prose style prized by these essayists was one of strict economy: not a word appeared that did not earn its place. A paragraph might turn on a single well-chosen verb, and what a lesser writer would spread across three sentences they compressed into one. Readers accustomed to ornament found the effect austere, even bare. But its admirers insisted that the restraint was itself a kind of richness — that saying less, precisely, could carry more.*

As used in the passage, "economy" most nearly means

(A) the affordability or low cost of publishing

(B) a nation's system of production and consumption

(C) the prudent management of a household's finances

(D) a lavish abundance of descriptive detail

(E) sparing, restrained use of means

4. *The young pianist, eager to seem seasoned, affected a nonchalance he plainly did not feel; between phrases he would glance at the ceiling as though bored by his own virtuosity. The pose fooled no one. His teacher remarked that real ease cannot be borrowed, only earned, and that a mannerism assumed for effect always betrays itself as assumed. Genuine indifference has no need to advertise; only its imitation must.*

As used in the passage, "affected" most nearly means

(A) exerted an influence upon

(B) moved or touched emotionally

(C) assumed or feigned for effect

(D) afflicted, as by a disease

(E) expressed with complete sincerity

5. *The republic's founders, wary of concentrated power, designed each branch to check the others: the legislature could restrain the executive, the executive the legislature, and the courts both. They did not expect these frictions to make governance efficient — quite the reverse. A system so full of mutual restraint would move slowly and thwart hasty passions, which was precisely the intention. Efficiency, they reasoned, is the ally of tyranny as often as of good government; a power easily exercised is a power easily abused.*

As used in the passage, "check" most nearly means

(A) examine something to verify its accuracy

(B) hand over luggage or a coat for safekeeping

(C) a written order directing a bank to pay money

(D) restrain or hold within limits

(E) strengthen or enlarge the authority of

6. *The historian is careful to qualify every generalization she makes. No sooner does she assert a broad trend than she adds the exceptions – the regions where it did not hold, the decades when it ran the other way. Some readers find the constant hedging tiresome; others prize it as intellectual honesty. Either way, the effect is to narrow each sweeping claim, fencing it round with reservations until it fits the evidence exactly.*

As used in the passage, "qualify" most nearly means

(A) to state without exception or reserve

(B) to certify as professionally competent

(C) to meet the requirements for something; be eligible

(D) to moderate or dilute (a flavor or drink)

(E) to limit or restrict by adding reservations

7. *The board did not adopt the maverick engineer's proposal, but neither did they wave it away. For a full hour they entertained it in earnest – examining its assumptions, pressing on its weak points, asking what it might cost to try. In the end they set it aside, yet the willingness to give so unconventional an idea a serious hearing was itself remarkable in a body that usually refused even to discuss anything so far outside custom.*

As used in the passage, "entertained" most nearly means

(A) to dismiss without a second thought

(B) to give consideration to; contemplate

(C) to receive and host as guests

(D) to amuse or provide with diversion

(E) to hold an audience's attention by performing

8. *For years after the betrayal she harbored a quiet resentment toward her former partner. She never spoke of it, and outwardly the two remained cordial; but the grievance stayed with her, tended and undiminished, surfacing only in the coolness of her voice when his name came up. Forgiveness, she found, was harder than she had supposed – the feeling would not simply be set down and left behind.*

As used in the passage, "harbored" most nearly means

(A) to let go of; release

(B) to bring a vessel safely to anchor

(C) to give shelter and concealment to (a fugitive)

(D) to hold on to and nurse (a feeling)

(E) a sheltered stretch of water where ships dock

9. *The counterfeiters had planned the operation for months, but an alert bank teller foiled it in its final minute. Catching a faint irregularity in the serial numbers, she stalled the transaction and signaled security, and the whole scheme collapsed before a single forged bill changed hands. What long preparation had assembled, one watchful clerk undid at a stroke.*

As used in the passage, "foiled" most nearly means

(A) to thwart or frustrate

(B) a light, slender sword used in fencing

(C) a character who sets off another by contrast

(D) to help to succeed; further

(E) a thin, pliable sheet of metal

10. *Engineers had long warned that the old span could not bear the weight of modern traffic. In the summer's record heat the steel at last buckled: a central girder bent out of true, the roadway sagged, and the bridge was closed within the hour. The metal had not snapped so much as slowly given way, folding under a load it was never built to carry.*

As used in the passage, "buckled" most nearly means

(A) to fasten securely with a clasp

(B) a clasp for joining the two ends of a strap

(C) to bend or collapse under strain

(D) to apply oneself with sudden energy

(E) to hold firm without yielding

11. *The conductor was revered and feared in equal measure, for he would brook no departure from the printed score. A player who added even a single unmarked grace note found himself corrected before the phrase had ended, and repeated liberties meant dismissal. Interpretation, he held, was the composer's affair and not the performer's; a musician's private embellishments he simply would not allow.*

As used in the passage, "brook" most nearly means

(A) to refuse to allow; forbid

(B) a small natural stream

(C) to babble or murmur, as running water

(D) to enjoy the use of; profit from

(E) to tolerate or put up with

12. *The firm's troubles were grave to begin with, and the botched recall only compounded them. Each misstep multiplied the harm: lost sales forced layoffs, layoffs sank morale, and low morale bred fresh mistakes. What might have been one bad quarter grew, through this accumulation, into a crisis that fed on itself, every new blunder deepening the hole the last had dug.*

As used in the passage, "compounded" most nearly means

(A) to mix or prepare by combining ingredients

(B) to make worse; aggravate

(C) a substance formed from two or more elements

(D) to relieve or lessen

(E) an enclosed group of buildings; a walled residence

13. *Before recommending the merger, the committee canvassed every objection its members could muster. For weeks they worked through the risks point by point, inviting dissent, weighing each concern against the projected gains, and returning to doubts that others would have let drop. Only after this exhaustive review – with no argument left unexamined – did they finally give their verdict.*

As used in the passage, "canvassed" most nearly means

(A) to stretch and paint a scene on cloth

(B) to inspect and formally tally ballots

(C) to examine and discuss thoroughly

(D) to go about soliciting votes or support

(E) to dismiss without examination

14. *A responsible theory, she argued, must be grounded in observation and not merely in the elegance of its mathematics. Every claim it advances should trace back to something one could in principle measure; a hypothesis that floats free of all evidence, however beautiful, stands no higher than a guess. To build knowledge, on this view, is to anchor each conclusion firmly in what the data will bear.*

As used in the passage, "grounded" most nearly means

(A) to bar (an aircraft or pilot) from flying

(B) to connect an electrical circuit to the earth

(C) to base firmly on a foundation of evidence

(D) the solid surface of the earth

(E) to leave without support or basis

15. *Many rival firms folded during the long recession, but this one weathered it. By trimming costs early, keeping its best people, and refusing to overextend, the company came through the downturn battered yet intact, poised to expand the moment demand returned. What sank its competitors it managed, through discipline and a little luck, to outlast.*

As used in the passage, "weathered" most nearly means

(A) to come safely through; withstand

(B) to be overwhelmed and destroyed by

(C) to wear away or erode through long exposure

(D) the day-to-day state of the atmosphere

(E) to forecast coming atmospheric conditions

16. *The marchers set out briskly, but by the twentieth mile their pace began to flag. Feet dragged, talk died away, and the bright resolve of the morning gave way to a grim, plodding effort. Even the hardiest felt their energy ebbing, and the final miles were covered on will alone, long after enthusiasm had drained from the column.*

As used in the passage, "flag" most nearly means

(A) to grow stronger; surge

(B) to mark or single out for attention

(C) to hail or signal by waving

(D) a cloth banner serving as an emblem

(E) to weaken and lose vigor

17. *The nurses soon learned that it was easier to humor the old admiral than to argue with him. When he insisted the ward be run like a ship, they answered 'aye, sir' and let him keep his charts; when he ordered the windows 'battened down,' they closed them. Going along with his harmless fancies cost nothing and kept him content, whereas contradiction only left him agitated for hours.*

As used in the passage, "humor" most nearly means

(A) to oppose and refuse to accommodate

(B) to indulge or go along with

(C) one of the four cardinal fluids of ancient physiology

(D) a passing state of mind or mood

(E) the quality of being amusing; comedy

18. *Stranded by the blizzard, the climbers husbanded their remaining fuel and food with great care. Each candle was lit only when strictly needed, each ration split to stretch across the days they might still be trapped. By spending their scant supplies as slowly as survival allowed, they made three days' provisions last a week, until the rescue party at last broke through.*

As used in the passage, "husbanded" most nearly means

(A) to squander or use up recklessly

(B) to till or cultivate (land)

(C) to use sparingly; conserve

(D) to breed and raise livestock

(E) a woman's marriage partner

19. *By printing the leaked memos, the editor knew she was courting disaster. Lawsuits, subpoenas, the fury of powerful men – she invited them all with open eyes, judging the story too important to bury. Some called it recklessness and others courage, but no one doubted that she had knowingly drawn upon herself the very dangers a cautious editor would have gone to great lengths to avoid.*

As used in the passage, "courting" most nearly means

(A) to seek the romantic affection of; woo

(B) a marked area for playing a game such as tennis

(C) to keep well clear of; avoid

(D) a tribunal where legal cases are heard

(E) to act so as to invite or attract

20. *The warlord exacted a heavy tribute from every village along his march. Grain, cattle, silver – whatever a settlement possessed, his riders demanded a portion of it under threat of the torch, and few dared refuse. What the land surrendered was not freely given but wrung from it by fear, the price of being left unburned.*

As used in the passage, "exacted" most nearly means

(A) to demand and extract by force or authority

(B) to work out a figure with precision

(C) to hand over willingly; give up freely

(D) perfectly precise and accurate

(E) making rigorous demands; requiring great care

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude

node: grev.rc.R6

The skill. A tone-and-attitude question asks how the author feels about the subject — not what the passage says, but the stance behind the saying. Read for evaluative words and their intensity: does the author praise, endorse, admire, concede, doubt, deplore, or hold two feelings at once? First fix the charge (favorable, unfavorable, or mixed), then fix the strength (mild reservation is not contempt; qualified approval is not celebration). The right answer matches both charge and intensity and stays anchored to the author's own voice. Wrong answers reverse the charge, overstate the intensity beyond what measured language supports, attribute to the author an attitude that belongs to a party the author merely reports or concedes, or name a mood (indifference, nostalgia) for which the passage gives no basis.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What does the AUTHOR feel about the subject — favorable, unfavorable, or mixed — and how strongly?

Plan. Fix the charge from the evaluative words, then fix the intensity. Keep the attitude anchored to the author's voice, not to a view the author only reports.

Solve. Choose the option whose charge AND strength match the author's own stance.

Check. Is the charge right (not reversed)? Is the intensity matched (not inflated to contempt or celebration)? Is this the author's attitude, not a conceded or cited party's?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

wrong-charge.
Reverses the polarity of the author's attitude — reads approval as disapproval or the reverse — ignoring the direction of the evaluative language.

too-strong.
Gets the charge right but inflates the intensity beyond the measured text — turning mild reservation into contempt, or qualified approval into unreserved celebration.

mixes/misplaces-attitude.
Attributes to the author an attitude that belongs to a party the author merely reports or concedes, or blends two distinct attitudes into one.

unsupported-mood.
Names an attitude — indifference, detachment, nostalgia — for which the passage offers no basis, or that contradicts the author's evident engagement.

Practice

1. *The new translation is, by any measure, a labor of devotion: the translator spent two decades on a poet most readers have never heard of, and her notes alone would fill a slim volume. One wishes the same care had reached the verse itself, which too often trades the original's music for a dutiful literalism. Still, students who cannot read the original will be grateful, for this is the fullest English gathering of the poems we are likely to see for a generation.*

The author's attitude toward the new translation is best described as one of

(A) resentment of the translator's ambition.

(B) sardonic contempt.

(C) unreserved enthusiasm.

(D) qualified appreciation.

(E) scholarly indifference.

2. *Enthusiasts promise that the newest productivity apps will finally free us from busywork. I have heard the promise before — from the day planner, the email filter, the to-do list that syncs across seven devices. Each tool does shave minutes from some task, and each invents new tasks of its own, chief among them the task of managing the tool. I do not doubt that the apps work as advertised. I doubt that working as advertised is the same as helping.*

The author's attitude toward the productivity apps is best described as

(A) eager endorsement.
(B) scornful hostility.
(C) nostalgic longing for older tools.
(D) genuine admiration for the apps' cleverness.
(E) measured skepticism.

3. *Whatever else one says of the financier, he built institutions that outlasted him by a century. That the same institutions were financed by schemes he knew to be fraudulent is not a detail to be waved away, and his biographers do him no favors when they treat his ruthlessness as mere vigor. He was neither the villain his enemies drew nor the visionary his admirers embalm. He was something harder to file: a builder who could not build honestly.*

The author's attitude toward the financier is best described as

(A) unmitigated condemnation.
(B) clear-eyed ambivalence that resists a single verdict.
(C) admiring vindication.
(D) amused detachment.
(E) the reverence his admirers express.

4. *The hypothesis that migrating birds navigate by sensing the earth's magnetic field has an undeniable elegance, and the recent experiments are more careful than their predecessors. Yet elegance has misled biology before, and the effect these studies report is small enough that a single overlooked variable could account for it. I would not bet against the idea. I would only note that the confidence with which it is now repeated in textbooks has outrun the evidence meant to support it.*

The author's attitude toward the magnetic-navigation hypothesis is best described as

(A) enthusiastic endorsement of the hypothesis.
(B) indifference to whether the hypothesis is true.
(C) firm rejection of the hypothesis.
(D) the certainty expressed by the textbooks.
(E) cautious open-mindedness paired with concern about overstatement.

5. *The museum's decision to return the contested bronzes deserves the praise it has received; possession secured by plunder was never possession by right. What deserves less praise is the*

self-congratulation that has accompanied the gesture — the press releases, the gala, the careful framing of a legal necessity as a moral awakening. To do the right thing, at last and under pressure, is still to do the right thing. It is not, however, the same as having been right all along.

The author's attitude is best described as

(A) contempt for the decision to return the bronzes.

(B) approval of the restitution combined with skepticism toward the museum's self-presentation.

(C) indifference to whether the bronzes were returned.

(D) wholehearted celebration of the museum's moral leadership.

(E) bitter outrage at the museum's entire conduct.

6. *The restoration has stripped away centuries of yellowed varnish, and the colors that emerge are startling, the blues almost violent in their freshness. Purists grumble that we are now seeing something the painter never saw, a picture too bright for the candlelit rooms it was made for. There is something to the complaint. Yet I confess the recovered brilliance moves me more than any argument against it; whatever we have lost, we have gained a canvas that once again looks alive.*

The author's attitude toward the restoration is best described as one of

(A) appreciative approval that acknowledges a real reservation.

(B) the indignation voiced by the purists.

(C) detached neutrality about the outcome.

(D) regret that the restoration was ever undertaken.

(E) unbounded rapture untroubled by any doubt.

7. *The senator's memoir is candid about small failings, a missed vote here, a temper lost there, and this candor has been widely praised as courage. I would call it strategy. By confessing the venial, the book quietly buries the mortal: the votes that were bought, the friends who were used. A memoir that admits everything trivial and nothing that matters has not told the truth; it has merely dressed evasion in the costume of honesty.*

The author's attitude toward the memoir is best described as

(A) genuine admiration for the senator's frankness.

(B) the courage the book's reviewers attribute to it.

(C) furious condemnation of the senator as a criminal.

(D) nostalgic fondness for an older style of political memoir.

(E) skepticism toward the memoir's performance of honesty.

8. *Amateur astronomers, working from suburban backyards with modest telescopes, have lately turned up comets and exploding stars that the great observatories missed. It is tempting to*

romanticize them as lone geniuses shaming the professionals. The truth is less flattering and more interesting: they succeed because there are thousands of them watching every clear night, while the big instruments, booked months ahead, stare at narrow patches of sky. Their triumph is one of coverage, not of superior vision, and it is a real triumph all the same.

The author's attitude toward the amateur astronomers' achievements is best described as

(A) genuine respect grounded in an accurate account of their success.

(B) weary boredom with backyard astronomy.

(C) dismissal of their discoveries as luck unworthy of notice.

(D) boundless admiration untempered by any qualification.

(E) the reverence that would cast them as lone geniuses.

9. *The city's new concert hall photographs magnificently; its titanium curves have already sold a thousand postcards. Inside, though, the musicians complain that the sound dies three rows back, and after two seasons the hall has quietly installed acoustic panels that mar the very lines the architect fought for. A building meant first to be heard has been designed first to be seen. I do not deny its beauty. I deny that beauty was the problem it was hired to solve.*

The author's attitude toward the concert hall is best described as

(A) utter contempt for a worthless building.

(B) indifference to how the hall functions.

(C) wholehearted celebration of its design triumph.

(D) the enthusiasm of the postcard-buying public.

(E) disapproval of the building's misplaced priorities despite acknowledging its beauty.

10. *Grammarians have warned for two centuries that the language is decaying, and each generation's slang, they insist, is the final proof. Yet the very words once denounced as vulgar, 'clever,' 'fun,' 'reliable,' now sit unremarked in the dictionaries those grammarians consult. Languages do not decay; they move, and the sense of decay is only the sound of one's own usage being left behind. The warnings are less a report on the language than a memoir of the warner growing old.*

The author's attitude toward the grammarians' warnings of decay is best described as

(A) the alarm the grammarians themselves feel.

(B) savage denunciation of grammarians as enemies of culture.

(C) melancholy resignation at the loss of old words.

(D) earnest agreement that the language is decaying.

(E) wry skepticism toward the warnings of linguistic decay.

11. *The analysts have won their war; every front office now drafts by the numbers, and the numbers have, on the whole, been right. Something, though, has drained from the watching. When a scout once said a young pitcher had 'it,' he was often wrong, but he was pointing at a mystery*

worth arguing about. The spreadsheets are more accurate and less alive. I would not trade the wins back. I only miss the arguments.

The author's attitude toward the analytics revolution in sports is best described as

(A) the confident triumph felt by the analysts.

(B) acknowledgment of its success shaded by mild regret.

(C) complete indifference to how teams are built.

(D) resentful rejection of analytics as a failure.

(E) bitter grief at the ruin of the game.

12. *The foundation gives away a hundred million dollars a year, and much of it does real good: clinics staffed, wells dug, scholarships funded. What unsettles me is the quiet transfer of judgment that comes with the money, which diseases matter, which villages, which students, all decided in a boardroom an ocean away from the lives it reshapes. Generosity on this scale is not merely kindness. It is power, and power exercised with the best intentions is still power that answers to no one.*

The author's attitude toward the foundation is best described as

(A) outraged denunciation of the foundation as a fraud.

(B) boredom with questions of philanthropy.

(C) grateful admiration free of any misgiving.

(D) the confidence of the boardroom that directs the gifts.

(E) appreciation of its good works tempered by unease about its unaccountable power.

13. *The novelist's early books were tight, ferocious things; not a sentence wasted. The late work sprawls, digressions within digressions, whole chapters that go nowhere in particular. Reviewers who prized the early discipline call this decline. I hear something else: a writer who has stopped performing and begun, at last, to think on the page. The looseness is not weakness. It is the sound of a mind that no longer needs to impress us, and can therefore tell us more.*

The author's attitude toward the novelist's late style is best described as

(A) agreement that the late work marks a decline.

(B) appreciation of the late style as a sign of maturity rather than decline.

(C) cool disinterest in the novelist's development.

(D) reverent worship of the late novels as flawless.

(E) the disappointment voiced by the reviewers.

14. *Reintroducing wolves to the valley has, its champions say, healed an entire ecosystem: the deer moved, the saplings grew, the river even changed course. It is a lovely story, and parts of it are surely true. But a valley is not a laboratory, and a dozen other things changed in those same years, the weather, the grazing leases, the beavers. To credit the wolves with all of it is*

to mistake a good story for a proven one. I want the wolves there. I also want the claim kept honest.

The author's attitude toward the claim that the wolves healed the ecosystem is best described as

(A) the certainty of the reintroduction's champions.

(B) support for the reintroduction paired with skepticism toward the sweeping causal claim.

(C) total rejection of any effect from the wolves.

(D) indifference to the fate of the valley.

(E) hostility to the idea of reintroducing wolves.

15. *Schools are dropping cursive, and the usual laments have followed: a lost art, a fraying link to the past. I taught cursive for years and will not pretend its passing is a tragedy. Few adults use it; fewer can read the ornate hands of a century ago regardless. Yet I would pause before cheering. Forming letters by hand, cursive or not, seems to help young children remember what they write, and that benefit, unlike the calligraphy, is worth defending.*

The author's attitude toward the dropping of cursive is best described as

(A) gleeful celebration of the end of all handwriting instruction.

(B) the grief expressed by those who lament the loss.

(C) sentimental longing for the ornate hands of a century ago.

(D) calm acceptance of cursive's decline, tempered by concern for the benefits of writing by hand.

(E) dismay at the disappearance of cursive as a cultural tragedy.

16. *It is easy to sneer at the billionaires racing to build rockets, vanity projects, we say, escape pods for the rich while the planet burns. Some of that is fair. Yet sneering is cheap, and the fact remains that these ventures have cut the cost of reaching orbit by an order of magnitude, something governments spent decades failing to do. I am no admirer of the men. I am, reluctantly, an admirer of what their money and their vanity have managed to build.*

The author's attitude toward the billionaires' space ventures is best described as

(A) cheerful optimism about humanity's future in space.

(B) reluctant admiration for what the ventures achieved, despite distaste for the men behind them.

(C) unqualified scorn for the ventures as pure vanity.

(D) the derision of those who call the ventures escape pods for the rich.

(E) enthusiastic hero-worship of the billionaires themselves.

17. *The audio guide walks you, room by room, telling you where to stand and what to feel. Visitors love it; attendance is up, and the surveys glow. My worry is quieter. A guided crowd sees*

exactly what it is told to see and misses whatever the script omits, the odd small canvas in the corner that might have been the day's real discovery. Convenience has a cost measured in curiosity, and it is a cost the cheerful surveys were never designed to catch.

The author's attitude toward the audio guides is best described as

(A) total indifference to how visitors experience the museum.

(B) furious condemnation of the guides as a menace to art.

(C) measured concern about their cost to curiosity, notwithstanding their popularity.

(D) the delight expressed by the surveyed visitors.

(E) wholehearted endorsement of the guides as an improvement.

18. *The forecaster has been wrong before, and says so, in print, at the start of the new book, a refreshing candor in a trade built on false confidence. He then proceeds, over three hundred pages, to make predictions every bit as sweeping as the ones that failed him last time. The apology, it turns out, was not a change of method but a preface to repeating it. Honesty about one's errors is admirable. It is not, by itself, a way of avoiding the next one.*

The author's attitude toward the forecaster is best described as

(A) full confidence in the forecaster's new predictions.

(B) nostalgia for an earlier era of economic forecasting.

(C) the self-assurance the forecaster brings to his own predictions.

(D) withering ridicule of the forecaster as a charlatan.

(E) credit for his candor tempered by doubt that it improves his method.

19. *Every few years the headlines announce that fusion power is twenty years away, and every few years the twenty years reset. The latest milestone is genuine, a reaction that released more energy than the lasers poured in, a threshold long thought decades off. But 'more than the lasers' is not 'more than the plant,' and the gap between a spark in a laboratory and a wire in a home remains immense. The result is worth celebrating. The celebrations that call it 'limitless clean power, at last' are worth resisting.*

The author's attitude toward the fusion milestone is best described as

(A) genuine appreciation of the result joined to resistance against overstated claims.

(B) dismissal of the milestone as meaningless.

(C) gloomy despair about the future of energy.

(D) the exuberance of the headlines proclaiming limitless power.

(E) unbounded excitement that fusion power has arrived.

20. *The old theater is to be gutted and modernized, and I have signed no petition to save it. Its seats are cramped, its sightlines poor, its wiring a hazard the fire marshal has flagged for years. Sentiment says preserve it; sense says the building has served its time. And yet, walking its*

worn aisles one last time, I found the sentiment harder to dismiss than my own arguments. I still think the renovation is right. I did not expect to mind it so much.

The author's attitude toward the theater's renovation is best described as

(A) cold indifference to the theater's fate.

(B) eager, untroubled enthusiasm for the renovation.

(C) firm opposition to the renovation.

(D) the sentiment of those petitioning to save the theater.

(E) rational endorsement of the renovation shadowed by unexpected reluctance.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization

node: grev.rc.R7

The skill. An organization question asks how the passage is built — the sequence of moves it makes, not the topic it covers. Read for structural verbs and their order: does the passage state a familiar view and then challenge it, raise an objection and rebut it, draw a distinction and derive a consequence, or assert a claim and illustrate it? Sketch the moves in order before reading the options. The right answer names the actual moves in the actual sequence, in matched language. Wrong answers reverse the order of the moves, mislabel a move (calling a rebuttal an abandonment, or a qualification a refutation), describe one part as if it were the whole structure, or claim a structural element the passage never contains (a definition, a statistic, an experiment's method).

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What are the passage's structural MOVES, and in what ORDER does it make them?

Plan. Sketch the moves as a short ordered list (state, challenge, propose; or object, concede, rebut) before reading options.

Solve. Choose the option that names the actual moves in the actual sequence.

Check. Is the order right (not reversed)? Is each move labeled correctly (rebuttal vs abandonment)? Does the option describe the whole, and only elements actually present?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

reverses-order.
Names the structural moves in the wrong sequence — putting the conclusion before the question, or the alternative before the familiar view it replaces.

mislabels-move.
Misidentifies what a move does — treating a rebuttal as an abandonment, a qualification as a refutation, or a comparison as a ranking.

part-as-whole.
Describes a single step or example as if it were the passage's whole organization (too narrow).

element-not-present.
Claims a structural element the passage never contains — a definition, a set of statistics, an experiment's method, a history.

Practice

1. *Sleep, we are often told, exists to rest the body. But the body rests well enough during quiet wakefulness, when the muscles relax and the heart slows; what it cannot do while awake is clear the brain of certain waste proteins that accumulate through the day. Recent work suggests that this clearing is one of sleep's central jobs. If so, the old picture has the priority backward: sleep is less a rest for tired muscles than a maintenance shift for the busy brain.*

The passage is organized by

(A) stating a familiar explanation, challenging it with a contrary observation, and proposing a revised explanation.
(B) presenting an alternative explanation first and then the familiar view it replaces.
(C) describing, step by step, the method of a recent experiment.
(D) defining a biological term and then listing its several examples.
(E) refuting a claim and concluding that sleep's purpose cannot be known.

2. *Great public projects are rarely finished by the people who begin them. The cathedral at Chartres rose over generations of masons who never saw its spires; the transcontinental railroad joined crews who had started from opposite coasts and would never work together again. What such projects require is not a single tireless builder but an institution patient enough to carry a purpose across the lifetimes of the individuals who serve it.*

The passage develops its point by

(A) narrating the construction of a single cathedral from foundation to spire.
(B) posing a question and then rejecting every answer proposed to it.
(C) beginning with specific cases and only afterward venturing a generalization.
(D) asserting a generalization, illustrating it with two examples, and refining the claim it began with.
(E) comparing two projects in order to argue that one was superior to the other.

3. *It might be objected that raising the minimum wage must cost jobs: pay each worker more, and employers will hire fewer. The logic is clean, and for very large increases it may even hold. But the objection assumes employers cannot absorb higher costs in any other way — through slightly higher prices, lower turnover, or thinner profits — and the record of modest increases suggests*

they usually can. The objection is not wrong in principle; it is wrong about the size of the effect at the scale actually proposed.

The passage is organized by

(A) raising an objection, granting it limited force, and then rebutting it by exposing an assumption it makes.

(B) stating a conclusion and then listing the assumptions that guarantee it.

(C) advancing a policy proposal and then abandoning it as unworkable.

(D) focusing throughout on the effects of very large wage increases.

(E) rebutting an objection before the objection has been stated.

4. *Tolerance and respect are easily confused, but they pull in different directions. To tolerate a practice is to let it alone despite disapproving of it; the disapproval is built into the word. To respect a practice is to grant it positive worth. A society can therefore demand tolerance of all its members without demanding respect from any of them — which is fortunate, since respect cannot be commanded, only earned, while tolerance is exactly the sort of restraint a law can require.*

The passage proceeds by

(A) offering a series of examples and inducing a general rule from them.

(B) tracing the historical origins of two related words.

(C) distinguishing two concepts, defining each, and drawing out a practical consequence of the distinction.

(D) defining a single concept and defending it against its critics.

(E) arguing that two concepts usually distinguished are in fact identical.

5. *No one disputes that the printing press spread literacy; the harder question is what it spread literacy toward. For its first century the press produced far more indulgences, almanacs, and polemics than works of lasting thought — a flood of the ephemeral, not a library of the wise. Yet this very glut may have mattered most. A public accustomed to reading anything was, in time, a public that could be reached by argument; the trivial reading came first, and the consequential reading grew in the space it had cleared.*

The passage develops its point by

(A) answering its central question first and only afterward raising it.

(B) concluding that the printing press had little lasting importance.

(C) stating a thesis and supporting it with an unbroken chain of statistics.

(D) granting an accepted point, redirecting to a subtler question, and answering it by reinterpreting apparently trivial evidence as decisive.

(E) listing the kinds of documents the press produced and stopping there.

6. *The textbook story runs like this: first there was barter, and its inconveniences, the hungry cobbler who needs bread from a baker who needs no shoes, drove people to invent money. Tidy, logical, and, as anthropologists have found, apparently false. In the societies we can actually observe, neighbors did not swap goods one for one; they kept loose, long-running tallies of who owed whom. Money, on this evidence, did not rescue us from barter. It arose from debt, a thing older and more social than the textbook's lonely trade.*

The passage is organized by

(A) laying out a standard account, confronting it with contrary evidence, and proposing a different origin.

(B) presenting the revised debt-origin first and the textbook barter story afterward.

(C) describing in detail the predicament of the cobbler and the baker.

(D) recounting the textbook story and concluding that the origin of money can neither be proved nor disproved.

(E) defining the word 'money' and tracing its etymology.

7. *We tend to think of the placebo as nothing, a sugar pill, a stand-in for real treatment. But consider what the placebo actually does. Patients given inert pills report less pain, sleep better, sometimes show measurable changes in the very systems the fake drug was pretended to target. If a 'nothing' can do that, then the ritual of treatment, the white coat, the confident dose, the act of being cared for, is not nothing at all. The placebo is not the absence of medicine. It is a piece of medicine we have not learned to prescribe.*

The passage develops its point by

(A) opening with a common assumption, unsettling it with evidence, and redefining the term accordingly.

(B) raising a question and then abandoning the topic unresolved.

(C) listing the symptoms that placebos have been shown to affect.

(D) reporting the step-by-step protocol of a clinical trial.

(E) offering its redefinition of the placebo first and the common view of it last.

8. *Planners have long argued which city is better to live in: the gridded city, rational and legible, or the tangled old town that grew without a plan. The debate assumes the two are rivals. Walk any great city, though, and you find them fused, a grid laid over hills it must bend around, medieval lanes surviving inside a modern plan. The interesting cities are not grid or tangle. They are the record of a grid and a tangle negotiating, block by block, over centuries.*

The passage is organized by

(A) presenting a familiar either/or debate and then dissolving it by showing the two forms combined.

(B) describing the fusion of the two city forms before introducing the debate about them.

(C) recounting how a single medieval lane survived into the present.

(D) comparing two city forms in order to crown one of them superior.

(E) citing population statistics for gridded and ungridded cities.

9. *Ask where a great idea comes from and you will hear the language of lightning, a flash, a bolt, a sudden strike from nowhere. The metaphor flatters the genius and misleads everyone else. Trace almost any breakthrough backward and the lightning dissolves into a long, dim glow: years of half-formed notes, borrowed fragments, dead ends slowly turned around. What looks like a single instant is the last step of a process too slow to notice while it happens. We remember the spark and forget the fuel.*

The passage develops its point by

(A) naming a common metaphor, exposing how it misleads, and substituting a more accurate account.

(B) quoting several scientists' firsthand descriptions of discovery.

(C) advancing the slow-process account first and the lightning metaphor last.

(D) describing the years of notes and dead ends behind one breakthrough.

(E) presenting the lightning metaphor and endorsing it as basically correct.

10. *One might suppose that a system bound by precedent can never change: each judge merely follows the last. But precedent binds more loosely than that. A judge who dislikes an old ruling can 'distinguish' it, find some difference in the new case that makes the old rule not quite apply, and over enough cases the distinctions accumulate until the original rule, though never formally overturned, no longer decides anything. The system changes not by breaking its rules but by the patient, lawful erosion of them.*

The passage is organized by

(A) defining the single legal term 'distinguish' and stopping there.

(B) stating a plausible assumption and then countering it by explaining a mechanism that undermines it.

(C) conceding the assumption and building further conclusions on top of it.

(D) surveying the history of a particular court's landmark rulings.

(E) explaining the mechanism of legal change before raising the assumption it answers.

11. *We call some pleasures 'acquired tastes,' as if the food were the same and only we had changed. Perhaps the reverse is truer. The first bitter coffee, the first pungent cheese, really did taste bad, the reaction was not a mistake to be corrected. What changes is not that we learn the thing was good all along, but that we build, through repetition, a new palate that a former self would not recognize. An acquired taste is less a discovery than a small remaking of the person who tastes.*

The passage develops its point by

(A) recounting a first taste of bitter coffee in detail.

(B) quoting a familiar phrase, challenging the assumption buried in it, and offering a reinterpretation.

(C) conceding that the familiar phrase is exactly right.

(D) reporting the results of a taste experiment on volunteers.

(E) presenting its reinterpretation before the familiar phrase it revises.

12. *A flat map of a round world must lie; the only question is how. The familiar classroom map keeps the compass directions honest and pays for it by swelling the far north, Greenland bloated to the size of Africa, which in truth could swallow it many times over. Other projections keep the areas true and bend the directions instead. There is no map that tells the whole truth, only maps that choose which truth to keep. To read a map well is first to ask what it has agreed to distort.*

The passage is organized by

(A) explaining the mathematical formulas behind each projection.

(B) asserting a general principle, illustrating the tradeoff it names, and drawing a practical lesson.

(C) describing how one projection distorts the size of Greenland.

(D) drawing its practical lesson first and stating the general principle only at the end.

(E) comparing two projections in order to declare one of them correct.

13. *It is objected that history is really the work of great individuals, that without this general or that inventor, the whole course of events would have run otherwise. The claim is not empty; some individuals plainly mattered. But it proves less than it seems. For every indispensable figure, the conditions that made them matter, the restless army, the ripe technology, the waiting market, were themselves the work of thousands. The great individual is often less the cause of the wave than the surfer who happened to catch it.*

The passage is organized by

(A) listing dates and casualty figures from several wars.

(B) presenting a thesis, granting it partial truth, and then rebutting it by reframing what it explains.

(C) focusing throughout on the role of a single general.

(D) stating the great-individual thesis and endorsing it without reservation.

(E) offering its rebuttal before stating the thesis it answers.

14. *We hear music as a succession of sounds, and so it is. But ask a performer what she labors over, and as often as not it is the silences, the held rest before the theme returns, the breath that makes the next phrase land. Sound without silence is only noise; the silences are what carve the sound into meaning. To listen for the notes alone is to read a poem while skipping its line breaks. The music lives as much in what is withheld as in what is played.*

The passage develops its point by

(A) recounting a single performer's account of one rest.

(B) granting the obvious view, redirecting attention to an overlooked element, and generalizing the point.

(C) arguing that music and noise are ultimately the same thing.

(D) beginning with the overlooked silences and only later admitting that music is sound.

(E) diagramming the notation used to mark rests in a score.

15. *An invasive species, the phrase implies, is a villain to be repelled. Yet consider the honeybee, an import on nearly every continent it now pollinates, or the earthworms that enrich soils they were carried into. Some newcomers wreck the places they arrive; others quietly become the ground others stand on. The useful question is not whether a species is native but what, here and now, it actually does. 'Invasive' names a passport, not a verdict, and we have too often mistaken the one for the other.*

The passage is organized by

(A) conceding that invasive species are uniformly harmful.

(B) tallying the economic damage caused by invasive species.

(C) recounting the spread of the honeybee across continents.

(D) questioning a loaded label, offering counterexamples, and proposing a more useful criterion.

(E) proposing its own criterion first and raising the loaded label only at the close.

16. *The expert's snap judgment looks like magic: the chess master who sees the right move at a glance, the veteran nurse who senses trouble before the monitors do. Skeptics dismiss it as luck dressed up as skill. But the glance is not empty. Behind it lie thousands of hours in which similar patterns were met, tested, and filed away, so that what now arrives as intuition is really recognition running faster than thought. The magic is real; it is simply the compressed residue of very slow, very deliberate practice.*

The passage develops its point by

(A) describing a phenomenon, airing a skeptical dismissal, and rebutting it by explaining the phenomenon.

(B) endorsing the skeptics' view that the judgments are mere luck.

(C) defining the term 'intuition' before proceeding.

(D) explaining the source of expert intuition before describing the intuition itself.

(E) focusing on the single case of the chess master.

17. *Some words, we are told, cannot be translated, the German Sehnsucht, the Portuguese saudade, and this is offered as proof that languages carve up the world in incommensurable ways. The premise is sound; the conclusion overreaches. That English needs a phrase where Portuguese needs a word shows a difference of economy, not of reach: given a sentence or two, the feeling comes across perfectly well. Untranslatable in a single word is not the same as unsayable. The gaps between languages are real, but they are bridges' lengths, not chasms.*

The passage is organized by

(A) listing the untranslatable words of a dozen languages.

(B) stating its conclusion about bridges before the premise about untranslatable words.

(C) explaining the meaning of the single word saudade.

(D) denying that any words are difficult to translate.

(E) accepting a premise while rejecting the sweeping conclusion drawn from it, by way of a distinction.

18. *Automation, the fear goes, destroys jobs, and each new machine confirms it: the loom, the switchboard, the assembly robot each threw someone out of work. Yet a century of such machines has not produced a jobless world; employment is higher than ever. The resolution is not that the fear is silly but that it is incomplete. Machines destroy particular jobs quickly and visibly, and create others slowly and diffusely, and the second half of the story, being harder to see, is the half we forget.*

The passage is organized by

(A) recounting how the mechanical loom displaced weavers.

(B) charting employment rates across a century.

(C) resolving the apparent contradiction before the fear that generates it is stated.

(D) concluding that the fear of automation is simply foolish.

(E) presenting a fear supported by cases, confronting it with a contrary fact, and resolving the apparent contradiction.

19. *When a celebrated painting is exposed as a forgery, its price collapses overnight, though not a brushstroke has changed. The canvas that thrilled us on Monday repels us on Tuesday. This tells us something uncomfortable: we were never simply admiring the object. Woven into our pleasure was a story, about the hand that made it, the century it survived, the genius it embodied. Strip the story and the paint remains, but the spell breaks. What we call the value of art is partly the value of the tale we tell around it.*

The passage develops its point by

(A) recounting the trial and conviction of a famous forger.

(B) describing the overnight collapse in a single forgery's price.

(C) arguing that forgeries are just as good as the originals.

(D) presenting a puzzling fact, inferring what it reveals, and generalizing to a broader claim.

(E) stating its broad claim about art's value first and presenting the forgery case last.

20. *Critics point to democracy's endless quarreling as its great weakness: while autocrats act, parliaments argue. There is something to the charge, but it mistakes the symptom for the disease. The quarreling is not democracy malfunctioning; it is democracy working, the visible sound of rival interests being weighed instead of crushed. A system that looked perfectly serene*

would not be efficient; it would be one in which the losing side had simply been silenced. What reads as dysfunction is the price, and the proof, of the thing functioning.

The passage is organized by

(A) stating a criticism, granting it a grain of truth, and reframing the supposed flaw as a virtue.

(B) reframing the supposed flaw as a virtue before the criticism has been introduced.

(C) citing survey data on public trust in democracy.

(D) accepting the criticism and concluding that democracy is dysfunctional.

(E) contrasting a single parliament with a single autocrat.

Answer Key — Reading Comprehension

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** detail-as-purpose; **(C)** too-extreme; **(D)** distortion/wrong-emphasis.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-extreme; **(B)** detail-as-purpose; **(C)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** detail-as-purpose; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(D)** detail-as-purpose; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q5
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** too-extreme; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(E)** detail-as-purpose.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-extreme; **(B)** detail-as-purpose; **(D)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** too-extreme; **(D)** detail-as-purpose; **(E)** distortion/wrong-emphasis.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** too-extreme; **(C)** detail-as-purpose; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** distortion/wrong-emphasis.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** detail-as-purpose; **(B)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(C)** too-extreme; **(D)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-extreme; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** detail-as-purpose; **(E)** distortion/wrong-emphasis.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** detail-as-purpose; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** too-extreme; **(E)** distortion/wrong-emphasis.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q12
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(D)** detail-as-purpose; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** too-extreme; **(C)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(E)** detail-as-purpose.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q14
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-extreme; **(B)** detail-as-purpose; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** distortion/wrong-emphasis.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-extreme; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** detail-as-purpose; **(E)** distortion/wrong-emphasis.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(D)** detail-as-purpose; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q17
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(B)** detail-as-purpose; **(C)** too-extreme; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(C)** too-extreme; **(D)** detail-as-purpose.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** too-extreme; **(D)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(E)** detail-as-purpose.

Reading Comprehension: primary purpose of a passage — Q20
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** detail-as-purpose; **(B)** distortion/wrong-emphasis; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** true-but-not-implied; **(C)** contradicts; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(D)** contradicts; **(E)** true-but-not-implied.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q3
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** true-but-not-implied; **(C)** too-strong; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** contradicts.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q4
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** true-but-not-implied; **(B)** contradicts; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** true-but-not-implied; **(D)** contradicts.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** true-but-not-implied; **(D)** too-strong; **(E)** contradicts.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** contradicts; **(B)** true-but-not-implied; **(D)** too-strong; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** true-but-not-implied; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** contradicts.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** contradicts; **(B)** too-strong; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** true-but-not-implied.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** contradicts; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** too-strong; **(E)** true-but-not-implied.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** true-but-not-implied; **(C)** too-strong; **(D)** contradicts; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** true-but-not-implied; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** too-strong; **(E)** contradicts.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** true-but-not-implied; **(C)** contradicts; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(C)** true-but-not-implied; **(D)** too-strong; **(E)** contradicts.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q15
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** contradicts; **(D)** true-but-not-implied; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q16
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** true-but-not-implied; **(D)** contradicts; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** true-but-not-implied; **(C)** too-strong; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** contradicts.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** contradicts; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** true-but-not-implied; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(C)** true-but-not-implied; **(D)** contradicts; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: inference — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** true-but-not-implied; **(D)** too-strong; **(E)** contradicts.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q1
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-extreme; **(C)** wrong-function; **(D)** literal-restatement; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-extreme; **(B)** literal-restatement; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** wrong-function.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** literal-restatement; **(C)** wrong-function; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q4
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(B)** too-extreme; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(C)** too-extreme; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-function; **(C)** too-extreme; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q7
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-function; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** too-extreme; **(E)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q8
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(C)** too-extreme; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(C)** literal-restatement; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(D)** literal-restatement; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** wrong-function; **(D)** literal-restatement; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** wrong-function; **(C)** literal-restatement; **(D)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(B)** too-extreme; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q14
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** wrong-function; **(C)** literal-restatement; **(D)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** too-extreme; **(C)** wrong-function; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** too-extreme; **(D)** literal-restatement; **(E)** wrong-function.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(B)** too-extreme; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q18
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(C)** literal-restatement; **(D)** too-extreme; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q19
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-function; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(D)** too-extreme; **(E)** literal-restatement.

Reading Comprehension: function of a sentence or detail — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** literal-restatement; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** wrong-function; **(E)** too-extreme.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** overreach; **(B)** distortion/detail-swap; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** contradicts-text.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** distortion/detail-swap; **(B)** overreach; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** contradicts-text.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q3
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** contradicts-text; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** overreach; **(E)** distortion/detail-swap.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** contradicts-text; **(C)** overreach; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** distortion/detail-swap.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** contradicts-text; **(D)** overreach; **(E)** distortion/detail-swap.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** distortion/detail-swap; **(B)** contradicts-text; **(C)** overreach; **(D)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** distortion/detail-swap; **(D)** contradicts-text; **(E)** overreach.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** overreach; **(B)** distortion/detail-swap; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** contradicts-text.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** distortion/detail-swap; **(C)** contradicts-text; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** overreach.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** distortion/detail-swap; **(B)** overreach; **(C)** contradicts-text; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** overreach; **(C)** contradicts-text; **(D)** distortion/detail-swap; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** contradicts-text; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** distortion/detail-swap; **(E)** overreach.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** distortion/detail-swap; **(C)** overreach; **(E)** contradicts-text.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** overreach; **(B)** contradicts-text; **(C)** distortion/detail-swap; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q15
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** contradicts-text; **(C)** overreach; **(D)** distortion/detail-swap.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** distortion/detail-swap; **(C)** contradicts-text; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** overreach.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** overreach; **(B)** contradicts-text; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** distortion/detail-swap.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q18
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** contradicts-text; **(D)** overreach; **(E)** distortion/detail-swap.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(C)** contradicts-text; **(D)** overreach; **(E)** distortion/detail-swap.

Reading Comprehension: specific detail — Q20
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** distortion/detail-swap; **(B)** overreach; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** contradicts-text.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-sense; **(C)** related-but-wrong; **(D)** too-common-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-sense; **(C)** too-common-sense; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** related-but-wrong; **(B)** too-common-sense; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-common-sense; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** related-but-wrong; **(E)** opposite-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-common-sense; **(B)** related-but-wrong; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-sense; **(B)** related-but-wrong; **(C)** too-common-sense; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q7
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-sense; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** too-common-sense; **(E)** related-but-wrong.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-sense; **(B)** related-but-wrong; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** too-common-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** related-but-wrong; **(D)** opposite-sense; **(E)** too-common-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-common-sense; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** related-but-wrong; **(E)** opposite-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-sense; **(B)** too-common-sense; **(C)** related-but-wrong; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q12
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** related-but-wrong; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-sense; **(E)** too-common-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q13
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** related-but-wrong; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** too-common-sense; **(E)** opposite-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q14
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** related-but-wrong; **(D)** too-common-sense; **(E)** opposite-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-sense; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** too-common-sense; **(E)** related-but-wrong.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-sense; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** related-but-wrong; **(D)** too-common-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-sense; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** related-but-wrong; **(E)** too-common-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q18
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-sense; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** related-but-wrong; **(E)** too-common-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q19
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** related-but-wrong; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-sense; **(D)** too-common-sense.

Reading Comprehension: vocabulary in context — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** related-but-wrong; **(C)** opposite-sense; **(D)** too-common-sense; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(B)** wrong-charge; **(C)** too-strong; **(E)** unsupported-mood.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-charge; **(B)** too-strong; **(C)** unsupported-mood; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** unsupported-mood; **(E)** mixes/misplaces-attitude.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** unsupported-mood; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-charge; **(C)** unsupported-mood; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(C)** unsupported-mood; **(D)** wrong-charge; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-charge; **(B)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(C)** too-strong; **(D)** unsupported-mood.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** unsupported-mood; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** too-strong; **(E)** mixes/misplaces-attitude.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** unsupported-mood; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q10
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(B)** too-strong; **(C)** unsupported-mood; **(D)** wrong-charge.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(C)** unsupported-mood; **(D)** wrong-charge; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** unsupported-mood; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-charge; **(C)** unsupported-mood; **(D)** too-strong; **(E)** mixes/misplaces-attitude.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(C)** too-strong; **(D)** unsupported-mood; **(E)** wrong-charge.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(C)** unsupported-mood; **(E)** wrong-charge.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** unsupported-mood; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q17
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** unsupported-mood; **(B)** too-strong; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(E)** wrong-charge.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-charge; **(B)** unsupported-mood; **(C)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(D)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-charge; **(C)** unsupported-mood; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude; **(E)** too-strong.

Reading Comprehension: author's tone and attitude — Q20
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** unsupported-mood; **(B)** too-strong; **(C)** wrong-charge; **(D)** mixes/misplaces-attitude.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** reverses-order; **(C)** element-not-present; **(D)** element-not-present; **(E)** mislabels-move.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** part-as-whole; **(B)** mislabels-move; **(C)** reverses-order; **(E)** mislabels-move.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q3
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** element-not-present; **(C)** mislabels-move; **(D)** part-as-whole; **(E)** reverses-order.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** mislabels-move; **(B)** element-not-present; **(D)** part-as-whole; **(E)** reverses-order.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** reverses-order; **(B)** mislabels-move; **(C)** element-not-present; **(E)** part-as-whole.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** reverses-order; **(C)** part-as-whole; **(D)** mislabels-move; **(E)** element-not-present.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q7
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** mislabels-move; **(C)** part-as-whole; **(D)** element-not-present; **(E)** reverses-order.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** reverses-order; **(C)** part-as-whole; **(D)** mislabels-move; **(E)** element-not-present.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** element-not-present; **(C)** reverses-order; **(D)** part-as-whole; **(E)** mislabels-move.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q10
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** part-as-whole; **(C)** mislabels-move; **(D)** element-not-present; **(E)** reverses-order.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** part-as-whole; **(C)** mislabels-move; **(D)** element-not-present; **(E)** reverses-order.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q12
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** element-not-present; **(C)** part-as-whole; **(D)** reverses-order; **(E)** mislabels-move.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** element-not-present; **(C)** part-as-whole; **(D)** mislabels-move; **(E)** reverses-order.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** part-as-whole; **(C)** mislabels-move; **(D)** reverses-order; **(E)** element-not-present.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** mislabels-move; **(B)** element-not-present; **(C)** part-as-whole; **(E)** reverses-order.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** mislabels-move; **(C)** element-not-present; **(D)** reverses-order; **(E)** part-as-whole.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** element-not-present; **(B)** reverses-order; **(C)** part-as-whole; **(D)** mislabels-move.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** part-as-whole; **(B)** element-not-present; **(C)** reverses-order; **(D)** mislabels-move.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q19
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** element-not-present; **(B)** part-as-whole; **(C)** mislabels-move; **(E)** reverses-order.

Reading Comprehension: passage organization — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** reverses-order; **(C)** element-not-present; **(D)** mislabels-move; **(E)** part-as-whole.

TRACK 4

Critical Reasoning

Arguments, assumptions, and what would change them

> *"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it."*
>
> — Aristotle

Short arguments tested for their logic: the conclusion and its support, the unstated assumption, and what would strengthen, weaken, or explain the reasoning.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument

node: grev.cr.A1

The skill. A strengthen question asks which new fact, if true, makes the argument's specific conclusion more likely to be true. First isolate that conclusion precisely and find the gap between the evidence and it — usually an assumption that some alternative explanation is false. The right answer closes that gap: it rules out a competing cause, or affirms a condition the argument needs. Predict the direction of the needed support before reading the options. Then reject the four traps: an option that makes the conclusion less likely (a weakener), one with no bearing on the conclusion (irrelevant), one that merely repeats a premise already given (adds nothing), or one that supports a conclusion other than the one actually argued.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What EXACTLY is the conclusion, and what gap or assumption stands between the evidence and it?

Plan. Predict the kind of fact that would close the gap — ruling out an alternative cause or affirming a needed condition — before reading options.

Solve. Choose the option that makes THIS conclusion more likely to be true.

Check. Does it support the specific conclusion (not a different one)? Does it add something new (not restate a premise)? Does it strengthen rather than weaken or wander off-topic?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

weakens.
Selects an option that makes the conclusion less likely — introducing an alternative cause or contrary evidence — the reverse of strengthening.

irrelevant.
Selects an option with no bearing on the conclusion, true but inert with respect to the argument's gap.

restates-premise.
Selects an option that merely repeats a premise or fact the argument already assumes, adding no new support.

different-conclusion.
Selects an option that supports some conclusion other than the one the argument actually draws.

Practice

1. *After the city installed a protected bike lane on Main Street, the number of cycling injuries reported on that street fell by thirty percent within a year. The transportation department concluded that the new lane had made cycling on Main Street safer.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the department's conclusion?

(A) Over the same year, cycling injuries fell by thirty percent on streets across the city that received no bike lane.

(B) The bike lane on Main Street is physically separated from motor-vehicle traffic.

(C) Pedestrian injuries on Main Street also declined after the lane was installed.

(D) The number of cyclists using Main Street rose slightly over the year in which injuries fell.

(E) The bike lane was paid for by a state grant rather than by city taxes.

2. *Last year Brightwork Software moved its entire staff from a five-day to a four-day workweek without cutting anyone's pay. Total weekly output, measured in the number of features shipped, held steady from one year to the next. Management concluded that its employees had become more productive per hour worked.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens management's conclusion?

(A) Employees worked the same number of hours per day after the change as they had before it.

(B) The company's total weekly output did not decline after the switch.

(C) Brightwork's chief competitor also uses a four-day workweek.

(D) Employees reported being happier and less likely to leave the company after the change.

(E) To keep output steady, the company hired additional developers during the year.

3. *Across the region, towns with more bookstores per capita tend to have higher adult literacy rates than towns with fewer bookstores. A columnist argues that a town seeking to raise its own literacy rate should therefore use public money to subsidize the opening of new bookstores.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the columnist's argument?

(A) In several towns that recently opened subsidized bookstores, adult literacy rates rose in the years that followed.

(B) Subsidizing bookstores would also help preserve the character of a town's historic downtown.

(C) Towns with more bookstores per capita have higher adult literacy rates than towns with fewer.

(D) Online booksellers now account for most book sales across the country.

(E) Towns tend to attract bookstores only after their residents have already become highly literate.

4. *An online retailer redesigned its checkout so that shipping costs appear on the first page rather than the last. In the month after the change, the share of shoppers who abandoned their carts fell noticeably. The retailer's analysts concluded that revealing shipping costs earlier had reduced cart abandonment.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the analysts' conclusion?

(A) Most of the retailer's shoppers complete checkout on a mobile phone rather than a computer.

(B) The retailer made no other changes to its site or prices that month, and cart-abandonment rates on competing sites were unchanged.

(C) During the same month, the retailer began offering free shipping on most orders.

(D) After the redesign, shipping costs were displayed on the first page of the checkout.

(E) Shoppers who completed a purchase after the redesign spent more per order than before.

5. *Archaeologists found that a cliffside settlement was abandoned in the same decade that a nearby river changed course, leaving the settlement without easy access to water. They concluded that the loss of the water source drove the inhabitants away.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the archaeologists' conclusion?

(A) The settlement's houses were built from stone quarried several miles away.

(B) The inhabitants who left the cliffside settlement went on to found a larger town downstream.

(C) The river that had supplied the settlement changed course during the decade the settlement was abandoned.

(D) Other settlements in the region that lost access to water in the same period were likewise abandoned within a few years, while those that kept their water persisted.

(E) Layers of ash and scattered weapons at the site indicate that the settlement was destroyed in a raid during the decade it was abandoned.

6. *After a hospital adopted a new hand-sanitizing protocol for its staff, patient infection rates fell by twenty-five percent over the following year. Administrators concluded that the new protocol was responsible for the decline in infections.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the administrators' conclusion?

(A) Patient infection rates were lower in the year after the protocol than in the year before.

(B) During the same year, the hospital installed a new air-filtration system known to reduce airborne infections.

(C) Nurses found the new protocol easier to follow than the one it replaced.

(D) The sanitizer used in the new protocol is manufactured at a plant overseas.

(E) Aside from the protocol, the hospital made no other infection-control changes that year, and the mix and severity of its patients stayed the same.

7. *An apple orchard applied a newly approved pesticide for the first time last season, and its harvest came in noticeably larger than in previous years. The orchard's manager concluded that the pesticide was responsible for the increased yield.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the manager's conclusion?

(A) The apples grown that season sold at a higher price than usual at market.

(B) The orchard's apple yield was higher in the season it used the pesticide than in earlier seasons.

(C) The new pesticide costs more per acre than the one the orchard used before.

(D) A neighboring orchard that did not use the pesticide, growing under the same weather conditions, produced only its usual yield that season.

(E) The same season, the orchard replaced its trees with a variety bred to bear more fruit.

8. *A student began drinking a cup of chamomile tea each night before bed, and since then she has been falling asleep more quickly than she used to. She concluded that the tea is what helps her fall asleep faster.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the student's conclusion?

(A) The chamomile tea she buys costs more than the coffee she used to drink.

(B) Apart from the tea, she made no change to her evening routine over this period.

(C) She falls asleep faster now than she did before she began drinking the tea.

(D) Around the same time, she also started going to bed an hour later, when she is naturally more tired.

(E) She finds the taste of chamomile tea pleasant.

9. *A state raised the minimum legal age for buying fireworks, and in the following year the number of firework injuries among teenagers fell sharply. State officials concluded that the higher age limit was responsible for the drop in teen injuries.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the officials' conclusion?

(A) Teen firework injuries were lower in the year after the law than in the year before.
(B) The new age limit passed the legislature with broad bipartisan support.
(C) During the same year, a nationwide shortage made fireworks harder for anyone to buy.
(D) Firework injuries among adults were unchanged after the law took effect.
(E) Neighboring states that kept their old age limits saw no decline in teen firework injuries over the same period.

10. *After a coastal government banned all fishing within a marine zone, a coral reef inside the zone that had been badly damaged by years of trawling recovered steadily over the next several years. Marine biologists studying the site concluded that the fishing ban was what allowed the reef to recover.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the biologists' conclusion?

(A) The protected zone has become a popular destination for scuba divers.
(B) The reef inside the zone recovered in the years after fishing was banned there.
(C) Similar reefs nearby that remained open to fishing did not recover, despite enjoying equally favorable water temperatures.
(D) Ocean temperatures in the area fell to levels ideal for coral growth during the same years.
(E) Fish populations in waters outside the protected zone also grew during those years.

11. *An online retailer added a live-chat support feature to its website so shoppers could ask questions in real time, and over the following quarter the scores customers gave in its satisfaction survey rose. The support team concluded that the new live-chat feature was responsible for the higher satisfaction.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the team's conclusion?

(A) Customers who used the live-chat feature spent more money per order.
(B) During the same quarter, the retailer also shortened its telephone hold times considerably.
(C) Customer-satisfaction scores were higher after the live-chat feature was added than before.
(D) The live-chat feature is staffed by agents working in a different time zone.
(E) The rise in satisfaction scores was concentrated entirely among customers who had used the live-chat feature.

12. *An elementary school began serving free breakfast to all students, and that year its average scores on the district reading test rose. The principal concluded that the breakfast program was responsible for the higher scores.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the principal's conclusion?

(A) The school's average reading scores were higher after the program began than before.

(B) The same year, the school hired several highly experienced reading teachers.

(C) The free breakfasts are paid for by a single private donor.

(D) The school changed nothing else about its teaching or testing, and nearby schools without free breakfast saw flat reading scores that year.

(E) Student attendance rose after the breakfast program began.

13. *A gardener added compost to one of her two flowerbeds and left the other untreated. By midsummer the composted bed had produced far more blooms than the untreated one. She concluded that the compost was responsible for the greater number of blooms.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the gardener's conclusion?

(A) The composted bed also attracted more bees than the untreated bed.

(B) The compost was made from the gardener's own kitchen scraps.

(C) The composted bed produced more blooms than the untreated bed.

(D) The two beds receive the same amount of sunlight and water and were planted with the same kind of flower.

(E) The bed that received compost happens to sit in richer soil than the untreated bed.

14. *After a city installed bright new streetlights throughout a downtown park, reported nighttime crimes in the park fell by half over the next year. The parks department concluded that the new lighting was responsible for the drop in crime.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the department's conclusion?

(A) The city also began sending police officers to patrol the park each night at the same time.

(B) Nearby parks that received no new lighting saw their nighttime crime hold steady over the same year.

(C) The new streetlights use energy-efficient LED bulbs.

(D) Reported nighttime crimes in the park were fewer after the lights were installed than before.

(E) Daytime use of the park increased over the same year.

15. *A surgical clinic began having a nurse phone each patient a few days after surgery to check on recovery. Over the next year the clinic's rate of readmission within a month of surgery fell. The clinic's director concluded that the follow-up calls were responsible for the lower readmission rate.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the director's conclusion?

(A) Readmissions were less frequent in the year after the calls began than in the year before.

(B) The clinic also adopted a detailed new discharge checklist at the same time it began the calls.

(C) A comparable clinic that made no follow-up calls saw its readmission rate hold steady over the same year.

(D) Patients reported feeling more cared for after receiving a follow-up call.

(E) The follow-up calls are made by trained volunteers rather than paid staff.

16. *A town offered tax incentives to attract a new manufacturing plant, and after the plant opened the town's unemployment rate fell. A town official concluded that the incentives, by drawing in the plant, were responsible for the drop in unemployment.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the official's conclusion?

(A) During the same period, a large regional employer expanded its operations across the whole surrounding area.

(B) The town's total tax revenue rose in the years after the plant opened.

(C) The tax incentives were approved by a narrow margin on the town council.

(D) Neighboring towns that offered no such incentives saw no fall in unemployment over the same period.

(E) The town's unemployment rate was lower after the plant opened than before.

17. *A recreational runner switched to a new brand of running shoe, and the knee pain that had bothered her for months soon went away. She concluded that the new shoes were responsible for ending her knee pain.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the runner's conclusion?

(A) Her average running times improved after she switched to the new shoes.

(B) Around the same time she switched shoes, she also cut her weekly running distance roughly in half.

(C) Her knee pain stopped after she began wearing the new shoes.

(D) The new shoes come in a brighter color than her old ones.

(E) When she briefly returned to her old shoes for a week, the knee pain came back, then faded again once she switched back.

18. *A group of farmers began rotating their crops from season to season, and after a few years the nitrogen content of their soil had risen. An agronomist concluded that the crop rotation was responsible for the increase in soil nitrogen.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the agronomist's conclusion?

(A) Soil nitrogen was higher after the farmers began rotating crops than before.

(B) The rotated fields also had fewer weeds than they used to.

(C) The crops grown in the rotation are sold mainly at nearby farmers' markets.

(D) Adjacent fields farmed without rotation, on the same soil type and under the same weather, showed no rise in nitrogen.

(E) During those years the farmers also spread nitrogen-rich fertilizer on the rotated fields.

19. *A country began requiring large graphic health warnings on cigarette packages, and over the following two years its smoking rate fell. Health officials concluded that the warning labels were responsible for the decline in smoking.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the officials' conclusion?

(A) The graphic warning labels were designed by a well-known artist.

(B) Sales of nicotine chewing gum rose after the labels appeared.

(C) The country's smoking rate was lower after the labels appeared than before.

(D) During the same two years, the country sharply raised the tax on cigarettes.

(E) The country made no other change to its tobacco policy, and cigarette taxes and prices stayed flat throughout the period.

20. *An airline changed its boarding procedure so that passengers board from the back of the plane to the front, and its average boarding time fell. The operations team concluded that the new back-to-front procedure was responsible for the faster boarding.*

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the team's conclusion?

(A) The gate agents received new uniforms the month the procedure changed.

(B) Average boarding time was shorter after the new procedure was adopted than before.

(C) Throughout the period the airline flew the same aircraft with the same number of passengers per flight, and changed nothing else about boarding.

(D) Passengers rated the boarding process as less stressful under the new procedure.

(E) Over the same period the airline began charging for carry-on bags, so passengers brought fewer bags to stow.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument

node: grev.cr.A2

The skill. A weaken question asks which option, if true, most undermines the argument's conclusion — usually by attacking the link between the evidence and the conclusion, not the truth of the evidence itself. First separate the conclusion from the premises and locate the gap: most weakenable arguments make an unstated leap, treating a correlation as a cause or a special case as representative. The strongest weakener introduces a fact that makes the conclusion less likely to follow — commonly an alternative explanation for the evidence, an overlooked case the reasoning failed to rule out, or a reason the sample or comparison is misleading. Reject options that instead strengthen the argument, that merely restate a premise you already grant, that raise an irrelevant consideration, or that undercut a claim the argument never actually made.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What exactly is the conclusion, and what is the gap between it and the premises — a causal leap, a comparison, a generalization?

Plan. Look for the option that makes the conclusion less likely — typically an alternative cause or an overlooked case — and set aside strengtheners, premise-restatements, and off-topic facts.

Solve. Choose the option that most directly undercuts the specific conclusion.

Check. Does my choice make the conclusion harder to accept? Or did I pick something that supports it, merely repeats a premise, or targets a claim the argument never made?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

wrong-direction.
Selects an option that strengthens the argument (or supports its conclusion) when the task is to weaken it.

out-of-scope.
Selects an irrelevant consideration that has no bearing on whether the specific conclusion holds.

restates-premise.
Selects an option that merely repeats a premise the argument already grants, leaving the inference to the conclusion untouched.

addresses-wrong-conclusion.
Selects an option that undercuts a side issue or a claim the argument did not make, rather than the actual conclusion.

Practice

1. *The Beanstalk coffee chain introduced a smartphone loyalty app last spring, and over the following six months its sales rose fifteen percent. Management concluded that the app was responsible for the increase and now plans to require every regional franchise to adopt it.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument that the app was responsible for the increase in sales?

(A) Customers who downloaded the app bought coffee from Beanstalk more frequently than customers who did not.

(B) Building and maintaining the app cost Beanstalk more than executives had expected.

(C) A competing chain that launched a similar app saw no change in its own sales.

(D) Beanstalk's total sales in the six months after the launch were indeed higher than in the previous half-year.

(E) During the same six months, Beanstalk also cut its prices and opened new outlets in three busy transit stations.

2. *In a study, adults who took a daily zinc supplement scored higher on a memory test than adults who took no supplement. The researchers concluded that zinc improves memory and recommended supplements for anyone hoping to sharpen recall.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the researchers' conclusion?

(A) The adults who chose to take zinc also tended to exercise regularly and sleep more than those who took nothing.

(B) When a subset of the no-supplement group later began taking zinc, their memory scores rose as well.

(C) In high doses, zinc can cause nausea in some people.

(D) The zinc group's average memory-test score exceeded that of the group taking nothing.

(E) Zinc supplements are inexpensive and available without a prescription.

3. *After the city painted protected bike lanes on Elm Avenue, the number of reported cycling accidents on that street fell by a third. The transportation board credited the lanes and has proposed installing identical lanes on every major avenue in the city.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the board's reasoning that the lanes caused the drop in accidents?

(A) On comparable streets without the new lanes, cycling accidents held steady over the same months.

(B) Painting the lanes cost less than the board had originally estimated.

(C) During the same period, a long construction project closed part of Elm Avenue, sharply reducing the number of cyclists who used it.

(D) Reported cycling accidents on Elm Avenue after the lanes were installed were fewer than before.

(E) Some drivers complained that the new lanes left less room for cars.

4. *The Marlowe bistro hired a new head chef in January, and by summer its average online rating had climbed from three stars to four. The owner is convinced the chef deserves the credit and has offered him a long contract on the strength of the improved reviews.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the owner's conclusion that the chef was responsible for the improved rating?

(A) The new chef had previously worked at a highly rated restaurant across town.

(B) The new chef is paid more than the chef he replaced.

(C) In February the bistro also renovated its dining room and retrained its serving staff, the two things earlier low reviews had most often complained about.

(D) The bistro's average rating was higher in summer than it had been in January.

(E) Reviews written after January praised the food far more often than reviews written before.

5. *A software firm launched a voluntary wellness program and found that employees who enrolled took twenty percent fewer sick days over the next year than employees who did not enroll. The human-resources director concluded that the program keeps workers healthy and now wants to make enrollment mandatory for all staff.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the director's reasoning?

(A) Among enrollees, those who attended the most wellness sessions took the fewest sick days of all.

(B) The wellness program was praised in an industry magazine as innovative.

(C) Employees chose whether to enroll, and those who signed up were mostly younger staff who had already taken few sick days in the years before the program existed.

(D) Enrolled employees averaged fewer sick days last year than employees who did not enroll.

(E) Running the wellness program required the firm to hire two additional staff members.

6. *A neighborhood gym began offering group fitness classes in the spring, and over the following months its membership-renewal rate rose. The manager concluded that the new classes were responsible for the higher renewal rate and plans to expand the class schedule.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the manager's conclusion?

(A) At the same time it introduced the classes, the gym cut its monthly membership fee substantially.

(B) The group classes cost more to run than the manager had expected.

(C) Members who attended the group classes renewed at a higher rate than members who did not.

(D) The group classes are taught by nationally certified instructors.

(E) The gym's renewal rate was higher after the classes began than before.

7. *A newspaper put its website behind a paywall, and over the next month the number of paid digital subscriptions climbed. The publisher concluded that the paywall was responsible for the growth in subscriptions and calls it a model for other papers.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the publisher's conclusion?

(A) Subscriptions rose fastest among readers who had most often reached the paywall.

(B) That same month, a major national news event drove readers everywhere to subscribe to news sites.

(C) The paper had more paid subscribers after the paywall than before.

(D) The paywall software was licensed from a European vendor.

(E) Some longtime readers said they disliked hitting the paywall.

8. *A large survey found that adults who drink a glass of red wine most days live longer, on average, than adults who drink no wine. A commentator concluded that drinking red wine extends life and urged readers to take up the habit.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the commentator's conclusion?

(A) Red wine generally costs more than white wine.

(B) In the survey, red-wine drinkers lived longer on average than non-drinkers.

(C) Among wine drinkers in the survey, those who drank more red wine lived even longer on average.

(D) Red wine can stain a person's teeth over time.

(E) The red-wine drinkers in the survey were mostly wealthy and had far better access to medical care than the non-drinkers.

9. *A coastal city banned single-use plastic bags, and over the following summer the amount of litter collected on its beaches fell sharply. The city council credited the bag ban and is urging nearby towns to adopt the same policy.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the council's reasoning that the ban reduced beach litter?

(A) Beaches where the ban was enforced most strictly showed the largest drops in litter.

(B) That same summer, the city doubled the number of trash cans and cleanup crews on its beaches.

(C) Beach litter was lower in the summer after the ban than in previous summers.

(D) The bag ban was opposed by several large grocery chains.

(E) Reusable bags cost shoppers more than the plastic bags they replaced.

10. *A parent began drilling a child on spelling with a set of flashcards, and over the next month the child's scores on weekly spelling quizzes improved. The parent concluded that the flashcards were responsible for the improvement.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the parent's conclusion?

(A) The words the child practiced on the flashcards were the ones she improved on most.

(B) The child spells better now than she did before using the flashcards.

(C) The child found the flashcard drills rather boring.

(D) The flashcards were a birthday gift from a relative.

(E) During the same weeks, the child's teacher began an intensive spelling unit in class.

11. *A restaurant added a dessert menu, and over the next few weeks the average amount each table spent rose. The owner concluded that the desserts were responsible for the larger checks and plans to expand the dessert offerings.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the owner's conclusion?

(A) Some diners felt the dessert menu was too long to read.

(B) Tables that ordered a dessert had noticeably larger checks than those that did not.

(C) The desserts are supplied by an outside bakery rather than made in-house.

(D) At the same time it added the dessert menu, the restaurant raised the prices of its main dishes.

(E) The average check was larger after the dessert menu was added than before.

12. *A fitness-app company noticed that users who log every meal in the app lose more weight, on average, than users who do not log their meals. The company concluded that logging meals causes weight loss and now prompts all users to log.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the company's conclusion?

(A) Users who logged their meals lost more weight than users who did not.

(B) Among users who log meals, the most consistent loggers lost the most weight.

(C) Users who bother to log every meal tend to be more disciplined about diet and exercise in general.

(D) The meal-logging feature was introduced in a recent update to the app.

(E) Some users find logging every meal tedious.

13. *A school district lengthened the school day by an hour, and that year its high-school graduation rate rose. The superintendent concluded that the longer day was responsible for the higher graduation rate and wants to keep the change permanent.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the superintendent's reasoning?

(A) Some students complained that the longer day left them tired.

(B) The same year, the district opened a new tutoring center and hired several college counselors.

(C) The graduation rate was higher in the year of the longer day than in prior years.

(D) The longer school day required the district to renegotiate its teacher contracts.

(E) Schools that added the most extra instructional time saw graduation rates climb the most.

14. *A driver switched from regular to premium gasoline, and over the next few weeks her car's fuel economy improved. She concluded that the premium gasoline was responsible for the better mileage and intends to keep buying it.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the driver's conclusion?

(A) On the tanks where she used premium gasoline, her mileage was consistently higher.

(B) Her fuel economy was better after she switched to premium than before.

(C) Premium gasoline costs more per gallon than regular.

(D) She switched to premium right around the time she had the car's engine tuned and its worn tires replaced.

(E) Premium gasoline was harder to find at her usual station.

15. *A study found that children who take private music lessons score higher on standardized math tests than children who take no music lessons. The researchers concluded that music lessons improve children's math ability and recommended lessons for all students.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the researchers' conclusion?

(A) Children who take private music lessons usually come from families that also pay for extensive academic tutoring.

(B) Some children dislike having to practice a musical instrument.

(C) Private music lessons are often expensive.

(D) In the study, children who took music lessons scored higher in math than those who did not.

(E) The longer children had studied music, the higher their math scores tended to be.

16. *A software team adopted a new project-management tool, and over the next two quarters it shipped noticeably more features than before. The team lead concluded that the new tool was responsible for the greater output and urged other teams to adopt it.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the team lead's conclusion?

(A) Over the same two quarters, the team grew from six engineers to ten.

(B) Features whose progress was tracked in the new tool were completed faster than features that were not.

(C) The new tool is a subscription service billed to the team each month.

(D) The team shipped more features after adopting the tool than before.

(E) A few engineers found the new tool's interface confusing at first.

17. *A city added a new bus route through its downtown, and over the following month the number of pedestrians on downtown sidewalks rose. A transit official concluded that the new route was responsible for bringing more people downtown.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the official's conclusion?

(A) The new route runs at a financial loss for the transit agency.

(B) Downtown foot traffic was higher after the route opened than before.

(C) That same month, a large new shopping center opened in the heart of downtown.

(D) The new bus route is operated by a private contractor.

(E) Pedestrian traffic rose most at the stops the new route served.

18. *A man who had been feeling low started taking a brisk half-hour walk outdoors each morning, and over the following weeks his mood noticeably improved. Pleased with the change, he concluded that the daily walks were what had lifted his mood and resolved to keep them up.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the man's conclusion?

(A) The daily walks have also strengthened the muscles in his legs.

(B) On the few mornings he skipped his walk, his mood for the day was noticeably worse.

(C) He began the walks just as a long and stressful work project came to an end.

(D) He takes his walks in a park close to his home.

(E) His mood is better now than it was before he began the daily walks.

19. *A garden-supply company observed that gardeners who use its plant food grow taller tomato plants than gardeners who use none. The company concluded that its plant food is what makes the tomato plants grow taller and features the claim in its advertising.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the company's conclusion?

(A) Plants given a larger dose of the plant food grew taller than plants given a smaller dose.

(B) Tomato plants grown with the plant food were taller than those grown without it.

(C) Gardeners who buy the plant food also tend to water and weed their gardens far more attentively than those who do not.

(D) The plant food has an unpleasant smell when first applied.

(E) The plant food is sold only in large containers.

20. *An online store sent a round of discount emails to its customers, and sales that week came in higher than the week before. The marketing team concluded that the emails were responsible for the jump in sales and plans to send them every week.*

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the team's conclusion?

(A) Customers who opened the discount emails bought more that week than customers who did not.

(B) The discount emails were written by the company's newly hired marketing specialist.

(C) That week coincided with a national holiday during which online shopping surges across all retailers.

(D) A few recipients unsubscribed after receiving the discount emails.

(E) Sales were higher the week the emails went out than the week before.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption

node: grev.cr.A3

The skill. An assumption question asks for an unstated premise the argument needs in order to hold together — not extra support, but a link without which the conclusion cannot stand. Find the gap between the premises and the conclusion; the assumption usually bridges a shift in terms or rules out an alternative the argument quietly ignores. Test any candidate with the negation test: negate the statement and ask whether the argument collapses. If negating it destroys the reasoning, it is a required assumption; if the argument still survives once the statement is false, it

is not necessary, however plausible it sounds. Reject options that merely restate a premise or the conclusion, that go beyond what the argument needs (too strong to be necessary), that raise an irrelevant issue, or that state the reverse of what the argument requires.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What is the conclusion, and what unstated link must be true for the premises to support it?

Plan. Predict the bridging assumption, then apply the negation test — negate each candidate and keep only the one whose negation breaks the argument.

Solve. Choose the necessary assumption: the statement the argument cannot do without.

Check. When I negate my choice, does the argument truly fall apart? Did I avoid restatements, too-strong claims, off-topic facts, and reversed statements?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

restates-stated.
Selects an option that repeats a stated premise or the conclusion rather than supplying the unstated link the argument depends on.

out-of-scope.
Selects a consideration the argument does not depend on; negating it leaves the argument intact.

too-strong.
Selects a claim stronger than the argument requires; because the argument can hold even if the claim is false, it fails the negation test and is not necessary.

reverses.
Selects the reverse of what the argument needs — a statement that, if assumed, would undermine rather than support the conclusion.

Practice

1. *The company plans to raise its profit by relocating its call center overseas, where wages are much lower. Because labor is the call center's single largest expense, executives are confident that the move will cut costs and lift profit.*

   The argument depends on which of the following assumptions?

   (A) Overseas wages will remain lower than domestic wages forever.

   (B) The cost of relocating the center will exceed the money saved on wages.

   (C) Labor is the call center's largest single expense.

(D) Relocating the call center will not create new costs large enough to cancel out the savings in wages.

(E) The company's competitors have not yet moved their own call centers overseas.

2. *Researchers found that a certain gene is far more common in people who live past ninety than in the population at large. They concluded that inheriting this gene increases a person's chances of living a very long life.*

The conclusion depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) The gene appears more often in people over ninety than in the population at large.

(B) Everyone who carries the gene lives past ninety.

(C) The people who carry the gene do not also share some other trait that is itself responsible for their long lives.

(D) People who live past ninety are less likely than others to carry the gene.

(E) The gene can be identified with a simple blood test.

3. *To cut downtown traffic, the city will make bus rides free during rush hour. Officials reason that many commuters now drive because the fare feels like an added cost on top of parking, and that removing the fare will draw enough of them onto buses to ease congestion.*

The officials' plan relies on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Free fares will make the buses so crowded that former drivers return to their cars.

(B) Every commuter who now drives will switch to the bus once fares are free.

(C) Some commuters currently drive downtown during rush hour.

(D) The city can afford to give up the fare revenue it collects during rush hour.

(E) For a substantial number of commuters, the fare — rather than factors such as travel time or comfort — is what keeps them from taking the bus.

4. *Dana wants to run a marathon next year. She has read that elite marathoners log at least eighty miles a week in training, and she has therefore decided that to finish the race she must build up to eighty miles a week herself.*

Dana's reasoning depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Anyone who trains eighty miles a week will finish the marathon.

(B) Elite marathoners train at least eighty miles a week.

(C) Completing a marathon requires the same weekly mileage that elite runners use to race one competitively.

(D) Dana has enough free time to fit eighty-mile weeks into her schedule.

(E) Runners who train far less than the elites are the ones most likely to finish.

5. *A publisher noticed that its books with one-word titles sold better on average than its books with longer titles. It has decided that shortening the titles of its upcoming releases will increase their sales.*

The publisher's decision depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Every book with a one-word title outsells every book with a longer title.

(B) The publisher's one-word-titled books sold better on average than its longer-titled books.

(C) It was the brevity of the titles, not some other trait the short-titled books happened to share, that was responsible for their stronger sales.

(D) The publisher's competitors also release books with short titles.

(E) The books that sold best happened to be the ones with the longest titles.

6. *A school district adopted new online homework software, and district test scores rose the following year. Administrators concluded that the software was responsible for the improvement and plan to expand its use.*

The administrators' conclusion depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Scores would have risen even more that year if the district had not adopted the software.

(B) Test scores rose in the year after the software was introduced.

(C) No other change in the district that year was responsible for the rise in test scores.

(D) The software raised the individual score of every single student in the district.

(E) The software costs less than the paper worksheets it replaced.

7. *Employees who enroll in the company's optional wellness program take fewer sick days than employees who do not. Management has concluded that requiring all employees to join the program would reduce total absences across the company.*

The conclusion depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) The program eliminates sick days entirely among the employees who take part.

(B) The wellness program is popular among the company's managers.

(C) Employees who join the wellness program take fewer sick days.

(D) The employees who take the most sick days are the ones who choose to enroll in the program.

(E) The employees who currently enroll are not already healthier, for reasons unrelated to the program, than those who do not.

8. *A columnist argues that building a highway bypass around the congested downtown will shorten travel times for commuters, since the bypass lets drivers avoid the downtown traffic entirely.*

The columnist's argument depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) The bypass will cost more to build than the city originally estimated.

(B) The bypass allows drivers to avoid the downtown area.

(C) The bypass will remain completely free of traffic at all hours.

(D) Commuters who take the bypass will face longer delays than those who continue through downtown.

(E) The bypass will not itself draw enough traffic to become as congested as the downtown route.

9. *A reviewer notes that a new phone model has a larger battery than the model it replaces. She concludes that the new phone will therefore last longer on a single charge than the old one did.*

The reviewer's conclusion depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) The new phone is offered in more colors than the previous model.

(B) The new phone does not draw enough extra power to offset the gain from its larger battery.

(C) The new phone uses less power than any phone ever built.

(D) The new phone's hardware drains the battery faster than the added capacity can supply.

(E) The new phone has a larger battery than the previous model.

10. *A charity observed that the months in which it sent the most fundraising emails were also the months in which it raised the most money. It has decided to increase the number of emails it sends in order to raise more donations.*

The charity's decision depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Recipients tend to give less the more fundraising emails they receive.

(B) The charity's emails are written by a professional copywriter.

(C) The higher donations in those months were due to the number of emails rather than to some other factor, such as the time of year.

(D) The months with more fundraising emails were the months with higher donations.

(E) Every additional email the charity sends produces at least one additional donation.

11. *A nutrition writer notes that a coastal village whose people eat large amounts of fish has unusually low rates of heart disease. He advises readers elsewhere to eat more fish, reasoning that doing so will lower their risk of heart disease as well.*

The writer's advice depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Within the village, the people who eat the most fish have the highest rates of heart disease.

(B) The village's low rate of heart disease is due to its fish consumption rather than to other features of village life.

(C) The fish eaten in the village is caught in nearby waters.

(D) The people of the village eat large amounts of fish.

(E) Anyone who eats fish regularly will never develop heart disease.

12. *A city council notes that streets with bike lanes report fewer car accidents than streets without them. It has decided to add a bike lane to Main Street in order to reduce the car accidents that occur there.*

The council's decision depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Streets that have bike lanes report fewer car accidents.

(B) The new bike lane will be painted a bright color for visibility.

(C) A bike lane makes car accidents impossible on any street where it is installed.

(D) Adding a bike lane to a street tends to raise the number of car accidents on it.

(E) The streets that already have bike lanes are not ones that had fewer accidents even before the lanes were added.

13. *A film studio's past summer releases have, on average, sold more tickets than its winter releases. The studio has decided to release its next film in summer in order to maximize its ticket sales.*

The studio's decision depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Every film released in summer outsells every film released in winter.

(B) The stronger sales of the studio's summer films were due to the season rather than to the kinds of films it chose to release then.

(C) The studio's winter releases have in fact earned more than its summer releases.

(D) The studio's summer releases have on average outsold its winter releases.

(E) The studio spends more on movie posters than its competitors do.

14. *An economist argues that if a museum lowers the price of its tickets, its total ticket revenue will rise, because cheaper tickets will draw more visitors through the doors.*

The economist's argument depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) So few additional visitors will come that revenue will drop below its current level.

(B) The lower price will fill the museum to its full capacity every single day.

(C) The additional visitors drawn by the lower price will be numerous enough to more than make up for the lower revenue per ticket.

(D) The museum recently opened a new wing devoted to modern art.

(E) Lowering the ticket price reduces the amount collected per ticket sold.

15. *A coach believes his team lost most of its games last season because the players were not fit enough. He has therefore introduced a much tougher fitness program, confident that it will produce more wins next season.*

The coach's reasoning depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) The new fitness program will be supervised by an outside trainer.

(B) The team's fittest players were the ones who performed worst last season.

(C) The team lost most of its games last season.

(D) A fitter team wins every single game it plays.

(E) The team's losses were caused by insufficient fitness rather than by factors such as skill or tactics.

16. *In a survey, sixty percent of respondents said they would like a certain restaurant to offer more vegetarian dishes. On the strength of this, the owner has decided to add several vegetarian dishes, expecting that sales will rise as a result.*

The owner's decision depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Every one of the restaurant's customers will order a vegetarian dish.

(B) A majority of survey respondents said they wanted more vegetarian options.

(C) The survey was conducted online rather than on paper.

(D) Customers who request vegetarian dishes almost never order them when they appear on the menu.

(E) The people who said they wanted more vegetarian dishes will in fact order them once they are offered.

17. *Hospitals with more nurses per patient report shorter emergency-room wait times than hospitals with fewer. An administrator concludes that hiring more nurses at her own hospital will shorten its wait times.*

The administrator's conclusion depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Hospitals with more nurses per patient tend to have longer wait times.

(B) Hospitals with more nurses per patient report shorter wait times.

(C) The nurses at the hospital are represented by a union.

(D) The shorter waits at well-staffed hospitals are due to the higher nurse-to-patient ratio rather than to other advantages those hospitals share.

(E) Adding even a single nurse eliminates all patient waiting.

18. *A gardener used a new fertilizer on her tomato plants this year and harvested noticeably larger tomatoes than she did last year. She has concluded that the fertilizer is what made the tomatoes grow larger.*

The gardener's conclusion depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) The fertilizer produces the largest tomatoes that any plant can possibly grow.

(B) The new fertilizer is sold in a larger bag than the brand she used before.

(C) The new fertilizer tends to stunt the growth of tomato plants.

(D) Her tomatoes were larger this year than they were last year.

(E) No factor other than the fertilizer, such as this year's weather, accounts for the larger tomatoes.

19. *Most fatal crashes involving teenagers are caused by the very youngest drivers. A policymaker therefore argues that raising the minimum driving age by two years will reduce the number of traffic deaths.*

The policymaker's argument depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Raising the driving age will prevent crashes rather than merely postpone to a later age the inexperience that causes them.

(B) The proposed law would also raise the minimum age for a motorcycle license.

(C) Most fatal teenage crashes are caused by the youngest drivers.

(D) No driver older than the new minimum age is ever involved in a fatal crash.

(E) Drivers become more likely to cause fatal crashes as they gain years of experience.

20. *Users of a mobile app who turn on push notifications open the app more often than users who leave notifications off. The developers have concluded that switching notifications on for all users by default will increase overall app usage.*

The developers' conclusion depends on which of the following assumptions?

(A) Users who turn on notifications open the app more often.

(B) The app is available on both major phone platforms.

(C) Users who currently turn on notifications are not simply the users already most inclined to open the app.

(D) Users tend to open the app less often once notifications are switched on.

(E) Every user with notifications enabled opens the app dozens of times each day.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy

node: grev.cr.A4

The skill. A resolve-the-discrepancy question presents two facts that seem to conflict and asks which option best explains how both can be true at once. First state the apparent contradiction precisely: what would you expect given the first fact, and how does the second fact violate that expectation? The right answer supplies a new piece of information that lets both facts sit comfortably together — usually by revealing a hidden difference between the two cases, an offsetting factor that cancels the expected effect, or a reason the two facts are actually measuring different things. Reject options that deepen the puzzle instead of dissolving it, that merely restate one of the two facts, that explain only one side while leaving the other as mysterious as before, or that raise something irrelevant to both.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What are the two facts, and why do they seem to conflict — what does one lead you to expect that the other appears to contradict?

Plan. Look for information that lets both facts be true together — a hidden difference or an offsetting factor — and reject options that worsen the conflict, restate a fact, or address only one side.

Solve. Choose the option under which both facts can hold at once.

Check. Does my choice actually let BOTH facts be true? Or does it deepen the conflict, repeat one fact, or explain only one side?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

deepens-discrepancy.
Selects an option that, instead of reconciling the two facts, makes them even harder to square.

out-of-scope.
Selects an option irrelevant to both facts, so it explains neither and cannot resolve the tension.

restates-a-fact.
Selects an option that merely repeats one of the two given facts as though restating it were an explanation.

one-sided.
Selects an option that accounts for only one of the facts (often why it is true) while leaving the other just as puzzling — it does not show how both hold together.

Practice

1. *The Harbor Grill raised its menu prices by twenty percent last year. Yet its total revenue for the year came out almost exactly the same as the revenue it had earned the year before.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both of these facts can be true?

(A) Most of the restaurant's regular customers said the higher prices did not change how often they came in.

(B) The price increase was intended to cover the rising cost of ingredients.

(C) The restaurant down the street lowered its own prices during the same year.

(D) Following the price increase, the number of meals the restaurant served fell substantially.

(E) The restaurant charged twenty percent more for its dishes than it had the year before.

2. *A certain frog secretes a potent toxin through its skin, one strong enough to sicken most animals that try to eat it. Yet a particular snake regularly preys on these frogs and suffers no ill effects at all.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The toxin is even more concentrated in the frogs that live where this snake hunts.

(B) The frog's toxin first evolved as a defense against birds that hunt by day.

(C) The snake eats the toxic frogs without becoming sick.

(D) The frog's bright coloring warns most other predators to stay away.

(E) Over many generations, this snake population has evolved a biochemical resistance to the frog's particular toxin.

3. *A city installed hundreds of new streetlights across several neighborhoods, expecting the brighter streets to make residents safer. Yet in the year after installation, the number of reported nighttime thefts in those same neighborhoods rose.*

Which of the following, if true, best helps to reconcile the two findings?

(A) The new streetlights were installed only on blocks that had historically seen very little crime.

(B) Reported nighttime thefts in the lit neighborhoods went up during the year after installation.

(C) With the streets better lit, residents became far more willing to report thefts they would previously have overlooked or left unreported.

(D) The city paid for the streetlights by raising parking fees downtown.

(E) The streetlights were installed to reassure residents who felt unsafe walking after dark.

4. *Each winter, a town's emergency room treats more injuries from sidewalk falls on days when the sidewalks have been salted than on days when they are left icy and untreated. Salt is supposed to make walking safer, not more dangerous.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains the pattern in fall injuries?

(A) The town buys its road salt from a supplier in a neighboring county.

(B) Salt makes sidewalks noticeably less slippery within minutes of being spread.

(C) Crews salt the sidewalks only after the heaviest storms, when conditions are far more treacherous than on an ordinary icy day.

(D) More people are treated for fall injuries on salted days than on untreated icy days.

(E) The town began salting its sidewalks in order to reduce winter injuries.

5. *A company moved its entire sales team to a four-day workweek, expecting weekly output to drop with the lost day. Instead, over the following months the team closed more sales per week than it had on the old five-day schedule.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both results can be true?

(A) Management adopted the four-day week in the hope of reducing employee burnout.

(B) After moving to four days, the team closed more sales each week than it had on five.

(C) After the change, the team faced the same sales targets and the same customer list as before.

(D) With one less day available, the representatives cut back sharply on long internal meetings and other low-value tasks, spending a greater share of their remaining hours actually contacting customers.

(E) Competing firms in the industry still operate on a five-day workweek.

6. *To finish a software project sooner, a company doubled the number of programmers assigned to it. Yet the project took longer to complete than a similar earlier project that had been staffed with only half as many programmers.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) With twice as many programmers, the team spent so much time coordinating and communicating that each member got far less actual coding done.

(B) The programmers on the larger team were more experienced than those on the earlier project.

(C) The project staffed with twice as many programmers took longer to complete.

(D) The company doubled the team because it wanted the project finished as quickly as possible.

(E) The company's headquarters is in a different city from where the earlier project's team had worked.

7. *Over the past decade, average wages in a certain country rose steadily year after year. Yet when surveyed, most workers said they felt no better off financially than they had at the start of the decade.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The country's population grew slightly over the decade.

(B) Average wages in the country increased in each year of the decade.

(C) Over the same decade, the prices of everyday goods and services rose at about the same rate as wages.

(D) Wages rose because employers were competing for workers from a shrinking labor pool.

(E) During the decade, the prices of most goods and services actually fell.

8. *A gym signed up a record number of new members in January. Yet the number of people actually working out at the gym on a typical day barely changed over the course of the year.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The new members bought memberships that gave them unlimited daily access.

(B) Most of the new members stopped visiting the gym within a few weeks of signing up.

(C) The gym is located next door to a popular coffee shop.

(D) The gym ran a New Year's promotion designed to attract as many sign-ups as possible.

(E) A record number of people signed up for gym memberships in January.

9. *In laboratory trials, a new medication cured the disease in nearly all patients who received it. Yet once the drug went on sale, doctors reported that it helped only a minority of the patients to whom they prescribed it.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The trial enrolled only patients with the mild, early form of the disease, whereas the drug was later prescribed to patients with every form of it.

(B) The drug is manufactured at a single factory located overseas.

(C) In the laboratory trials, the drug cured almost every patient who received it.

(D) The version of the drug sold to the public was more potent than the one used in the trials.

(E) Researchers ran the trials in order to demonstrate that the drug was effective before putting it on sale.

10. *A retailer's website draws far more visitors each month than walk into its physical stores. Yet the physical stores account for the great majority of the company's sales.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) Most people who visit the website only browse, whereas those who go to a store usually intend to buy something.

(B) The website and the physical stores offer the same products at the same prices.

(C) The company built the website mainly to reach customers who live far from any of its stores.

(D) The website receives many more visitors each month than the stores do.

(E) The company redesigned its website about two years ago.

11. *Two neighboring farms grow the same crop. One farm pours far more water onto its fields than the other, yet at harvest both farms bring in crops of about the same size.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The farm that uses less water has soil that holds moisture far better, so its crops receive just as much water at their roots.

(B) The farm that uses more water does so because its owner firmly believes heavy watering produces the best crops.

(C) The two farms are owned by members of the same family.

(D) One of the two farms uses much more water than the other.

(E) The two farms have identical soil, weather, and hours of sunlight.

12. *A bookstore moved its most popular novels out of the prominent front window and onto a shelf at the back of the store. Yet sales of those novels did not fall at all in the months that followed.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The back shelf sits in a dim corner that few customers ever walk past.

(B) The store moved the novels in order to free up the front window for a new display of greeting cards.

(C) The bookstore also sells coffee from a counter near its entrance.

(D) Customers who wanted those popular novels already knew about them and sought them out wherever they were shelved.

(E) The store's most popular novels were relocated from the front window to a shelf in the back.

13. *A factory installed new machines that turn out parts at twice the speed of the old ones. Yet the factory's weekly output of finished products did not rise at all after the new machines went into service.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The new machines almost never break down or require maintenance.

(B) The new machines were purchased from a manufacturer in another country.

(C) The factory bought the new machines in the hope of raising its weekly output.

(D) The new machines produce parts at twice the speed of the machines they replaced.

(E) Every finished product must still pass through a single inspection stage, unchanged by the new machines, that limits how many can be completed each week.

14. *A region received far more rainfall this spring than in a typical year. Yet by the end of the season its reservoirs held less water than they usually do.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The region used less water this spring than it normally does.

(B) The unusually heavy rains were brought on by a shift in ocean temperatures far offshore.

(C) The region received far more rain this spring than in an ordinary year.

(D) Most of the rain fell in sudden, violent storms whose water ran off the hard ground into rivers before it could be collected in the reservoirs.

(E) The region's reservoirs were built more than fifty years ago.

15. *In a local election, one candidate spent far more on advertising than her opponent did. Yet on election day she received far fewer votes than he did.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) Election day happened to be cold and rainy across the district.

(B) Her advertisements dwelt on harsh attacks that many voters found off-putting, pushing their support toward her opponent.

(C) The candidate spent considerably more on advertising than her opponent did.

(D) Her advertisements reached nearly every household in the district.

(E) She spent so heavily on advertising because she had started the race far behind in name recognition.

16. *An airline greatly increased the number of flights it runs between two cities. Yet the total number of passengers it carried between those cities over the year stayed about the same as before.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The airline added many more flights between the two cities.

(B) Nearly every one of the added flights was fully booked on almost every trip.

(C) The airline added the flights in the hope of carrying more passengers between the cities.

(D) The same pool of travelers was simply spread across more flights, so each flight carried fewer passengers than before.

(E) The airline repainted its planes in a new color scheme during the year.

17. *A university lowered the tuition it charges each student. Yet the total amount of money it collected in tuition that year turned out to be higher than before.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The lower tuition attracted so many additional students that the extra enrollments more than made up for the smaller amount each paid.

(B) The university is well known for its championship rowing team.

(C) The university admitted the same number of students as it had in previous years.

(D) The university reduced the tuition it charges each student.

(E) The university cut its tuition in order to compete with lower-priced rival schools.

18. *A store switched to a cheaper supplier for one of the products it sells, cutting what it paid for each unit. Yet over the following months the store's profit on that product fell.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The store switched suppliers in order to lower its costs.

(B) The store began buying the product from a less expensive supplier.

(C) The store's owner has been running the business for more than twenty years.

(D) The cheaper supplier's version was of noticeably lower quality, so many customers returned it for refunds.

(E) The store sold the same number of units at the same retail price as before.

19. *A city banned cars from its main shopping street, and merchants there worried that sales would suffer. Yet in the months after the ban, sales along the street rose.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The shopping street is named after the city's founder.

(B) With the cars gone, far more pedestrians strolled and lingered on the street, and they bought more than the passing drivers ever had.

(C) After cars were banned from the street, sales along it increased.

(D) The city banned the cars mainly in the hope of reducing air pollution downtown.

(E) Most of the street's shoppers had always arrived by car.

20. *A team of scientists sampled a lake and found very few fish in it. Yet local anglers regularly pull large numbers of fish out of the same lake.*

Which of the following, if true, best explains how both facts can be true?

(A) The scientists used nets designed to capture fish of every size.

(B) The scientists sampled the open middle of the lake, while the fish gather in the weedy shallows near shore where the anglers cast their lines.

(C) The scientists' sampling turned up very few fish in the lake.

(D) The anglers fish this lake because it has long enjoyed a reputation for good catches.

(E) The lake freezes over completely every winter.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement

node: grev.cr.A5

The skill. A role question does not ask whether a statement is true; it asks what job the statement does inside the argument. First locate the author's own main conclusion — the single claim everything else is arranged to support — by asking which sentence the others answer 'why?' for. Then classify the marked statement against that conclusion. It may BE the main conclusion; it may be a premise or piece of evidence offered to support the conclusion; it may be an intermediate conclusion, itself supported by earlier evidence and in turn supporting the main conclusion; or it may be a view the author introduces only to argue against, so that it belongs to the other side. The commonest traps reverse the direction of support (calling a conclusion a premise), confuse an intermediate conclusion with the main one, put the author on the wrong side of a claim he actually rejects, or simply restate what the sentence says instead of naming the function it serves.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What is the author's main conclusion, and how does the marked statement stand in relation to it — is it that conclusion, support for it, a step toward it, or a view the author opposes?

Plan. Find the main conclusion first by testing which claim the others explain. Then ask of the marked statement: does the argument support it, does it support the conclusion, or does the author reject it?

Solve. Choose the option that names that function, not the option that merely repeats the statement's content.

Check. Have I kept the direction of support right? Have I put the author on the correct side? Is this the main conclusion or only a step toward it?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

premise-conclusion-confusion.
Reverses the direction of support — labels the main conclusion a premise, or labels a supporting premise the conclusion.

main-vs-intermediate.
Confuses an intermediate (subsidiary) conclusion with the main conclusion, or vice versa.

sides-reversed.
Puts the author on the wrong side — treats a view the author introduces only to reject as the author's own claim, or vice versa.

content-not-function.
Describes what the statement asserts, or assigns it a role the argument never uses (background fact, example, prediction), instead of naming the function it actually serves.

Practice

1. *The new bridge should be built from steel rather than concrete. A steel span of this length needs far fewer support piers, and every pier sunk into the river disturbs the gravel beds where the local salmon spawn. The fishery that the town depends on cannot afford that disturbance.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'The new bridge should be built from steel rather than concrete' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is an intermediate conclusion that in turn supports a further conclusion.

(B) It is a factual observation about salmon biology included as background.

(C) It is a premise offered as support for another claim.

(D) It is the main conclusion that the rest of the argument is offered to support.

(E) It is a consideration the author raises only in order to reject it.

2. *Commuters who switch to the new express train save roughly forty minutes a day. Time saved on the commute is time returned to family and rest, both of which improve workers' health and productivity. The city should therefore expand express service to more neighborhoods.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'Commuters who switch to the new express train save roughly forty minutes a day' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is the main conclusion the argument reaches.

(B) It is an intermediate conclusion inferred from an earlier premise.

(C) It is a restatement, in numerical form, of the argument's final recommendation.

(D) It is evidence offered in support of the argument's recommendation.

(E) It is an objection to the recommendation that the author ultimately concedes.

3. *Some maintain that lengthening the school year would by itself raise student test scores. But several countries with markedly shorter years outperform countries with longer ones, and what determines learning is how classroom hours are used, not merely how many of them there are. Simply adding days to the calendar is therefore unlikely to help.*

In the argument above, the claim that 'lengthening the school year would by itself raise student test scores' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is the main conclusion the author sets out to defend.

(B) It is a premise from which the author's own conclusion directly follows.

(C) It is a position the author introduces in order to argue against it.

(D) It is an intermediate conclusion the author draws on the way to a stronger claim.

(E) It is a general fact about schooling that the author takes as settled background.

4. *Because the museum's climate controls failed twice last winter, several lenders have quietly withdrawn their most fragile works. The museum's reputation for safe stewardship is thus eroding, and a reputation, once lost among lenders, is very hard to rebuild. The board should fund the new environmental system without further delay.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'The museum's reputation for safe stewardship is thus eroding' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is a prediction about future ticket revenue offered as background.

(B) It is a premise asserted without any support in the argument.

(C) It is an intermediate conclusion, drawn from the earlier facts and in turn supporting the final recommendation.

(D) It is a concern the author raises only in order to dismiss it.

(E) It is the argument's main conclusion.

5. *Advocates of the retail ban argue that it will curb underage vaping. Yet those same advocates concede that most teenagers obtain the devices online, where a ban on store sales has no reach. If the supply the ban targets is not the supply teenagers actually use, the measure cannot achieve its stated aim. The proposed ban, however well intentioned, should not be expected to reduce underage vaping.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'most teenagers obtain the devices online, where a ban on store sales has no reach' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is an assertion about the health effects of vaping, offered as context.

(B) It is the main conclusion the argument is designed to establish.

(C) It is a point, conceded by the advocates, that the author uses as evidence that the ban cannot achieve its aim.

(D) It is an intermediate conclusion inferred from the claim that the ban cannot achieve its aim.

(E) It is a claim the author rejects as false.

6. *A pear orchard that keeps a few beehives at its edge yields noticeably more fruit than an otherwise identical orchard with no hives nearby. Bees move pollen from blossom to blossom far more reliably than wind alone ever could. Growers who want larger harvests, then, should install hives well before the trees come into flower.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'A pear orchard that keeps a few beehives at its edge yields noticeably more fruit than an otherwise identical orchard with no hives nearby' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is an intermediate conclusion inferred from an earlier premise.

(B) It is the main conclusion that the rest of the argument works to establish.

(C) It is evidence offered in support of the argument's recommendation.

(D) It is an objection the author concedes and then sets aside.

(E) It is a claim about the anatomy of bees included as background.

7. *The county keeps its two small branch libraries open only a few hours a week, and even then almost no one walks through their doors. The staff and utilities those branches consume would fund a far larger collection at the central library, which residents actually use. The county should close the two branches and consolidate their budgets downtown.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'The county should close the two branches and consolidate their budgets downtown' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is a premise offered as support for another claim.

(B) It is an intermediate conclusion that in turn supports a further conclusion.

(C) It is the main conclusion that the rest of the argument is offered to support.

(D) It is a report of the branches' operating hours included as background.

(E) It is a view the author introduces only in order to reject it.

8. *Rooftop solar panels have fallen so far in price that a typical household now recovers their cost in under seven years. Over a panel's twenty-five-year life, then, most of the electricity it produces is effectively free. Homeowners weighing the investment should treat the panels as a long-term saving rather than an expense.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'Over a panel's twenty-five-year life, then, most of the electricity it produces is effectively free' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is a concern the author raises only in order to dismiss it.

(B) It is a forecast of future electricity prices offered as background.

(C) It is the argument's main conclusion.

(D) It is an intermediate conclusion, drawn from the payback figure and in turn supporting the final recommendation.

(E) It is a premise asserted without any support in the argument.

9. *Managers often insist that employees are most productive when gathered together in one office. But the departments at this firm that shifted fully to remote work have raised their output every quarter since the change, while the office-bound departments have stagnated. Requiring everyone back to the building would trade a proven gain for an unfounded assumption.*

In the argument above, the claim that 'employees are most productive when gathered together in one office' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is a position the author introduces in order to argue against it.

(B) It is an intermediate conclusion the author draws on the way to a stronger claim.

(C) It is a premise from which the author's own conclusion directly follows.

(D) It is the main conclusion the author sets out to defend.

(E) It is a settled fact about workplaces the author takes as background.

10. *Marden was founded three centuries ago as a modest fishing village. Today it draws more summer tourists than it has residents, and the crowds have pushed rents beyond what year-round workers can pay; the shops those workers once staffed are closing one by one. Unless the town caps short-term rentals, it will lose the very community that first made it appealing.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'Marden was founded three centuries ago as a modest fishing village' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is background information that sets the scene but does not itself support the conclusion.

(B) It is a view the author raises only in order to reject it.

(C) It is an intermediate conclusion that supports the final recommendation.

(D) It is a prediction about the town's future offered as its conclusion.

(E) It is a premise offering direct support for the recommendation.

11. *Students at the academy who eat a full breakfast score higher on morning exams than those who skip it, even when the two groups are matched for study time and hours of sleep. A hungry brain, it seems, cannot hold its attention for long. The school should therefore add a free breakfast to its daily schedule.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'Students at the academy who eat a full breakfast score higher on morning exams than those who skip it, even when the two groups are matched for study time and hours of sleep' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is an intermediate conclusion inferred from an earlier claim.

(B) It is an objection the author ultimately rejects.

(C) It is a claim about brain chemistry offered as background.

(D) It is evidence offered in support of the recommendation.

(E) It is the main conclusion the argument reaches.

12. *Backers promise the new stadium will pay for itself through tourism, but studies of a dozen comparable arenas show that visitors simply shift their spending from local restaurants to the venue, adding little genuinely new money. The jobs created are mostly seasonal and low paid. The city would do better to spend the subsidy on transit that residents use all year.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'The city would do better to spend the subsidy on transit that residents use all year' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is the main conclusion the argument is designed to support.

(B) It is a premise offered in support of another claim.

(C) It is a description of how the stadium would be financed, offered as background.

(D) It is a proposal the author raises only in order to reject it.

(E) It is an intermediate conclusion that in turn supports a further conclusion.

13. *Because the farm doses its cattle with antibiotics every day, the bacteria on the property are constantly exposed to the drugs. Such steady exposure is exactly the condition under which resistant strains emerge and spread. The herd is thus becoming a reservoir of drug-resistant infection. Regulators should require that these drugs be reserved for animals that are actually sick.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'The herd is thus becoming a reservoir of drug-resistant infection' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is the argument's main conclusion.

(B) It is a worry the author raises only in order to dismiss it.

(C) It is a definition of antibiotic resistance offered as background.

(D) It is a premise asserted without any support in the argument.

(E) It is an intermediate conclusion, inferred from the facts about daily dosing and in turn supporting the call for regulation.

14. *The chain argues that its low monthly fee makes fitness affordable to everyone. Admittedly, its sticker price is lower than a rival's. But the contract locks members in for two full years and charges steep penalties to quit early, so the typical member ends up paying far more than the advertised rate. Calling this plan the affordable option is misleading.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'its sticker price is lower than a rival's' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is the main conclusion the author sets out to defend.

(B) It is a premise from which the author's own conclusion directly follows.

(C) It is a point the author concedes but then argues is outweighed by other costs.

(D) It is an intermediate conclusion the author draws on the way to a stronger claim.

(E) It is a claim about the chain's profits offered as background.

15. *The director shot the entire film on location in a remote fishing town. Critics have praised its vivid scenery, yet audiences have stayed away and the studio has quietly trimmed its marketing budget. Without a wider advertising push, even a beautiful film will vanish unnoticed. The studio should restore the promotional funds before the release date.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'The director shot the entire film on location in a remote fishing town' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is a view the author raises only in order to reject it.

(B) It is background information that sets the scene but does not itself support the conclusion.

(C) It is a premise offering direct support for the recommendation.

(D) It is an intermediate conclusion that supports the final recommendation.

(E) It is a prediction about the film's box office offered as the conclusion.

16. *In the three bays where fishing was banned five years ago, coral cover has climbed steadily and fish populations have rebounded. Neighboring bays left open to fishing show no such recovery. Protection, not chance, is plainly at work here. The regional council should extend the no-fishing rule to the remaining bays.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'In the three bays where fishing was banned five years ago, coral cover has climbed steadily and fish populations have rebounded' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is the main conclusion the argument reaches.

(B) It is an objection the author concedes and then sets aside.

(C) It is a general statement about coral biology offered as background.

(D) It is evidence offered in support of the argument's recommendation.

(E) It is an intermediate conclusion inferred from an earlier premise.

17. *When the agency trialed a four-day week, its staff reported less burnout and took fewer sick days, while clients noticed no drop in service. The shorter week also made the agency's job postings far more competitive with those of its rivals. On this evidence, the agency should make the four-day schedule permanent.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'the agency should make the four-day schedule permanent' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is an intermediate conclusion that in turn supports a further conclusion.

(B) It is a premise offered in support of another claim.

(C) It is the main conclusion that the rest of the argument is offered to support.

(D) It is a proposal the author raises only in order to reject it.

(E) It is a summary of the trial's results offered as background.

18. *Average temperatures in the valley have risen two degrees over three decades, and the grapes now ripen almost a month earlier than the winery's methods assume. The estate's traditional harvest date therefore no longer matches the fruit's actual maturity. If it wants to preserve the wine's character, the estate must set its harvest by testing the grapes rather than by the calendar.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'The estate's traditional harvest date therefore no longer matches the fruit's actual maturity' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is an intermediate conclusion, drawn from the warming trend and in turn supporting the final recommendation.

(B) It is a concern the author raises only in order to dismiss it.

(C) It is the argument's main conclusion.

(D) It is a forecast of future harvests offered as background.

(E) It is a premise asserted without any support in the argument.

19. *Supporters of the curbside program point out that residents dutifully fill their blue bins each week. That much is true. But half of what goes in is soiled or non-recyclable and must be sent to the landfill anyway, and sorting the rest costs the city more than the recovered material is worth. High participation, by itself, is no measure of a program's success.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'residents dutifully fill their blue bins each week' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is the main conclusion the author sets out to prove.

(B) It is a statistic about recycling costs offered as background.

(C) It is a claim the author grants as true but argues fails to support the supporters' position.

(D) It is an intermediate conclusion on the way to the author's main claim.

(E) It is a premise from which the author's own conclusion directly follows.

20. *The observatory sits atop a peak chosen a century ago for its exceptionally dark skies. In recent years, though, a growing city below has washed the horizon with light, and the faintest galaxies the telescope was built to study have vanished from its images. Unless the county limits nighttime lighting, the instrument's most valuable research will soon become impossible.*

In the argument above, the statement that 'The observatory sits atop a peak chosen a century ago for its exceptionally dark skies' plays which of the following roles?

(A) It is a prediction about the city's growth offered as the conclusion.

(B) It is an intermediate conclusion that supports the final recommendation.

(C) It is a view the author raises only in order to reject it.

(D) It is a premise offering direct support for the recommendation.

(E) It is background information that sets the scene but does not itself support the conclusion.

Answer Key — Critical Reasoning

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** weakens; **(B)** restates-premise; **(C)** different-conclusion; **(E)** irrelevant.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** restates-premise; **(C)** irrelevant; **(D)** different-conclusion; **(E)** weakens.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q3
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** different-conclusion; **(C)** restates-premise; **(D)** irrelevant; **(E)** weakens.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q4
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** irrelevant; **(C)** weakens; **(D)** restates-premise; **(E)** different-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** irrelevant; **(B)** different-conclusion; **(C)** restates-premise; **(E)** weakens.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-premise; **(B)** weakens; **(C)** different-conclusion; **(D)** irrelevant.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** different-conclusion; **(B)** restates-premise; **(C)** irrelevant; **(E)** weakens.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q8
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** irrelevant; **(C)** restates-premise; **(D)** weakens; **(E)** different-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-premise; **(B)** irrelevant; **(C)** weakens; **(D)** different-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** irrelevant; **(B)** restates-premise; **(D)** weakens; **(E)** different-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** different-conclusion; **(B)** weakens; **(C)** restates-premise; **(D)** irrelevant.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-premise; **(B)** weakens; **(C)** irrelevant; **(E)** different-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** different-conclusion; **(B)** irrelevant; **(C)** restates-premise; **(E)** weakens.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** weakens; **(C)** irrelevant; **(D)** restates-premise; **(E)** different-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q15
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-premise; **(B)** weakens; **(D)** different-conclusion; **(E)** irrelevant.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q16
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** weakens; **(B)** different-conclusion; **(C)** irrelevant; **(E)** restates-premise.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** different-conclusion; **(B)** weakens; **(C)** restates-premise; **(D)** irrelevant.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-premise; **(B)** different-conclusion; **(C)** irrelevant; **(E)** weakens.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q19
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** irrelevant; **(B)** different-conclusion; **(C)** restates-premise; **(D)** weakens.

Critical Reasoning: strengthen the argument — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** irrelevant; **(B)** restates-premise; **(D)** different-conclusion; **(E)** weakens.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(B)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** restates-premise.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-direction; **(C)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(D)** restates-premise; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(D)** restates-premise; **(E)** addresses-wrong-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(D)** restates-premise; **(E)** wrong-direction.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(D)** restates-premise; **(E)** addresses-wrong-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(C)** wrong-direction; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** restates-premise.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q7
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(C)** restates-premise; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** addresses-wrong-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** restates-premise; **(C)** wrong-direction; **(D)** addresses-wrong-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(C)** restates-premise; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** addresses-wrong-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q10
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(B)** restates-premise; **(C)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(D)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(B)** wrong-direction; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** restates-premise.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q12
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-premise; **(B)** wrong-direction; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** addresses-wrong-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(C)** restates-premise; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** wrong-direction.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(B)** restates-premise; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** addresses-wrong-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** restates-premise; **(E)** wrong-direction.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-direction; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** restates-premise; **(E)** addresses-wrong-conclusion.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q17
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(B)** restates-premise; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** wrong-direction.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q18
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(B)** wrong-direction; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** restates-premise.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q19
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(B)** restates-premise; **(D)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: weaken the argument — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-direction; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(D)** addresses-wrong-conclusion; **(E)** restates-premise.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** reverses; **(C)** restates-stated; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-stated; **(B)** too-strong; **(D)** reverses; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** reverses; **(B)** too-strong; **(C)** restates-stated; **(D)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** restates-stated; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** reverses.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** restates-stated; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** reverses.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** reverses; **(B)** restates-stated; **(D)** too-strong; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** restates-stated; **(D)** reverses.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** restates-stated; **(C)** too-strong; **(D)** reverses.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(C)** too-strong; **(D)** reverses; **(E)** restates-stated.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** reverses; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(D)** restates-stated; **(E)** too-strong.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** reverses; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** restates-stated; **(E)** too-strong.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-stated; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** too-strong; **(D)** reverses.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(C)** reverses; **(D)** restates-stated; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q14
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** reverses; **(B)** too-strong; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** restates-stated.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q15
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** reverses; **(C)** restates-stated; **(D)** too-strong.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** restates-stated; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** reverses.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q17
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** reverses; **(B)** restates-stated; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** too-strong.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** too-strong; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** reverses; **(D)** restates-stated.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** restates-stated; **(D)** too-strong; **(E)** reverses.

Critical Reasoning: identify the assumption — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-stated; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(D)** reverses; **(E)** too-strong.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** deepens-discrepancy; **(B)** one-sided; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** restates-a-fact.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** deepens-discrepancy; **(B)** one-sided; **(C)** restates-a-fact; **(D)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** deepens-discrepancy; **(B)** restates-a-fact; **(D)** out-of-scope; **(E)** one-sided.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** deepens-discrepancy; **(D)** restates-a-fact; **(E)** one-sided.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** one-sided; **(B)** restates-a-fact; **(C)** deepens-discrepancy; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** deepens-discrepancy; **(C)** restates-a-fact; **(D)** one-sided; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(B)** restates-a-fact; **(D)** one-sided; **(E)** deepens-discrepancy.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q8
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** deepens-discrepancy; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** one-sided; **(E)** restates-a-fact.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** restates-a-fact; **(D)** deepens-discrepancy; **(E)** one-sided.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q10
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** deepens-discrepancy; **(C)** one-sided; **(D)** restates-a-fact; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** one-sided; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(D)** restates-a-fact; **(E)** deepens-discrepancy.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** deepens-discrepancy; **(B)** one-sided; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** restates-a-fact.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** deepens-discrepancy; **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** one-sided; **(D)** restates-a-fact.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** deepens-discrepancy; **(B)** one-sided; **(C)** restates-a-fact; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(C)** restates-a-fact; **(D)** deepens-discrepancy; **(E)** one-sided.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q16
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** restates-a-fact; **(B)** deepens-discrepancy; **(C)** one-sided; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** out-of-scope; **(C)** deepens-discrepancy; **(D)** restates-a-fact; **(E)** one-sided.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** one-sided; **(B)** restates-a-fact; **(C)** out-of-scope; **(E)** deepens-discrepancy.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** out-of-scope; **(C)** restates-a-fact; **(D)** one-sided; **(E)** deepens-discrepancy.

Critical Reasoning: resolve or explain a discrepancy — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** deepens-discrepancy; **(C)** restates-a-fact; **(D)** one-sided; **(E)** out-of-scope.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** main-vs-intermediate; **(B)** content-not-function; **(C)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(E)** sides-reversed.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(B)** main-vs-intermediate; **(C)** content-not-function; **(E)** sides-reversed.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sides-reversed; **(B)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(D)** main-vs-intermediate; **(E)** content-not-function.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** content-not-function; **(B)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(D)** sides-reversed; **(E)** main-vs-intermediate.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** content-not-function; **(B)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(D)** main-vs-intermediate; **(E)** sides-reversed.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** main-vs-intermediate; **(B)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(D)** sides-reversed; **(E)** content-not-function.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(B)** main-vs-intermediate; **(D)** content-not-function; **(E)** sides-reversed.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sides-reversed; **(B)** content-not-function; **(C)** main-vs-intermediate; **(E)** premise-conclusion-confusion.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** main-vs-intermediate; **(C)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(D)** sides-reversed; **(E)** content-not-function.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q10
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sides-reversed; **(C)** main-vs-intermediate; **(D)** content-not-function; **(E)** premise-conclusion-confusion.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** main-vs-intermediate; **(B)** sides-reversed; **(C)** content-not-function; **(E)** premise-conclusion-confusion.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(C)** content-not-function; **(D)** sides-reversed; **(E)** main-vs-intermediate.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** main-vs-intermediate; **(B)** sides-reversed; **(C)** content-not-function; **(D)** premise-conclusion-confusion.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q14
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sides-reversed; **(B)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(D)** main-vs-intermediate; **(E)** content-not-function.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sides-reversed; **(C)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(D)** main-vs-intermediate; **(E)** content-not-function.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q16
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(B)** sides-reversed; **(C)** content-not-function; **(E)** main-vs-intermediate.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q17
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** main-vs-intermediate; **(B)** premise-conclusion-confusion; **(D)** sides-reversed; **(E)** content-not-function.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q18
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sides-reversed; **(C)** main-vs-intermediate; **(D)** content-not-function; **(E)** premise-conclusion-confusion.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q19
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sides-reversed; **(B)** content-not-function; **(D)** main-vs-intermediate; **(E)** premise-conclusion-confusion.

Critical Reasoning: the role of a statement — Q20
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** content-not-function; **(B)** main-vs-intermediate; **(C)** sides-reversed; **(D)** premise-conclusion-confusion.

TRACK 5

Vocabulary in Context

High-frequency words, fixed by the context around them

> *"One forgets words as one forgets names. One's vocabulary needs constant fertilizing or it will die."*
>
> — Evelyn Waugh

An extended high-frequency vocabulary track. The graduate-level words the test rewards, each fixed by the context that surrounds it rather than memorized in isolation.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words

node: grev.vocab.V1

The skill. A vocabulary-in-context question is answered by the sentence, not by a memorized gloss. The sentence almost always plants a clue — a defining phrase, an example, a contrast, or a consequence — that pins down which meaning the writer intends. Read for that clue and predict a plain paraphrase before looking at the options. Then eliminate the traps: the option that means roughly the opposite of the clue; the near-synonym that lives in the right neighborhood but carries the wrong precise nuance; the real but contextually wrong dictionary sense of a word that has more than one; and the choice suggested only by the word's sound or the sentence's topic. The right answer is the one that could replace the word without disturbing the sentence's logic.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What clue in the sentence fixes the intended meaning of the word, and what plain paraphrase does that clue predict?

Plan. Predict a paraphrase from the clue before reading the options. Then match, discarding opposites, wrong-nuance near-synonyms, wrong dictionary senses, and sound-alikes.

Solve. Choose the option closest to your predicted paraphrase.

Check. Could my choice replace the word and preserve the sentence's logic? Have I resisted the opposite, the almost-right synonym, and the alternate sense the context rules out?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

opposite-meaning.
Selects a meaning roughly opposite to the one the clue requires.

near-synonym-wrong-nuance.
Selects a meaning in the right general family but with the wrong precise nuance for this sentence.

wrong-dictionary-sense.
Selects a genuine alternate sense of the word that the context rules out.

sound-alike-or-association.
Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *The veteran pilot's radio calls were famously laconic: even as the storm closed in, she answered the tower with a single clipped word and nothing more.*

As used in the sentence, 'laconic' most nearly means

(A) long-winded and rambling
(B) rude and dismissive
(C) relaxed and unhurried
(D) careless and lazy
(E) using very few words; terse

2. *Even as the quarterly losses mounted, the founder remained sanguine, assuring the anxious staff that the company's best years still lay ahead of them.*

As used in the sentence, 'sanguine' most nearly means

(A) blood-red or ruddy in color
(B) bloodthirsty and violent
(C) recklessly indifferent to danger
(D) gloomy and despairing
(E) cheerfully optimistic; confident of a good outcome

3. *Rather than clarify the budget, the consultant's jargon-laden report seemed designed to obfuscate it, burying the single relevant figure beneath pages of qualification.*

As used in the sentence, 'obfuscate' most nearly means

(A) to stubbornly refuse or obstruct

(B) to make unclear or obscure; to muddle

(C) to falsify or fabricate

(D) to explain plainly; to clarify

(E) to shorten by leaving out detail

4. *Where his co-anchor grew frantic as the disaster unfolded on air, Devlin stayed phlegmatic, reading each grim bulletin in the same even, unhurried tone.*

As used in the sentence, 'phlegmatic' most nearly means

(A) calm and unexcitable; even-tempered

(B) lazy and unwilling to work

(C) sickly and prone to congestion

(D) gloomy and melancholy

(E) easily excited and highly emotional

5. *The director was notoriously mercurial: a set he adored on Monday he would order torn down by Wednesday, and no one on the crew could predict which mood the morning would bring.*

As used in the sentence, 'mercurial' most nearly means

(A) steady and unchanging in temperament

(B) made of or relating to the metal mercury

(C) given to sudden, unpredictable changes of mood; volatile

(D) quick-witted and clever

(E) greedy for money; mercenary

6. *The new clerk was so obsequious toward the partners that he would leap to pull out their chairs and laugh a beat too loudly at even their dullest jokes.*

As used in the sentence, 'obsequious' most nearly means

(A) excessively eager to please; fawning and servile

(B) faithfully dutiful and devoted

(C) solemn and fitting for a funeral

(D) proudly independent and disdainful of authority

(E) genuinely courteous and considerate

7. *The witness proved thoroughly mendacious, contradicting under oath the very statements he had signed the week before.*

As used in the sentence, 'mendacious' most nearly means

(A) given to lying; deliberately untruthful

(B) poor and reduced to begging

(C) scrupulously truthful and honest

(D) forgetful and prone to honest mistakes

(E) boastful and given to wild exaggeration

8. *Her lecture was pellucid throughout: even the thorniest proof came across so plainly that first-year students followed every step.*

As used in the sentence, 'pellucid' most nearly means

(A) perfectly clear and easy to understand

(B) oversimplified to the point of being shallow

(C) murky and hard to follow

(D) iridescent, shimmering with shifting colors

(E) brightly shining; dazzling

9. *Rather than concede a single point, the truculent negotiator met each proposal with a sneer and a fresh threat to walk out.*

As used in the sentence, 'truculent' most nearly means

(A) readily yielding and submissive

(B) savagely cruel and destructive

(C) merely impatient and a little irritable

(D) mild-mannered and easily won over

(E) aggressively defiant and belligerent

10. *The fashion proved utterly ephemeral, everywhere one season and forgotten by the next.*

As used in the sentence, 'ephemeral' most nearly means

(A) trivial and unimportant

(B) returning at intervals; recurring

(C) delicate and airy; otherworldly

(D) lasting only a very short time; fleeting

(E) lasting indefinitely; enduring

11. *One term of teaching in a rural clinic was enough to disabuse her of the notion that good intentions alone could cure poverty.*

As used in the sentence, 'disabuse' most nearly means

(A) to lead someone into a mistaken belief

(B) to insult or disparage

(C) to free from a mistaken belief

(D) to cease mistreating; stop harming

(E) to gently correct a small oversight

12. *At this stage the movement was still inchoate – a handful of pamphlets, a slogan or two, and no settled leadership or program.*

As used in the sentence, 'inchoate' most nearly means

(A) fully formed and mature
(B) incoherent and mumbled
(C) sprawling and chaotically disorganized
(D) inborn; present from the very beginning
(E) just begun; not yet fully developed

13. *Students traveled from across the country to venerate the old physicist, hanging on his every word as though it were revelation.*

As used in the sentence, 'venerate' most nearly means

(A) to regard with deep respect; revere
(B) to hold in contempt; look down on
(C) to find mildly agreeable; rather like
(D) to worship as a deity
(E) to fill with venom; make poisonous

14. *The columnist castigated the mayor in print, calling his budget a betrayal of every promise he had made.*

As used in the sentence, 'castigated' most nearly means

(A) criticized or rebuked severely
(B) teased good-naturedly
(C) castrated or gelded
(D) praised warmly; commended
(E) revised a text by purging its errors

15. *Trapped beside a garrulous passenger, she heard the man's entire life story twice before the train had even left the station.*

As used in the sentence, 'garrulous' most nearly means

(A) silent and tight-lipped
(B) babbling or murmuring, as a flowing stream
(C) peevish and given to complaining
(D) excessively talkative, especially about trifles
(E) eloquent and commanding as a speaker

16. *His quixotic plan to end all traffic by giving every citizen a private helicopter charmed the crowd but collapsed at the first practical question.*

As used in the sentence, 'quixotic' most nearly means

(A) coldly practical and hardheaded

(B) idealistic and hopelessly impractical

(C) impulsively changeable from moment to moment

(D) chivalrously romantic in matters of love

(E) extremely quick or rapid

17. *The perfidious lieutenant, trusted with the battle plans, sold them to the enemy the very night before the attack.*

As used in the sentence, 'perfidious' most nearly means

(A) careless and unreliable

(B) steadfastly loyal and faithful

(C) treacherous; deliberately disloyal

(D) half-hearted and done with little care

(E) sweet-smelling; fragrant

18. *The doctor urged a season in the mountains, insisting that the dry, pine-scented air there was far more salubrious than the damp of the city.*

As used in the sentence, 'salubrious' most nearly means

(A) harmful to health; unwholesome

(B) salty; briny

(C) promoting health; wholesome

(D) socially respectable; genteel

(E) merely pleasant and comfortable

19. *After the poet's soaring imagery, the committee's report struck her as painfully prosaic – page after page of flat, workaday sentences.*

As used in the sentence, 'prosaic' most nearly means

(A) written in prose rather than in verse

(B) clear and admirably straightforward

(C) vividly imaginative and poetic

(D) dull, ordinary, and unimaginative

(E) forbidden or prohibited by rule

20. *The treaty's tortuous language wound through clause after nested clause, so that a single sentence might reverse itself three times before reaching its point.*

As used in the sentence, 'tortuous' most nearly means

(A) twisted or deformed in physical shape

(B) causing intense pain; agonizing

(C) long-winded and tedious to read

(D) full of twists and turns; convoluted

(E) perfectly straight and direct

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register

node: grev.vocab.V2

The skill. Knowing what a word denotes is not enough on the GRE; you must also hear its charge and its register. Charge is the word's built-in attitude — whether it praises, condemns, or stays neutral — and many hard words carry an evaluation that a bare definition hides. Register is the word's level of diction — elevated and formal, plain, technical, or colloquial — and the level a writer chooses signals tone. To judge a word as used, first read the surrounding detail as a verdict: praising details make a positive charge, damning details a negative one, and a clash of the two can make a mixed charge that admires and criticizes at once. Then match strength and formality to that verdict. The traps flip the charge to its opposite, drain a loaded word to neutrality, misjudge the register as casual when it is formal or the reverse, or get the direction right but the intensity or balance wrong — collapsing a mixed charge onto a single pole.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. Is the word, as used here, positive, negative, neutral, or mixed in charge — and is its register formal, plain, technical, or colloquial?

Plan. Read the surrounding details as a verdict that sets the charge; then fix the strength and the level of diction the writer intends.

Solve. Choose the option whose charge, intensity, and register all match the sentence.

Check. Did I keep the charge on the right side, resist neutralizing a loaded word, judge the register correctly, and preserve a mixed charge rather than flattening it?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

charge-flip.
Reads the word as carrying the opposite charge — positive for negative, or negative for positive.

charge-neutralized.
Treats a clearly evaluative word as neutral or purely descriptive, draining its built-in attitude.

register-misjudged.
Mistakes the word's level of diction — reads elevated or formal wording as casual or colloquial, or the reverse.

intensity-or-balance-misjudged.
Keeps the general charge but gets the strength wrong, or collapses a mixed, admiring-yet-critical charge onto a single pole.

Practice

1. *The concierge's obsequious manner — the ceaseless bowing, the compliments no guest had done anything to earn — made the small lobby feel less like a hotel than a royal court.*

As used in the sentence, 'obsequious' conveys which of the following?

(A) mild disapproval of someone merely a little too formal
(B) a strongly negative judgment: fawning, servile flattery
(C) a neutral description of ordinary professional politeness
(D) warm praise for genuinely gracious hospitality
(E) an informal, affectionate tease traded between friends

2. *Long after his death, the villagers continued to venerate the old physician, tending his grave every spring and repeating his sayings as though they were scripture.*

As used in the sentence, 'venerate' conveys which of the following?

(A) a neutral report that people happened to remember him
(B) a positive attitude of deep, reverent respect
(C) faint, lukewarm approval
(D) a casual fondness, like being fond of a friendly neighbor
(E) contempt or ridicule for a discredited figure

3. *In the preface the editor castigates his younger self, calling the early essays lazy, self-satisfied, and, in his own words, unworthy of the paper they were printed on.*

As used in the sentence, 'castigates' conveys which of the following?

(A) gentle, forgiving reassurance
(B) mild, good-natured teasing
(C) a light, colloquial term for tidying up a manuscript
(D) a neutral summary of what the early essays contained
(E) a strongly negative act: severe, harsh criticism

4. *After a month in the salubrious mountain air, the patient who had arrived pale and short of breath was hiking the ridge trail each morning without pausing to rest.*

As used in the sentence, 'salubrious' conveys which of the following?

(A) faint praise implying the air was merely tolerable

(B) a positive, somewhat formal word meaning health-giving and wholesome

(C) a negative word implying a harsh, punishing climate

(D) a slangy, casual way of saying 'nice weather'

(E) a neutral, purely geographic note about high altitude

5. *The scheme to end the drought by towing an iceberg across the ocean was gloriously quixotic — noble in its ambition, hopeless in its engineering, and cherished all the more by those who were certain it would fail.*

As used in the sentence, 'quixotic' conveys which of the following?

(A) an affectionately mixed charge: admiring the idealism while conceding the impracticality

(B) a neutral, technical label for a large engineering project

(C) unqualified praise for a sound and workable strategy

(D) harsh, purely negative contempt for a foolish blunder

(E) a dry, bureaucratic term carrying no emotional tone

6. *Every citation in the dissertation was flawless and every figure checked twice; her advisor praised the meticulous care behind three hundred error-free pages.*

As used in the sentence, 'meticulous' conveys which of the following?

(A) a casual, slangy way of saying she 'did a decent job'

(B) a negative complaint about fussy, obsessive nitpicking

(C) a neutral note that the dissertation was simply long

(D) a positive judgment: admirably careful and exacting attention to detail

(E) faint approval that the work was reasonably tidy

7. *The witness grew truculent under questioning, snapping at the attorney, refusing every request, and daring the judge to hold him in contempt.*

As used in the sentence, 'truculent' conveys which of the following?

(A) mild criticism of someone only slightly uncooperative

(B) a neutral report that he answered the questions put to him

(C) a breezy, colloquial word for being a little grumpy

(D) a positive attitude of admirable courage and candor

(E) a strongly negative judgment: hostile and aggressively defiant

8. *Though he had every reason to gloat, the champion was magnanimous in victory, praising his defeated rival's skill and crediting him for the closest match of the season.*

As used in the sentence, 'magnanimous' conveys which of the following?

(A) a positive judgment: noble generosity of spirit

(B) a casual, slangy way of saying he was 'being nice'

(C) faint approval that he was merely polite

(D) a negative note of condescending, patronizing superiority

(E) a neutral statement that he spoke after the match

9. *The inspector gave the crumbling bridge only a perfunctory glance, ticking the box and moving on without so much as testing a bolt.*

As used in the sentence, 'perfunctory' conveys which of the following?

(A) a negative judgment: cursory and careless, done as a mere formality

(B) praise for brisk, admirable thoroughness

(C) a dry technical term for a standard inspection procedure

(D) a neutral statement that he looked at the bridge

(E) mild criticism of an inspection that was slightly hurried but basically diligent

10. *The salesman's unctuous praise, calling every customer the wisest he had met all day, coated the showroom in a smarmy sheen that no one believed.*

As used in the sentence, 'unctuous' conveys which of the following?

(A) a dignified, courtly formality suited to a ceremony

(B) gentle disapproval of someone just a touch too eager to please

(C) a strongly negative judgment: oily, insincere, ingratiating flattery

(D) a neutral description of a talkative salesman

(E) warm, sincere friendliness toward the customers

11. *An indefatigable organizer, she knocked on doors past midnight, rose before dawn to make calls, and never once let the campaign's energy flag.*

As used in the sentence, 'indefatigable' conveys which of the following?

(A) faint praise that she was fairly energetic now and then

(B) a casual, slangy way of saying she was 'always busy'

(C) a positive, somewhat formal word meaning tireless and untiring in effort

(D) a neutral note that she worked on the campaign

(E) a complaint about restless, exhausting overactivity

12. *Filing a single claim meant navigating a byzantine tangle of forms, offices, and cross-references, each one demanding a stamp from the last.*

As used in the sentence, 'byzantine' conveys which of the following?

(A) a negative judgment: excessively and frustratingly complicated

(B) a scholarly, purely historical label for the medieval empire, carrying no evaluation

(C) a neutral description of a simply large organization

(D) mild criticism of a process slightly more involved than average

(E) admiration for elegant, refined sophistication

13. *The heist was audacious to the point of madness, brilliant in its daring and insane in its risk, and the detectives found themselves half-admiring the nerve even as they condemned the crime.*

As used in the sentence, 'audacious' conveys which of the following?

(A) unqualified praise for a bold and flawless plan

(B) an admiring-yet-critical mixed charge: awed by the boldness while condemning the recklessness

(C) a dry, bureaucratic term carrying no emotional tone

(D) a neutral, technical label for a type of robbery

(E) harsh, purely negative contempt for a stupid blunder

14. *His sanctimonious lectures on thrift grated on everyone who knew how freely he spent on himself, preaching a virtue he never practiced.*

As used in the sentence, 'sanctimonious' conveys which of the following?

(A) admiration for genuine, heartfelt piety

(B) a negative judgment: hypocritically self-righteous moralizing

(C) a solemn, reverent term of religious praise

(D) a neutral note that he talked about thrift

(E) mild disapproval of someone a bit preachy but well-meaning

15. *So parsimonious that he reused tea bags and rationed the office heat, the director hoarded every penny while the staff shivered.*

As used in the sentence, 'parsimonious' conveys which of the following?

(A) a neutral note that he managed the budget

(B) warm praise for wise, prudent economy

(C) mild disapproval of someone merely a little reluctant to spend

(D) a negative, somewhat formal word meaning excessively stingy and miserly

(E) a casual, slangy word for being 'cheap'

16. *The child's winsome grin disarmed even the sternest strangers, drawing smiles from a bus full of tired commuters.*

As used in the sentence, 'winsome' conveys which of the following?

(A) faint approval that the grin was mildly pleasant and unremarkable

(B) a negative note of manipulative, calculated charm

(C) a neutral statement that the child smiled

(D) a positive judgment: charming and engagingly appealing

(E) a stiff, clinical term with no warmth

17. *The neighborhood was notorious for its pickpockets; guidebooks warned travelers to guard their wallets the moment they stepped off the train.*

As used in the sentence, 'notorious' conveys which of the following?

(A) celebrated, admired renown

(B) a neutral note that the area was simply well known, with no judgment

(C) a casual, offhand way of saying the area was 'popular'

(D) faint recognition that the area was slightly known here and there

(E) a negative judgment: widely known for something bad, infamous

18. *The company won the lawsuit, but the victory was pyrrhic: years of legal fees and a ruined reputation left it weaker than the rival it had beaten.*

As used in the sentence, 'pyrrhic' conveys which of the following?

(A) breezy sports-page slang for any close win

(B) pure catastrophe: an outright, total defeat

(C) unqualified celebration of a clean, decisive triumph

(D) a neutral, technical label for a kind of court ruling

(E) a mixed charge: a nominal victory that, given its ruinous cost, amounts to a defeat

19. *The old diplomat's sagacious counsel had steered three governments clear of war, each warning proved right by the events that followed.*

As used in the sentence, 'sagacious' conveys which of the following?

(A) a negative note of cunning, manipulative scheming

(B) a positive, somewhat formal word meaning deeply wise and discerning in judgment

(C) a neutral statement that he gave advice

(D) a casual, slangy word for being 'smart'

(E) faint praise that his advice was mildly sensible

20. *The film's mawkish finale, with its swelling strings, deathbed speeches, and a rescued puppy, laid on the sentiment so thick that the audience laughed instead of wept.*

As used in the sentence, 'mawkish' conveys which of the following?

(A) praise for a genuinely moving, deeply touching ending
(B) a neutral note that the ending was emotional
(C) a formal, technical film-criticism term carrying no attitude
(D) a negative judgment: cloyingly and excessively sentimental
(E) mild disapproval of an ending that was a touch sentimental but tasteful

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms

node: grev.vocab.V3

The skill. GRE vocabulary questions punish approximate knowledge. Here every option is a NEAR-synonym of the answer; only one matches the exact nuance the sentence builds. Read the context for the precise shade of meaning (deliberate vs. accidental, willful vs. impersonal, a state vs. an action, positive vs. negative register), predict it, then pick the single word whose nuance fits. Distractors are real synonyms that miss on nuance, sense, connotation/register, or direction. Clusters drawn from the PFS vocab bank (~/pfs/verbal/vocab-bank/); all sentences are original.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What exact shade of meaning does the sentence build—deliberate or accidental, willful or impersonal, a state or an action, praising or faulting?

Plan. Predict the precise nuance in your own words before reading the options. Then, because all five are near-synonyms, eliminate by nuance, sense, register, and direction rather than by rough meaning.

Solve. Select the one word whose nuance matches the prediction exactly.

Check. Would a second option 'sort of' work? If so, name what in the sentence rules it out. The GRE answer is the one you can defend against its nearest rival.

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

near-synonym, imprecise nuance.
Selects a true synonym whose nuance (willfulness, scope, or emphasis) misfits the context.

wrong-sense word.
Selects a word whose alternate sense (a state vs. an action, literal vs. figurative) does not match what the context requires.

wrong connotation/register.
Selects a word with the right denotation but the wrong positive/negative charge or level of

emphasis for the tone.

antonym/contradicts context.
Selects a word that reverses the direction the context signals.

Practice

1. *The glacier's advance was ___: slow, impersonal, and utterly indifferent to the villages in its path.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) inevitable
(B) tenacious
(C) relentless
(D) volatile
(E) inexorable

2. *Auction houses prize a manuscript whose ___ is unbroken—each owner recorded from the author's desk to the present sale.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) advent
(B) inception
(C) provenance
(D) destination
(E) genesis

3. *Shielded by powerful patrons, the official flouted the rules with complete ___, never once facing discipline.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) exemption
(B) impunity
(C) vindication
(D) accountability
(E) exoneration

4. *So ___ was the new investor that he wired money to anyone with a confident pitch and a glossy brochure.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) skeptical
(B) naive
(C) impressionable
(D) malleable
(E) credulous

5. *The senator's ___ reply pleased both camps precisely because each could read its careful phrasing as agreement.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) ambiguous
(B) enigmatic
(C) ambivalent
(D) unequivocal
(E) equivocal

6. *A single unproven rumor was enough to ___ a reputation she had spent decades building.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) impair
(B) disfigure
(C) contaminate
(D) sully
(E) burnish

7. *Reinforcements arrived in time to ___ the uprising before it could spread beyond the capital.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) incite
(B) subjugate
(C) quell
(D) subordinate
(E) vanquish

8. *The new reporting rules imposed such ___ paperwork that small clinics hired staff solely to keep up with it.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) trifling
(B) tedious
(C) formidable

(D) arduous

(E) onerous

9. *Auditors combed through thirty years of filings and found his conduct ___—not a single entry they could fault.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) immaculate

(B) pristine

(C) irreproachable

(D) exemplary

(E) culpable

10. *With a ___ glance at his notes—so quick the proctor never noticed—he checked the formula and kept writing.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) conspicuous

(B) clandestine

(C) inconspicuous

(D) subtle

(E) surreptitious

11. *Opposing counsel sought to ___ the witness's motives, hinting broadly that her testimony had been bought.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) impugn

(B) corroborate

(C) misconstrue

(D) contend

(E) malign

12. *Energy prices proved ___ that winter, doubling in a single week and then collapsing the next.*

As used in the sentence, the best choice most nearly means

(A) desultory

(B) stable

(C) erratic

(D) volatile

(E) fluctuating

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4

node: grev.vocab.V4

The skill. GRE vocabulary punishes approximate knowledge. Here every option is a near-synonym of the answer; only one matches the exact nuance the sentence builds. Read for the precise shade of meaning, predict it, then eliminate by nuance, sense, connotation/register, and direction.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What exact shade of meaning does the sentence build — deliberate or accidental, willful or impersonal, a state or an action, praising or faulting?

Plan. Predict the nuance in your own words before reading options; since all five are near-synonyms, eliminate by nuance, sense, register, and direction.

Solve. Select the one word whose nuance matches the prediction exactly.

Check. Would a second option 'sort of' work? Name what rules it out. The answer is the one you can defend against its nearest rival.

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

near-synonym, imprecise nuance.
Selects a true synonym whose nuance (willfulness, scope, or emphasis) misfits the context.

wrong-sense word.
Selects a word whose alternate sense (state vs action, literal vs figurative) does not match the context.

wrong connotation/register.
Selects a word with the right denotation but the wrong charge or emphasis for the tone.

antonym/contradicts context.
Selects a word that reverses the direction the context signals.

Practice

1. *As the flag was lowered over the fallen soldiers, the crowd stood in a hush so grave and ceremonial that even a whisper would have felt like a desecration.*

   Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

   (A) sober
   (B) zealous
   (C) solemn

(D) earnest

(E) momentous

2. *Unwilling to contradict the senior partners, the junior analyst softened every opinion and waited to speak only when he was expressly invited to.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) exalted

(B) reverent

(C) deferential

(D) disdainful

(E) obsequious

3. *She gave the entire prize away anonymously, gaining nothing and seeking no thanks, simply because others needed the money more than she did.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) benign

(B) malevolent

(C) altruistic

(D) benevolent

(E) endearing

4. *The rumor seemed trivial at first, but it drifted quietly from desk to desk and slowly corroded the team's trust until the whole department fell apart.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) sinister

(B) benign

(C) noxious

(D) pernicious

(E) malicious

5. *When the board asked for her real assessment, she held nothing back, naming every flaw in the plan plainly, even at the risk of giving offense.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) ardent

(B) candid

(C) genuine

(D) evasive

(E) authentic

6. *Unable to explain the missing funds, he invented from nothing an elaborate account of a late-night burglary that had never taken place.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) disguise
(B) counterfeit
(C) corroborate
(D) embellish
(E) fabricate

7. *In her final essay she mourned the disappearance of the wildflower meadows she had known as a child, grieving a landscape now paved over.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) deplore
(B) denounce
(C) bewail
(D) lament
(E) celebrate

8. *At the reunion the old teammates spent hours trading fond stories of games long past, laughing over victories they had not thought about in decades.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) reminisce
(B) muse
(C) foresee
(D) ruminate
(E) ponder

9. *The night before the exam results were posted, she could not eat, turning over in her mind every way the news might go badly against her.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) queasy
(B) agitated
(C) serene
(D) flustered
(E) apprehensive

10. *Though she privately objected to the new policy, she raised no protest and simply went along with the majority in order to avoid a fight.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) concur

(B) resist

(C) concede

(D) acquiesce

(E) condone

11. *Once the first café opened downtown, imitators appeared on every corner within a year, each new shop seeming to spawn two more.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) proliferate

(B) burgeon

(C) lucrative

(D) dwindle

(E) ubiquitous

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5

node: grev.vocab.V5

The skill. GRE vocabulary punishes approximate knowledge. Here every option is a near-synonym of the answer; only one matches the exact nuance the sentence builds. Read for the precise shade of meaning, predict it, then eliminate by nuance, sense, connotation/register, and direction.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What exact shade of meaning does the sentence build — deliberate or accidental, willful or impersonal, a state or an action, praising or faulting?

Plan. Predict the nuance in your own words before reading options; since all five are near-synonyms, eliminate by nuance, sense, register, and direction.

Solve. Select the one word whose nuance matches the prediction exactly.

Check. Would a second option 'sort of' work? Name what rules it out. The answer is the one you can defend against its nearest rival.

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

near-synonym, imprecise nuance.
Selects a true synonym whose nuance (willfulness, scope, or emphasis) misfits the context.

wrong-sense word.
Selects a word whose alternate sense (state vs action, literal vs figurative) does not match the context.

wrong connotation/register.
Selects a word with the right denotation but the wrong charge or emphasis for the tone.

antonym/contradicts context.
Selects a word that reverses the direction the context signals.

Practice

1. *After the third rejection he stopped applying altogether, convinced that no effort of his would ever succeed and that the future held nothing for him.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) poignant
(B) elated
(C) melancholy
(D) despondent
(E) dejected

2. *The new dataset did not merely raise doubts about the old theory; it produced precise measurements that showed the theory's central claim to be false.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) confront
(B) negate
(C) corroborate
(D) defy
(E) refute

3. *Citing repeated breaches of its terms, the company moved to bring the contract to a formal and deliberate end well before its scheduled expiry.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) initiate
(B) finite

(C) discontinue

(D) terminate

(E) cease

4. *The new neighbor greeted everyone on the street warmly, quick with a smile and never short a kind word for a passing stranger.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) amiable

(B) amicable

(C) surly

(D) affable

(E) gregarious

5. *She would not so much as glance at the tabloid, treating its gossip as beneath the notice of any serious mind and unworthy of a moment's attention.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) admiration

(B) reproach

(C) contempt

(D) censure

(E) disdain

6. *Living abroad for years, she felt a constant, tender ache for the sound of her mother's language and the streets of the town where she grew up.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) yearning

(B) craving

(C) aspiration

(D) indifference

(E) longing

7. *Once cloud storage became standard, the office's rows of old tape drives sat unused, unable to connect to any current system or serve any present purpose.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) dated

(B) cutting-edge

(C) obsolete

(D) anachronistic
(E) antiquated

8. *The instrument's readings were incomplete, but from the faint pattern that survived the technician tentatively guessed that the reaction had already begun.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) speculate
(B) evaluate
(C) verify
(D) surmise
(E) deduce

9. *After months of study, the engineers concluded that the bridge could indeed be built within the given budget and difficult terrain, ambitious as the design was.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) pragmatic
(B) feasible
(C) unattainable
(D) viable
(E) sound

10. *The proposal collapsed under scrutiny: its central assumption turned out to be false, so every conclusion drawn from that faulty premise failed with it.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) impractical
(B) unreasonable
(C) unsound
(D) inefficacious
(E) valid

11. *He refused to accept the model on the strength of its elegance alone, insisting instead on conclusions drawn directly from measurement and repeated observation.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) irrefutable
(B) theoretical
(C) data-driven
(D) empirical
(E) categorical

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6

node: grev.vocab.V6

The skill. GRE vocabulary punishes approximate knowledge. Here every option is a near-synonym of the answer; only one matches the exact nuance the sentence builds. Read for the precise shade of meaning, predict it, then eliminate by nuance, sense, connotation/register, and direction.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What exact shade of meaning does the sentence build — deliberate or accidental, willful or impersonal, a state or an action, praising or faulting?

Plan. Predict the nuance in your own words before reading options; since all five are near-synonyms, eliminate by nuance, sense, register, and direction.

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Selects a word with the right denotation but the wrong charge or emphasis for the tone.

antonym/contradicts context.
Selects a word that reverses the direction the context signals.

Practice

1. *Every spring the same dispute over the town budget resurfaces at the annual meeting, returning as reliably as the geese that come back to the pond each year.*

   Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

   (A) perpetual
   (B) ceaseless
   (C) fleeting

(D) eternal

(E) perennial

2. *Nothing in the inspection report pointed to any real danger, yet the manager's sudden alarm led him to shut the entire plant down for the week.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) idle

(B) justified

(C) unwarranted

(D) unfounded

(E) baseless

3. *The patient's temperature would not settle: it climbed steadily by every afternoon and then dropped again by dawn, rising and falling for days on end.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) vacillate

(B) undulate

(C) diversify

(D) fluctuate

(E) stabilize

4. *Every soldier's kit was assembled to a single specification, so that no one pack differed from another by so much as an ounce of weight or a stitch of shape.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) disparate

(B) unvarying

(C) rigid

(D) uniform

(E) homogeneous

5. *The two factions wanted opposite things at the very same moment, and no proposal could satisfy both at once; the split between their aims simply could not be bridged.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) reconcilable

(B) irreconcilable

(C) adamant

(D) rigid

(E) uncompromising

6. *Careful crop rotation allowed the same field to give forth a heavier harvest each autumn than any of the neighboring plots managed to produce.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) accrue
(B) yield
(C) consume
(D) amass
(E) proffer

7. *The guards discovered the tunnel the night before the escape, and in a single stroke the prisoners' long-laid scheme was defeated once and for all.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) deter
(B) thwart
(C) inhibit
(D) facilitate
(E) impede

8. *The probe's true test began only after it left the Sun's influence entirely, crossing the vast, cold emptiness that lies between one star system and the next.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) terrestrial
(B) extraterrestrial
(C) stellar
(D) celestial
(E) interstellar

9. *Within an hour of the announcement, the tiny support team was buried under far more messages than it could ever hope to read, let alone answer.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) inundate
(B) deplete
(C) glut
(D) swamp
(E) saturate

10. *For weeks no one dared to raise the touchy question of layoffs, until at last the director carefully opened the subject at the close of the meeting.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) moot
(B) plug
(C) advance
(D) broach
(E) suppress

11. *Having lost her own business years before, she understood from within exactly what the young founder was feeling as he described, voice shaking, the day the bankruptcy came through.*

Which word best captures the quality the sentence describes?

(A) solicitous
(B) commiserate
(C) disregard
(D) sympathize
(E) empathize

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity

node: grev.vocab.V7

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Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What clue in the sentence fixes the intended meaning of the word, and what plain paraphrase does that clue predict?

Plan. Predict a paraphrase from the clue before reading the options. Then match, discarding opposites, wrong-nuance near-synonyms, wrong dictionary senses, and sound-alikes.

Solve. Choose the option closest to your predicted paraphrase.

Check. Could my choice replace the word and preserve the sentence's logic? Have I resisted the opposite, the almost-right synonym, and the alternate sense the context rules out?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

opposite-meaning.
Selects a meaning roughly opposite to the one the clue requires.

near-synonym-wrong-nuance.
Selects a meaning in the right general family but with the wrong precise nuance for this sentence.

wrong-dictionary-sense.
Selects a genuine alternate sense of the word that the context rules out.

sound-alike-or-association.
Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *The referee's report was so prolix that a single objection sprawled across nine dense pages, burying the point in endless words.*

As used in the sentence, 'prolix' most nearly means

(A) eloquent and stirring
(B) admirably brief and to the point
(C) carelessly disorganized
(D) tediously wordy
(E) highly technical and specialized

2. *Her memo was succinct: three sentences that settled the matter no reader could misread.*

As used in the sentence, 'succinct' most nearly means

(A) abrupt to the point of rudeness
(B) given as a summary at the very end
(C) briefly and clearly stated
(D) rich and abundant
(E) rambling and long-winded

3. *His pithy retorts packed a whole argument into a half-dozen memorable words.*

As used in the sentence, 'pithy' most nearly means

(A) made of soft spongy plant tissue
(B) arousing sympathy

(C) witty and humorous

(D) brief and full of meaning

(E) long-winded and diffuse

4. *A sesquipedalian lecturer, he never used one syllable where ten would do, favoring monstrous words like 'antidisestablishmentarian.'*

As used in the sentence, 'sesquipedalian' most nearly means

(A) given to long words

(B) using plain, short words

(C) measuring a foot and a half long

(D) relating to walking or feet

(E) using foreign or borrowed words

5. *Phrases like 'a free gift' and 'ATM machine' are pleonastic, cramming in words that merely repeat what is already meant.*

As used in the sentence, 'pleonastic' most nearly means

(A) excessively ornate

(B) abundant and generous

(C) grammatically incorrect

(D) economical with words

(E) redundantly wordy

6. *The compendious handbook squeezed the whole of anatomy into a hundred lucid pages, comprehensive yet remarkably brief.*

As used in the sentence, 'compendious' most nearly means

(A) merely a short summary

(B) generously rewarding

(C) arranged in alphabetical order

(D) sprawling and exhaustive in length

(E) concise but comprehensive

7. *Rather than say 'died,' the periphrastic obituary spoke of one who had 'passed beyond the veil to his eternal reward.'*

As used in the sentence, 'periphrastic' most nearly means

(A) expressed with several words rather than one inflected form

(B) wandering from place to place

(C) blunt and direct

(D) roundabout, using extra words

(E) euphemistic and polite

8. *The sententious old judge could not pass the salt without delivering a solemn maxim on the virtue of moderation.*

As used in the sentence, 'sententious' most nearly means

(A) relating to judicial punishment

(B) playfully irreverent

(C) given to pompous moralizing

(D) wise and genuinely insightful

(E) concise and full of pithy sayings

9. *So loquacious was our host that a simple 'good evening' unleashed a forty-minute monologue.*

As used in the sentence, 'loquacious' most nearly means

(A) fond of argument

(B) very talkative

(C) reserved and silent

(D) mentally unstable

(E) eloquent and persuasive

10. *A voluble guide, she kept up an easy, unbroken stream of talk for the entire three-hour tour.*

As used in the sentence, 'voluble' most nearly means

(A) loud and boisterous

(B) of great worth

(C) sparing of words

(D) fluently talkative

(E) twining or rotating readily

11. *Given the smallest prompt, the professor would expatiate on medieval taxation until the bell mercifully rang.*

As used in the sentence, 'expatiate' most nearly means

(A) to state briefly

(B) to speak at great length

(C) to wander about freely

(D) to lecture sternly

(E) to send into exile abroad

12. *'Denied.' The terse reply used a single word where a paragraph had been expected.*

As used in the sentence, 'terse' most nearly means

(A) polite and diplomatic
(B) neatly polished and refined
(C) wordy and expansive
(D) nervously strained
(E) curtly brief

13. *His epigrammatic style, as in 'I can resist everything except temptation,' compressed wit and truth into a single glittering line.*

As used in the sentence, 'epigrammatic' most nearly means

(A) concise, witty and pointed
(B) long-winded and plodding
(C) shown by means of diagrams
(D) solemn and moralizing
(E) resembling a carved inscription

14. *The oracle's gnomic pronouncements were terse, riddling, and left every listener to puzzle out the hidden sense.*

As used in the sentence, 'gnomic' most nearly means

(A) expansive and fully explained
(B) terse and enigmatic
(C) relating to genes
(D) resembling a small goblin
(E) wise and authoritative

15. *The lecture was charming but discursive, wandering from Rome to jazz to his childhood dog before circling back.*

As used in the sentence, 'discursive' most nearly means

(A) rambling and digressive
(B) based on step-by-step reasoning
(C) confusingly disorganized
(D) rudely dismissive
(E) tightly focused and linear

16. *The contract's real terms hid beneath a hundred lines of verbiage no client could be expected to wade through.*

As used in the sentence, 'verbiage' most nearly means

(A) the way something is worded

(B) a single concise statement

(C) an excess of useless words

(D) specialized technical jargon

(E) a growth of green plants

17. *Unable to admit he was lost, he resorted to circumlocution, talking around the point for ten minutes without ever saying so.*

As used in the sentence, 'circumlocution' most nearly means

(A) a plain, direct statement

(B) roundabout, evasive speech

(C) a journey around the globe

(D) an outright lie

(E) a formal apology

18. *Her aphoristic advice, such as 'measure twice, cut once,' distilled experience into short, memorable rules.*

As used in the sentence, 'aphoristic' most nearly means

(A) arousing romantic desire

(B) written in verse

(C) long and discursive

(D) expressed in terse maxims

(E) vague and open-ended

19. *His curt 'Fine.' made plain, in a single clipped syllable, that the conversation was over and he was displeased.*

As used in the sentence, 'curt' most nearly means

(A) simply concise

(B) abruptly halted midway

(C) to woo or seek someone's favor

(D) warmly expansive

(E) rudely brief

20. *Rather than simply saying no, the manager gave a circumlocutory reply that wandered through three unrelated anecdotes before arriving nowhere near a decision.*

As used in the sentence, 'circumlocutory' most nearly means

(A) roundabout and wordy

(B) moving in a physical circle

(C) crisp and to the point

(D) circumspect and cautious

(E) deliberately evasive in intent

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression

node: grev.vocab.V8

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Solve. Choose the option closest to your predicted paraphrase.

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opposite-meaning.
Selects a meaning roughly opposite to the one the clue requires.

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wrong-dictionary-sense.
Selects a genuine alternate sense of the word that the context rules out.

sound-alike-or-association.
Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *Her lucid explanation made quantum spin so clear that even beginners followed every step without confusion.*

As used in the sentence, 'lucid' most nearly means

(A) murky and confusing
(B) shockingly sensational
(C) mentally clear and rational
(D) clear and easy to understand
(E) brilliantly clever

2. *The paper's abstruse notation was intelligible to perhaps a dozen specialists in the entire world.*

As used in the sentence, 'abstruse' most nearly means

(A) extremely tedious
(B) deliberately misleading
(C) plain and accessible
(D) slow-witted; stupid
(E) hard to understand

3. *A perspicuous writer, she could render the tax code in prose so transparent that nothing needed a second reading.*

As used in the sentence, 'perspicuous' most nearly means

(A) muddled and opaque
(B) mentally shrewd and cunning
(C) having sharp perception
(D) clearly expressed
(E) oversimplified to the point of distortion

4. *The scholar delighted in recondite subjects, such as Hittite grammar and medieval falconry, that almost no one else had studied.*

As used in the sentence, 'recondite' most nearly means

(A) obscure; known to few
(B) merely very complex
(C) highly refined
(D) restored to working order
(E) widely known and popular

5. *The guild guarded arcane techniques of glassblowing, secrets passed only from master to chosen apprentice.*

As used in the sentence, 'arcane' most nearly means

(A) common knowledge
(B) ancient and outdated
(C) forbidden by law
(D) belonging to a much earlier period
(E) mysterious; known to few

6. *The regulations were hopelessly opaque; after three readings the lawyers still could not agree on what they required.*

As used in the sentence, 'opaque' most nearly means

(A) deliberately deceptive
(B) perfectly clear
(C) hard to understand
(D) milky and iridescent in color
(E) not letting light pass through

7. *The prose was limpid, every sentence clear as spring water, with not a shadow of ambiguity.*

As used in the sentence, 'limpid' most nearly means

(A) of liquid, perfectly clear
(B) cloudy and confusing
(C) lacking firmness; drooping
(D) plain and unadorned
(E) clear and transparent

8. *His turgid prose, swollen with pompous abstractions, made a simple idea sound impossibly grand and unreadable.*

As used in the sentence, 'turgid' most nearly means

(A) pompously inflated and obscure
(B) richly poetic
(C) cloudy with stirred-up sediment
(D) lean and clear
(E) physically swollen or bloated

9. *The plot grew so convoluted, with twist folded inside twist, that viewers gave up trying to track who betrayed whom.*

As used in the sentence, 'convoluted' most nearly means

(A) simple and straightforward

(B) extremely complicated and twisted

(C) coiled or twisted in physical shape

(D) escorted along in a group

(E) confusingly vague

10. *The note left only a cryptic clue, 'the third from the sun remembers,' whose meaning no one could decipher.*

As used in the sentence, 'cryptic' most nearly means

(A) written in a secret cipher

(B) mysterious and puzzling

(C) relating to underground burial vaults

(D) serving as camouflage

(E) plainly stated

11. *The seminar's esoteric debates were meaningful only to a handful of initiates steeped in the discipline's inner lore.*

As used in the sentence, 'esoteric' most nearly means

(A) strikingly unusual and foreign

(B) merely intellectually difficult

(C) understood by only a few

(D) of broad general interest

(E) occult; concerning secret mystical teachings

12. *The philosopher's densest chapter was impenetrable; readers could not force a single sentence to yield its sense.*

As used in the sentence, 'impenetrable' most nearly means

(A) impossible to understand

(B) impossible to capture by force

(C) readily understood

(D) extremely boring

(E) impossible to pass through physically

13. *His plans for the company stayed nebulous: a vague, cloudy sense of 'growth' with no definite shape or step.*

As used in the sentence, 'nebulous' most nearly means

(A) vague and ill-defined

(B) wicked and villainous

(C) precise and well-defined

(D) secret and hidden

(E) resembling an interstellar cloud

14. *Her inscrutable expression gave nothing away; no one at the table could read whether she held a winning hand.*

As used in the sentence, 'inscrutable' most nearly means

(A) morally questionable

(B) impossible to interpret

(C) easily read

(D) without moral principles

(E) blank and expressionless

15. *The sect's hermetic doctrines were sealed off from outsiders, obscure teachings shared only within the closed order.*

As used in the sentence, 'hermetic' most nearly means

(A) sacred and revered

(B) completely airtight

(C) open and widely published

(D) living alone in isolation

(E) obscure; sealed from outsiders

16. *A good footnote should elucidate the passage, making a difficult reference clear to the ordinary reader.*

As used in the sentence, 'elucidate' most nearly means

(A) to escape or evade

(B) to make more confusing

(C) to prove with evidence

(D) to condense into a summary

(E) to make clear; explain

17. *The critic took three pages to explicate the poem, unfolding each buried allusion line by line.*

As used in the sentence, 'explicate' most nearly means

(A) to justify or make excuses for

(B) to translate word for word

(C) to leave unexplained

(D) to show someone was involved in wrongdoing

(E) to explain in detail

18. *Reviewers praised the textbook's perspicuity: even beginners could follow the proofs because every sentence stated its point without a trace of fog.*

As used in the sentence, 'perspicuity' most nearly means

(A) murkiness of style

(B) persistence in argument

(C) clarity of expression

(D) physical transparency of a material

(E) keen mental sharpness

19. *The bureaucracy's labyrinthine procedures wound through so many offices and forms that citizens lost their way entirely.*

As used in the sentence, 'labyrinthine' most nearly means

(A) requiring hard physical effort

(B) enormous in size

(C) of the inner ear's canals

(D) intricate and bewildering

(E) simple and easily navigated

20. *The moment she opened the ledger, the fraud was manifest, the missing sums plain for anyone to see.*

As used in the sentence, 'manifest' most nearly means

(A) hidden and undetectable

(B) of many different kinds

(C) merely strongly suspected

(D) clearly evident; obvious

(E) a ship's cargo and passenger list

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery

node: grev.vocab.V9

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Selects a genuine alternate sense of the word that the context rules out.

sound-alike-or-association.
Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *Critics laud her debut as a triumph, heaping praise on nearly every page.*

   As used in the sentence, 'laud' most nearly means

   (A) to praise highly
   (B) to thank politely
   (C) to promote to a higher rank
   (D) to recite morning church prayers
   (E) to condemn

2. *Reviewers extol the chef's inventiveness, praising his dishes as the finest in the entire city.*

As used in the sentence, 'extol' most nearly means

(A) to praise enthusiastically
(B) to recommend mildly
(C) to urge someone onward
(D) to demand payment by force
(E) to belittle

3. *The pop star basked in the crowd's adulation, an outpouring of worshipful, almost excessive praise.*

As used in the sentence, 'adulation' most nearly means

(A) corruption by adding impurities
(B) a public celebration
(C) sincere, measured respect
(D) harsh contempt
(E) excessive praise or admiration

4. *At the retirement dinner, colleague after colleague rose to eulogize her, praising a career of quiet brilliance.*

As used in the sentence, 'eulogize' most nearly means

(A) to deliver a funeral oration for the dead
(B) to express regret for a fault
(C) to mourn sorrowfully
(D) to criticize openly
(E) to praise highly

5. *His speech was a pure panegyric, a lavish oration devoted entirely to the founder's virtues.*

As used in the sentence, 'panegyric' most nearly means

(A) a wide-ranging survey
(B) a modest, heartfelt tribute
(C) a widespread outbreak of fear
(D) a speech of elaborate praise
(E) a bitter denunciation

6. *The tribute volume opened with a warm encomium celebrating the professor's fifty years of scholarship.*

As used in the sentence, 'encomium' most nearly means

(A) a jointly owned apartment

(B) a brief thank-you note

(C) a closing summary

(D) a formal accusation

(E) a formal expression of praise

7. *The courtiers would fawn over the prince, flattering his every whim to win his favor.*

As used in the sentence, 'fawn' most nearly means

(A) to flatter servilely

(B) to admire genuinely

(C) to defy openly

(D) a young deer

(E) to open the mouth from tiredness

8. *Surrounded by every sycophant on the payroll, the boss never heard an honest word, only flattery.*

As used in the sentence, 'sycophant' most nearly means

(A) a loyal supporter

(B) a self-serving flatterer

(C) a mentally ill person

(D) a large shade tree

(E) a blunt truth-teller

9. *The final movement swells into a paean, a jubilant song of praise and thanksgiving.*

As used in the sentence, 'paean' most nearly means

(A) a song of praise

(B) a hymn of thanksgiving to a god

(C) a mournful lament

(D) a lowly laborer

(E) a call to battle

10. *The performance earned the year's loudest plaudits, a storm of praise from press and public alike.*

As used in the sentence, 'plaudit' most nearly means

(A) an expression of praise

(B) a wave of jeers

(C) a burst of hand-clapping

(D) a formal financial inspection

(E) a mere polite nod

11. *She resisted every blandishment, the compliments, the gifts, the honeyed promises meant to coax her into signing.*

As used in the sentence, 'blandishment' most nearly means

(A) a bland, dull remark
(B) a threatening wave of a weapon
(C) flattery meant to persuade
(D) an outright bribe
(E) a stern threat

12. *With enough sweet talk he could cajole almost anyone into lending him money.*

As used in the sentence, 'cajole' most nearly means

(A) to persuade with logic
(B) to shut up in a cell
(C) to deceive with outright lies
(D) to bully by force
(E) to coax by flattery

13. *The child learned to wheedle an extra hour of television out of his grandparents with practiced charm.*

As used in the sentence, 'wheedle' most nearly means

(A) to carve wood down gradually
(B) to coax by flattery
(C) to demand outright
(D) to whistle a tune
(E) to nag persistently

14. *He was a shameless toady, agreeing with the director's every opinion in hopes of a promotion.*

As used in the sentence, 'toady' most nearly means

(A) a warty, hopping amphibian
(B) an outspoken critic
(C) to behave with fawning submission
(D) a servile flatterer
(E) a devoted admirer

15. *After the prize, the once-obscure poet was lionized, feted at every gala and treated as a celebrity.*

As used in the sentence, 'lionize' most nearly means

(A) to treat as a celebrity
(B) to respect quietly
(C) to shun and ignore
(D) to hunt big game
(E) to make fierce or bold

16. *The anthem exalts the nation's founders, raising them to almost heroic heights of honor.*

As used in the sentence, 'exalt' most nearly means

(A) to raise in rank or power
(B) to praise or glorify highly
(C) to rejoice triumphantly
(D) to degrade
(E) to thank formally

17. *His fulsome praise, thick, gushing, and clearly insincere, embarrassed everyone at the table.*

As used in the sentence, 'fulsome' most nearly means

(A) excessive and insincere (of praise)
(B) morally healthy and decent
(C) generously abundant
(D) restrained and measured
(E) warm and heartfelt

18. *The disgraced aide began to grovel before the senator, abasing himself and begging forgiveness.*

As used in the sentence, 'grovel' most nearly means

(A) to behave with abject submission
(B) to cover a path with crushed stone
(C) to apologize sincerely
(D) to stand defiantly
(E) to crawl face-down on the ground

19. *The 'biography' read like hagiography, an idealizing account that airbrushed away every flaw of its saintly subject.*

As used in the sentence, 'hagiography' most nearly means

(A) the mapping of the earth's features
(B) a scathing exposé
(C) the study of the lives of saints

(D) an idealizing, worshipful biography

(E) a balanced life story

20. *In the final act the tyrant's apotheosis is complete: his followers exalt him from mere ruler to living god.*

As used in the sentence, 'apotheosis' most nearly means

(A) elevation to divine status; glorification

(B) an utter downfall and disgrace

(C) a grand coronation

(D) the highest point or perfect example of something

(E) an old-fashioned pharmacist

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke

node: grev.vocab.V10

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Selects a meaning roughly opposite to the one the clue requires.

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Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *In the postmortem the auditor did not spare feelings; she animadverted on every lax control and named each officer who had ignored the warnings.*

As used in the sentence, 'animadvert' most nearly means

(A) to advertise or announce
(B) to criticize or censure
(C) to turn one's attention toward
(D) to praise warmly
(E) to merely mention in passing

2. *The coach rebuked the players sharply for their laziness, his stern words leaving no doubt of his displeasure.*

As used in the sentence, 'rebuke' most nearly means

(A) to reject a request bluntly
(B) to reprimand sharply
(C) to advise gently
(D) to compliment
(E) to beat back or repel

3. *She reproved him mildly for interrupting, a gentle correction rather than a real scolding.*

As used in the sentence, 'reprove' most nearly means

(A) to correct or scold mildly
(B) to denounce furiously
(C) to test something again for approval
(D) to postpone a punishment
(E) to praise warmly

4. *The columnist fustigated the council so severely that even its allies winced at the lashing paragraph-by-paragraph rebuke.*

As used in the sentence, 'fustigate' most nearly means

(A) to beat with a club
(B) to criticize harshly
(C) to correct politely
(D) to fuss and fidget nervously
(E) to gently encourage

5. *The judge admonished the jury to ignore the outburst, warning them firmly of their duty.*

As used in the sentence, 'admonish' most nearly means

(A) to fill with amazement
(B) to reassure
(C) to punish severely
(D) to warn or reprimand firmly
(E) to urge or advise earnestly

6. *She upbraided the clerk loudly for the error, scolding him in front of the whole line of customers.*

As used in the sentence, 'upbraid' most nearly means

(A) to correct politely
(B) to praise generously
(C) to protest an unfair charge
(D) to plait strands of hair
(E) to scold severely

7. *Reviewers excoriated the film, tearing it apart as a lazy, cynical insult to its audience.*

As used in the sentence, 'excoriate' most nearly means

(A) to clear of blame
(B) to strip or scrape away the skin
(C) to critique constructively
(D) to praise lavishly
(E) to criticize severely

8. *The columnist lambasted the mayor, blasting his budget as reckless in paragraph after scorching paragraph.*

As used in the sentence, 'lambaste' most nearly means

(A) to question mildly
(B) to defend and support
(C) to attack or criticize harshly
(D) to beat or thrash physically
(E) to moisten roasting meat with juices

9. *He would vituperate his rivals for hours, spewing bitter, abusive insults at every one of them.*

As used in the sentence, 'vituperate' most nearly means

(A) to abuse with bitter words
(B) to spread rumors quietly
(C) to spoil or corrupt the quality of
(D) to argue against reasonably
(E) to speak of admiringly

10. *The officer received an official reprimand, a formal rebuke entered permanently into her record.*

As used in the sentence, 'reprimand' most nearly means

(A) to send a prisoner back into custody
(B) a formal citation for merit
(C) a formal rebuke
(D) a demand for repayment
(E) a friendly warning

11. *'You should have called,' she chided gently, more worried than truly angry.*

As used in the sentence, 'chide' most nearly means

(A) to hide oneself away
(B) to rage at
(C) to congratulate
(D) to scold mildly
(E) to shrink back timidly

12. *Rather than debate her ideas, they tried to denigrate her, belittling her competence with snide asides.*

As used in the sentence, 'denigrate' most nearly means

(A) to combine parts into a whole
(B) to build up and honor
(C) to blacken or darken in color

(D) to belittle; run down

(E) to disagree openly

13. *Critics disparage his later novels as thin and derivative, dismissing them as unworthy of his early promise.*

As used in the sentence, 'disparage' most nearly means

(A) to match in an unequal marriage

(B) to speak of as inferior

(C) to speak highly of

(D) essentially different in kind

(E) to review objectively

14. *The pamphlet set out to vilify the reformer, painting him as a monster through slander and outright lies.*

As used in the sentence, 'vilify' most nearly means

(A) to build a grand country estate

(B) to make into a town; urbanize

(C) to speak well of

(D) to defame; speak abusively of

(E) to criticize fairly

15. *The preacher would inveigh against greed, thundering denunciations from the pulpit each Sunday.*

As used in the sentence, 'inveigh' most nearly means

(A) to warn calmly about

(B) to speak in favor of

(C) to investigate in secret

(D) to protest or rail against

(E) to win someone over by coaxing or trickery

16. *The headmaster would objurgate any latecomer, rebuking the offender in a torrent of stern reproof.*

As used in the sentence, 'objurgate' most nearly means

(A) to excuse kindly

(B) to bind by duty or contract

(C) to rebuke harshly

(D) to raise a formal objection in court

(E) to remind gently

17. *Editorials fulminate against the new tax, issuing furious blasts of condemnation week after week.*

As used in the sentence, 'fulminate' most nearly means

(A) to denounce vehemently

(B) to reach a high point

(C) to explode or detonate

(D) to endorse warmly

(E) to complain quietly

18. *Once the fraud was exposed, he lived out his years in opprobrium, an object of public scorn and disgrace.*

As used in the sentence, 'opprobrium' most nearly means

(A) widespread admiration

(B) a formal legal charge

(C) mild disapproval

(D) harsh public scorn; disgrace

(E) conspicuous wealth and luxury

19. *His after-dinner speech turned into a diatribe, a long, bitter tirade against modern manners.*

As used in the sentence, 'diatribe' most nearly means

(A) a bitter, abusive tirade

(B) a reasoned critique

(C) a stream feeding a larger river

(D) a traditional folk dance

(E) a warm tribute

20. *The debate degenerated into invective, with both sides hurling abuse and insult instead of argument.*

As used in the sentence, 'invective' most nearly means

(A) abusive, insulting language

(B) a solemn curse or spell

(C) a newly devised device

(D) words of praise

(E) sharp sarcasm

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion

node: grev.vocab.V11

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Practice

1. *Her cogent argument, each point following irresistibly from the last, convinced even the skeptics on the panel.*

As used in the sentence, 'cogent' most nearly means

(A) fully aware and informed
(B) clear and convincing
(C) closely relevant; to the point
(D) weak and unconvincing
(E) loudly forceful

2. *So eloquent was her plea that the courtroom fell silent, moved by the grace and power of every phrase.*

As used in the sentence, 'eloquent' most nearly means

(A) vividly expressive though wordless
(B) extremely honest
(C) gracefully stylish in appearance
(D) fluent and persuasive in speech
(E) halting and inarticulate

3. *His grandiloquent speech, swollen with lofty phrases and grand gestures, impressed no one with its empty pomp.*

As used in the sentence, 'grandiloquent' most nearly means

(A) genuinely inspiring
(B) generous and grand in spending
(C) plain and unpretentious
(D) pompous and lofty in language
(E) one who throws his voice

4. *The coach's bombastic pep talk was all inflated bluster, high-sounding words with little real substance.*

As used in the sentence, 'bombastic' most nearly means

(A) modest and understated
(B) pompous and inflated in speech
(C) stuffed with cotton padding
(D) aggressively rude
(E) explosively destructive

5. *Her mellifluous voice, smooth and sweet as flowing honey, made even the weather report a pleasure to hear.*

As used in the sentence, 'mellifluous' most nearly means

(A) sweet and smooth-sounding
(B) harsh and grating
(C) slow and drowsy
(D) loud and resonant
(E) intending harm

6. *He built to a stirring peroration, the grand closing passage in which the whole speech gathered its emotional force.*

As used in the sentence, 'peroration' most nearly means

(A) a rehearsal of a speech
(B) the closing part of a speech
(C) the opening remarks
(D) a row of punched holes
(E) a persuasive argument

7. *The actor loved to declaim, reciting his lines in ringing, theatrical tones to the very back of the hall.*

As used in the sentence, 'declaim' most nearly means

(A) to argue in a debate
(B) to speak rhetorically and dramatically
(C) to deny responsibility for
(D) to mumble inaudibly
(E) to speak passionately against something

8. *Trained in classical oratory, she could sway a crowd of thousands with the sheer eloquence of her delivery.*

As used in the sentence, 'oratory' most nearly means

(A) a small chapel for private prayer
(B) the art of eloquent public speaking
(C) a large sacred musical work
(D) the habit of nervous silence
(E) loud, forceful shouting

9. *The bishop's sonorous voice, deep and richly resonant, filled the cathedral to its farthest corner.*

As used in the sentence, 'sonorous' most nearly means

(A) deep and richly resonant
(B) high-flown and grandiose in wording

(C) thin and tinny

(D) pleasantly sweet

(E) drowsy and sleep-inducing

10. *Her trenchant analysis cut straight to the flaw in the plan, sharp and incisive where others were vague.*

As used in the sentence, 'trenchant' most nearly means

(A) sharp and incisive

(B) harshly cruel

(C) having a sharp cutting edge

(D) dull and vague

(E) a long ditch dug for defense

11. *His incisive questions went straight to the heart of the matter, exposing the weakness in one clean stroke.*

As used in the sentence, 'incisive' most nearly means

(A) rambling and vague

(B) making a surgical cut

(C) settling an issue conclusively

(D) brutally blunt

(E) sharply clear and penetrating

12. *His arguments were facile: smooth and fluent on the surface, but too easy and shallow to withstand real scrutiny.*

As used in the sentence, 'facile' most nearly means

(A) superficially fluent; shallow

(B) achieved with ease

(C) profound and rigorous

(D) clumsy and awkward

(E) relating to the face

13. *The salesman had a glib answer for every objection: smooth, quick, and not to be trusted.*

As used in the sentence, 'glib' most nearly means

(A) genuinely persuasive

(B) awkward and hesitant

(C) smooth and slippery to the touch

(D) fluent but insincere

(E) cheerful and lighthearted

14. *The scheme rested on specious reasoning: arguments that looked sound at a glance but collapsed the moment you examined them.*

As used in the sentence, 'specious' most nearly means

(A) seemingly valid but actually false

(B) attractive and showy in appearance

(C) openly illogical

(D) roomy and generous in size

(E) clearly and truly valid

15. *His defense was pure sophistry, clever-sounding reasoning designed to deceive rather than to reach the truth.*

As used in the sentence, 'sophistry' most nearly means

(A) advanced wisdom

(B) plausible but fallacious reasoning

(C) refined worldly sophistication

(D) a second-year student's overconfidence

(E) sound, honest logic

16. *The lullaby's dulcet tones, soft and sweetly soothing, sent the whole nursery to sleep.*

As used in the sentence, 'dulcet' most nearly means

(A) sweet to the taste

(B) sweet and soothing (of sound)

(C) shrill and jarring

(D) quiet and faint

(E) boring and lifeless

17. *Pressed for a straight answer, the minister began to equivocate, using slippery, ambiguous phrases to avoid committing himself.*

As used in the sentence, 'equivocate' most nearly means

(A) to speak ambiguously to mislead

(B) to state plainly and directly

(C) to change one's mind

(D) to use a single term in two senses within an argument

(E) equal in value

18. *The announcer's orotund delivery, full, round, and pompously grand, made a weather bulletin sound like an epic.*

As used in the sentence, 'orotund' most nearly means

(A) plump and rounded in shape
(B) thin and flat in tone
(C) resonant and full-toned (neutrally)
(D) full and pompously grand (of voice)
(E) warm and intimate

19. *The 'report' was frankly tendentious, marshaling every fact to push one predetermined conclusion.*

As used in the sentence, 'tendentious' most nearly means

(A) biased toward a viewpoint
(B) hesitant and unsure
(C) impartial and balanced
(D) highly controversial
(E) prone to nervous tension

20. *A polished rhetorician, he knew every device of persuasion and could shape an audience's mood with a single well-turned phrase.*

As used in the sentence, 'rhetorician' most nearly means

(A) a clumsy, tongue-tied speaker
(B) a rigorous logician
(C) a user of empty, showy talk
(D) a scholar who studies the past
(E) a skilled persuasive speaker

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil

node: grev.vocab.V12

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Practice

1. *Even as the markets collapsed around him, the old trader met each fresh disaster with the same unruffled equanimity, never once raising his voice.*

   As used in the sentence, 'equanimity' most nearly means

   (A) calmness under stress
   (B) panicked agitation
   (C) fairness and impartiality
   (D) cold indifference
   (E) unanimous agreement

2. *The lake's placidity that morning was total; not a ripple disturbed its glassy surface for hours.*

   As used in the sentence, 'placidity' most nearly means

   (A) pleasant agreeableness
   (B) a mild, unexcitable temperament

(C) empty desolation

(D) calm stillness

(E) churning turbulence

3. *Reporters hurled hostile questions for an hour, but the diplomat remained imperturbable, answering each with the same unhurried steadiness.*

As used in the sentence, 'imperturbable' most nearly means

(A) impossible to penetrate

(B) unable to be upset

(C) incapable of being changed

(D) coldly unfeeling

(E) easily flustered

4. *Defusing the bomb with only seconds left, she showed remarkable sangfroid, her hands perfectly steady though everyone around her trembled.*

As used in the sentence, 'sangfroid' most nearly means

(A) reckless bravado

(B) frantic nervousness

(C) cold-blooded callousness

(D) bloodthirsty rage

(E) composure under danger

5. *The young pianist handled the disastrous power outage with such aplomb that she simply kept playing from memory, smiling all the while.*

As used in the sentence, 'aplomb' most nearly means

(A) a heavy dullness

(B) awkward fumbling

(C) vertical straightness

(D) assured poise

(E) arrogant swagger

6. *The volcano had lain quiescent for two centuries, its slopes green and silent, giving no hint of the fire below.*

As used in the sentence, 'quiescent' most nearly means

(A) violently erupting

(B) permanently extinct

(C) peacefully content in mind

(D) inactive and still

(E) questioning and inquisitive

7. *She looked back on those halcyon summers before the war, cloudless, carefree, and untroubled by any worry.*

As used in the sentence, 'halcyon' most nearly means

(A) of the mythical kingfisher

(B) stormy and troubled

(C) icy and cold

(D) calm and happy

(E) wildly festive

8. *After the frantic harvest, the whole village sank into deep repose, sleeping late and moving slowly for a week.*

As used in the sentence, 'repose' most nearly means

(A) to place trust in

(B) idle boredom

(C) restless activity

(D) restful calm

(E) to state again

9. *No emergency ruffled the veteran nurse; unflappable even when the ward descended into chaos, she calmly issued orders.*

As used in the sentence, 'unflappable' most nearly means

(A) utterly indifferent

(B) unable to fly

(C) rigidly inflexible

(D) quick to panic

(E) not easily upset

10. *The stolid sentry showed no flicker of feeling as the parade, and later the riot, swept past him; nothing seemed to move him.*

As used in the sentence, 'stolid' most nearly means

(A) physically solid and bulky

(B) stubbornly defiant

(C) deeply serene

(D) wildly expressive

(E) showing no emotion

11. *While colleagues shouted over the crashed server, he stayed unruffled, sipping his coffee and calmly tracing the error.*

As used in the sentence, 'unruffled' most nearly means

(A) calm and untroubled
(B) smooth and without wrinkles
(C) unimpressed and unamused
(D) carelessly indifferent
(E) deeply agitated

12. *The wedding was a sedate affair, with soft music, quiet conversation, and not a single raucous toast.*

As used in the sentence, 'sedate' most nearly means

(A) calm and unhurried
(B) seated and stationary
(C) gloomy and mournful
(D) to drug into calmness
(E) wild and boisterous

13. *The sudden coup threw the capital into turmoil, with crowds surging, sirens wailing, and no one sure who was in charge.*

As used in the sentence, 'turmoil' most nearly means

(A) mild inconvenience
(B) exhausting hard labor
(C) settled tranquility
(D) violent disorder
(E) inner mental confusion

14. *A flicker of perturbation crossed her usually placid face when the letter arrived; she bit her lip and paced.*

As used in the sentence, 'perturbation' most nearly means

(A) anxious disturbance
(B) perfect serenity
(C) a small deviation in an orbit
(D) stubborn persistence
(E) furious outrage

15. *Over the tumult of the stadium, with thousands screaming and stamping at once, the announcer's voice was completely lost.*

As used in the sentence, 'tumult' most nearly means

(A) a swelling growth or lump

(B) hushed silence

(C) loud commotion

(D) cheerful festivity

(E) inner emotional agitation

16. *The general's cheerful bulletins could not dispel the public's disquiet; people sensed, uneasily, that something was being hidden.*

As used in the sentence, 'disquiet' most nearly means

(A) physical restlessness of the body

(B) a state of noisy commotion

(C) uneasy anxiety

(D) open rebellion

(E) calm reassurance

17. *For the first time in the trial the witness showed discomposure; his voice cracked, his hands shook, and he lost his place in the story.*

As used in the sentence, 'discomposure' most nearly means

(A) a disorderly appearance of dress

(B) perfect self-possession

(C) physical exhaustion

(D) the undoing of a written composition

(E) loss of calm

18. *The university was in a ferment of new ideas that spring, with students debating all night, pamphlets everywhere, nothing settled or quiet.*

As used in the sentence, 'ferment' most nearly means

(A) the chemical process of fermentation

(B) stagnant calm

(C) excited agitation

(D) violent bloodshed

(E) firm determination

19. *The negotiations collapsed into a maelstrom of accusations and counter-accusations, dragging in everyone until no one could escape the chaos.*

As used in the sentence, 'maelstrom' most nearly means

(A) a brief squabble
(B) a grinding machine
(C) turbulent uproar
(D) orderly calm
(E) a literal whirlpool at sea

20. *The report was a welter of unsorted figures and half-finished notes, so jumbled that no clear conclusion could be drawn.*

As used in the sentence, 'welter' most nearly means

(A) a heavy blow or strike
(B) confused jumble
(C) to roll or wallow
(D) a modest surplus
(E) orderly arrangement

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence

node: grev.vocab.V13

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Practice

1. *The intrepid explorer pressed on into the blizzard alone, undaunted by the cold that had turned back every other member of the party.*

As used in the sentence, 'intrepid' most nearly means

(A) physically tireless
(B) quick and rapid
(C) fearless and bold
(D) fearful and hesitant
(E) recklessly foolhardy

2. *Outnumbered ten to one, the dauntless defenders refused to yield, their spirit unbroken by the hopeless odds.*

As used in the sentence, 'dauntless' most nearly means

(A) tireless and unflagging
(B) dull and cheerless
(C) easily intimidated
(D) grimly stubborn
(E) not discouraged by danger

3. *He had the temerity to correct the professor in front of the whole lecture hall, a boldness that left the room gasping.*

As used in the sentence, 'temerity' most nearly means

(A) quiet self-assurance

(B) nervous fearfulness

(C) boldness that soon fades

(D) prudent caution

(E) rash boldness

4. *After lying to her face, he had the effrontery to ask her for a loan, shameless nerve that astonished everyone.*

As used in the sentence, 'effrontery' most nearly means

(A) the front or forward part of something

(B) a public insult to one's honor

(C) honest directness

(D) bashful reticence

(E) shameless boldness

5. *It took real hardihood to sail an open boat across the Atlantic; lesser sailors called the plan suicidal.*

As used in the sentence, 'hardihood' most nearly means

(A) a hardened, callous heart

(B) daring boldness

(C) hardiness against harsh climate

(D) faint-hearted caution

(E) physical toughness

6. *The championship match tested the young boxer's mettle, and he proved his courage by rising from the canvas again and again.*

As used in the sentence, 'mettle' most nearly means

(A) a hard, shiny metal

(B) raw physical strength

(C) a bad temper

(D) spirited courage

(E) cowardly weakness

7. *The doughty little tugboat pushed the great liner free of the sandbar, braving the storm no larger vessel would face.*

As used in the sentence, 'doughty' most nearly means

(A) merely stubborn

(B) soft, like dough

(C) timid and feeble

(D) brave and resolute

(E) sturdily built and thickset

8. *Too venturesome for a desk job, she quit to kayak uncharted rivers, always seeking the next risk.*

As used in the sentence, 'venturesome' most nearly means

(A) eager to take risks

(B) coming soon, forthcoming

(C) restlessly bored

(D) risk-averse and cautious

(E) commercially speculative

9. *In a brazen theft, the burglar strolled out the front door in daylight, utterly unashamed of who might see.*

As used in the sentence, 'brazen' most nearly means

(A) meekly discreet

(B) openly honest

(C) boldly shameless

(D) burning hot and searing

(E) made of brass; brass-colored

10. *The medal honored his valor: unarmed, he shielded two wounded comrades from enemy fire until help arrived.*

As used in the sentence, 'valor' most nearly means

(A) physical strength

(B) worth or value

(C) craven cowardice

(D) great courage

(E) loud boasting

11. *Her diffidence kept her from speaking up in meetings; brimming with good ideas, she doubted they were worth hearing.*

As used in the sentence, 'diffidence' most nearly means

(A) polite deference

(B) a subtle difference

(C) shy self-doubt

(D) brash self-assurance

(E) indifference and apathy

12. *The pusillanimous senator abandoned his allies the moment opposition stirred, too fainthearted to defend a single unpopular vote.*

As used in the sentence, 'pusillanimous' most nearly means

(A) sickly and frail
(B) cowardly and timid
(C) boldly courageous
(D) petty and small-minded
(E) cautiously prudent

13. *A timorous knock at the door, barely audible, betrayed the messenger's fear of the news he carried.*

As used in the sentence, 'timorous' most nearly means

(A) nervously fearful
(B) boldly confident
(C) trembling from cold
(D) tumor-related and swelling
(E) quietly modest

14. *In a craven retreat, the captain deserted his crew and rowed away alone, thinking only of saving his own skin.*

As used in the sentence, 'craven' most nearly means

(A) heroically brave
(B) cowardly
(C) filled with intense craving
(D) shrewdly self-interested
(E) abjectly submissive by nature

15. *History remembered him as a poltroon, the officer who fled at the first shot and left braver men to die.*

As used in the sentence, 'poltroon' most nearly means

(A) a clumsy fool
(B) a fearless hero
(C) a large decorative bird
(D) an utter coward
(E) a lazy idler

16. *She opened the exam results with trepidation, her stomach knotting, half-expecting the worst.*

As used in the sentence, 'trepidation' most nearly means

(A) a trembling or tremor of the limbs
(B) fearful apprehension
(C) a bold trespass
(D) mild curiosity
(E) eager confidence

17. *In a tremulous voice, the frightened child asked whether the storm would ever end, each word quivering.*

As used in the sentence, 'tremulous' most nearly means

(A) softly gentle
(B) trembling and timid
(C) wavering in sound, as a musical note
(D) enormous and tremendous
(E) firm and steady

18. *Burned once before, she was chary of new partnerships, agreeing to nothing until every clause had been checked twice.*

As used in the sentence, 'chary' most nearly means

(A) sparing or stingy
(B) cheerful and merry
(C) openly suspicious
(D) rashly trusting
(E) cautiously wary

19. *Far from the tyrant the papers described, the new boss was a milquetoast who apologized for giving orders and backed down at any objection.*

As used in the sentence, 'milquetoast' most nearly means

(A) a wealthy dandy
(B) a timid, spineless person
(C) a gentle peacemaker
(D) a bland, tasteless dish
(E) a domineering bully

20. *Mountaineering is no sport for the faint-hearted; the sheer drops send the timid scrambling back down at once.*

As used in the sentence, 'faint-hearted' most nearly means

(A) boldly daring

(B) lacking courage

(C) prone to fainting or dizziness

(D) physically weak

(E) kindly and tender-hearted

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency

node: grev.vocab.V14

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Practice

1. *Even after three rejections, her buoyancy never sank; she laughed off each refusal and cheerfully tried the next door.*

As used in the sentence, 'buoyancy' most nearly means

(A) boundless physical energy
(B) cheerful resilience
(C) reckless overconfidence
(D) sinking despondency
(E) the tendency to float in water

2. *The host's ebullience filled the room; bubbling with jokes and laughter, he swept even the shy guests into high spirits.*

As used in the sentence, 'ebullience' most nearly means

(A) listless gloom
(B) polite friendliness
(C) bubbling enthusiasm
(D) elegant refinement
(E) the boiling or bubbling of a liquid

3. *Her effervescence was infectious; she sparkled through the party, every sentence fizzing with delight.*

As used in the sentence, 'effervescence' most nearly means

(A) lively high spirits
(B) the bubbling or fizzing of a liquid
(C) nervous excitement
(D) dull moroseness
(E) graceful efficiency

4. *Blithe and carefree, the children skipped through the meadow without a worry in the world.*

As used in the sentence, 'blithe' most nearly means

(A) smooth and gliding
(B) casually heedless

(C) anxious and burdened

(D) calmly serene

(E) carefree and merry

5. *The harvest feast was a jocund affair, full of song, dance, and hearty laughter late into the night.*

As used in the sentence, 'jocund' most nearly means

(A) second-rate and secondary

(B) loudly rowdy

(C) governed by the planet Jupiter

(D) merry and cheerful

(E) somber and mournful

6. *The team's exuberance boiled over at the final whistle, with players leaping, hugging, and shouting in unrestrained joy.*

As used in the sentence, 'exuberance' most nearly means

(A) boastful pride

(B) flat indifference

(C) extravagant spending

(D) lush, abundant plant growth

(E) unrestrained joy

7. *The comedian's timing set off waves of mirth, the whole hall shaking with helpless laughter.*

As used in the sentence, 'mirth' most nearly means

(A) merry laughter

(B) the warmth of a fireside

(C) mild amusement

(D) grim solemnity

(E) quiet contentment

8. *The vivacious new intern lit up every meeting, chatting and gesturing with such animation that the room grew livelier around her.*

As used in the sentence, 'vivacious' most nearly means

(A) lively and spirited

(B) sluggish and dull

(C) viciously sharp-tongued

(D) aggressively pushy

(E) long-lived and enduring

9. *The jubilant crowd poured into the streets, cheering and waving flags the moment victory was announced.*

As used in the sentence, 'jubilant' most nearly means

(A) of a jubilee or anniversary year
(B) quietly relieved
(C) bitterly dejected
(D) youthful and juvenile
(E) triumphantly joyful

10. *The couple's felicity was plain to all: years on, they still finished each other's sentences and glowed with contentment.*

As used in the sentence, 'felicity' most nearly means

(A) brief pleasure
(B) good fortune or luck
(C) an apt, well-chosen phrase
(D) great happiness
(E) deep misery

11. *Months of unemployment sank him into despondency; he stopped answering the phone and saw no point in trying anymore.*

As used in the sentence, 'despondency' most nearly means

(A) hopeless dejection
(B) sullen resentment
(C) grudging dependence on others
(D) quiet weariness
(E) buoyant optimism

12. *The doleful howl of the dog, mourning its absent master, drifted through the empty house all night.*

As used in the sentence, 'doleful' most nearly means

(A) gently wistful
(B) mournfully sad
(C) measured out in portions
(D) idle and lazy
(E) brightly cheerful

13. *The saturnine clerk never smiled; he brooded at his desk, gloomy and taciturn, radiating a cold heaviness.*

As used in the sentence, 'saturnine' most nearly means

(A) sunny and genial

(B) saturated and soaked

(C) relating to the planet Saturn or to lead

(D) calmly reserved

(E) gloomy and sullen

14. *In lugubrious tones, the undertaker described the arrangements, his voice so mournful it seemed almost comically overdone.*

As used in the sentence, 'lugubrious' most nearly means

(A) brightly joyful

(B) smooth and slippery

(C) sternly serious

(D) exaggeratedly mournful

(E) sluggishly slow

15. *After the loss he turned morose, sitting alone for hours, snapping at anyone who tried to cheer him.*

As used in the sentence, 'morose' most nearly means

(A) shyly withdrawn

(B) gruesomely preoccupied with death

(C) peacefully solitary

(D) sullen and gloomy

(E) buoyantly cheerful

16. *The dour headmaster met every joke with a stony frown, and his forbidding severity silenced the room.*

As used in the sentence, 'dour' most nearly means

(A) quietly shy

(B) sour in taste

(C) hard, unyielding, or barren

(D) warm and jovial

(E) stern and gloomy

17. *The lost puppy looked utterly woebegone, drooping, bedraggled, and radiating misery from every soggy inch.*

As used in the sentence, 'woebegone' most nearly means

(A) worn out from age

(B) sorrowful in appearance

(C) merely untidy

(D) long past and forgotten

(E) beaming with delight

18. *Disconsolate after the funeral, she refused every comfort offered, certain that nothing could ever ease the loss.*

As used in the sentence, 'disconsolate' most nearly means

(A) disconnected, out of its console

(B) cheerfully content

(C) solitary and alone

(D) mildly disappointed

(E) beyond comforting

19. *A funereal hush hung over the office after the layoffs, with drawn faces, lowered voices, and not a trace of the old laughter.*

As used in the sentence, 'funereal' most nearly means

(A) functional and utilitarian

(B) relating to an actual funeral

(C) festive and lively

(D) solemnly formal

(E) gloomy and mournful

20. *Crestfallen at not making the team, he trudged home with slumped shoulders and downcast eyes.*

As used in the sentence, 'crestfallen' most nearly means

(A) quietly resigned

(B) having crashed or collapsed

(C) dejected and dispirited

(D) elated and proud

(E) having a bird's drooping crest

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity

node: grev.vocab.V15

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Practice

1. *The tyrant's wrath was terrible; a single misplaced word could send him into a rage that leveled whole villages.*

As used in the sentence, 'wrath' most nearly means

(A) intense fury
(B) a woven garland
(C) gentle forgiveness
(D) cold resentment
(E) swift retribution

2. *His petulance over the smallest delays, sulking, snapping, and slamming doors, made him seem more like a spoiled child than a manager.*

As used in the sentence, 'petulance' most nearly means

(A) explosive rage
(B) even-tempered patience
(C) peevish irritability
(D) smallness or pettiness
(E) boldness or insolence

3. *She reprimanded them with such asperity that the harshness of her tone stung worse than the words themselves.*

As used in the sentence, 'asperity' most nearly means

(A) roughness of a physical surface
(B) harshness of tone
(C) gentle mildness
(D) cold indifference
(E) bitterness of taste

4. *A man of quick choler, the colonel would flush red and bellow at the least provocation before his temper cooled.*

As used in the sentence, 'choler' most nearly means

(A) a deadly epidemic disease
(B) placid good humor
(C) lasting bitterness
(D) irritable anger
(E) yellow bile, the bodily humor

5. *Nothing roused the editor's ire like a misplaced comma; such errors made him seethe for the rest of the day.*

As used in the sentence, 'ire' most nearly means

(A) anger
(B) mild annoyance
(C) settled, long-held hatred
(D) a strand of metal wire
(E) calm approval

6. *Long after the lawsuit ended, rancor festered between the brothers; neither could mention the other without bitterness.*

As used in the sentence, 'rancor' most nearly means

(A) open hostility and fighting
(B) warm goodwill
(C) bitter resentment
(D) the staleness of spoiled food
(E) sudden outrage

7. *In high dudgeon, she stormed out of the meeting, slamming the door at what she took to be a deliberate insult.*

As used in the sentence, 'dudgeon' most nearly means

(A) indignant resentment
(B) cheerful acceptance
(C) the haft or hilt of a dagger
(D) a dungeon or cellar
(E) mild puzzlement

8. *He took umbrage at the joke, convinced it was a jab at him, and refused to speak for the rest of the evening.*

As used in the sentence, 'umbrage' most nearly means

(A) shade cast by trees
(B) open fury
(C) flattered delight
(D) offense or resentment
(E) an umbrella or covering

9. *When he saw the vandalized car he turned apoplectic, red-faced and sputtering, too enraged to form a coherent sentence.*

As used in the sentence, 'apoplectic' most nearly means

(A) apologetic and contrite

(B) serenely unbothered

(C) suffering a literal stroke

(D) mildly annoyed

(E) overcome with rage

10. *The splenetic old critic savaged every play he saw, his reviews dripping with spite and bad temper.*

As used in the sentence, 'splenetic' most nearly means

(A) genial and kindly

(B) relating to the spleen

(C) splendidly grand

(D) coolly critical

(E) bad-tempered and spiteful

11. *So irascible was the coach that players tiptoed around him, knowing the slightest mistake would trigger an outburst.*

As used in the sentence, 'irascible' most nearly means

(A) wildly illogical

(B) easily angered

(C) harboring lasting grudges

(D) sternly demanding

(E) slow to anger

12. *The bilious columnist seemed perpetually sour, spewing ill-tempered venom at anyone who disagreed with him.*

As used in the sentence, 'bilious' most nearly means

(A) ill-tempered

(B) sweet-natured

(C) relating to bile or a liver ailment

(D) wordy and verbose

(E) sharply witty

13. *Tired and hungry, the toddler grew peevish, whining and fretting over every little thing.*

As used in the sentence, 'peevish' most nearly means

(A) pale and sickly

(B) sunnily good-natured

(C) irritably fretful

(D) furiously enraged

(E) sulkily silent and withdrawn

14. *The querulous patient complained ceaselessly about the food, the light, and the noise; nothing was ever right.*

As used in the sentence, 'querulous' most nearly means

(A) peevishly suspicious

(B) cheerfully uncomplaining

(C) questioning and inquisitive

(D) given to complaining

(E) sharply demanding

15. *The fractious committee could agree on nothing; members bickered, took offense, and stormed out of meeting after meeting.*

As used in the sentence, 'fractious' most nearly means

(A) harmonious and cooperative

(B) quarrelsome and irritable

(C) boldly rebellious

(D) easily broken and fragile

(E) unruly and hard to control

16. *Her waspish retorts stung; she had a gift for the sharp, spiteful remark that left its target smarting.*

As used in the sentence, 'waspish' most nearly means

(A) sharply spiteful

(B) cleverly teasing

(C) having a narrow waist

(D) pale, Anglo-Saxon Protestant

(E) mild and soothing

17. *Short on sleep, the testy witness bristled at every question, barking answers before the lawyer could finish.*

As used in the sentence, 'testy' most nearly means

(A) relating to an examination

(B) boldly defiant

(C) patiently even-tempered

(D) short-tempered

(E) suspicious and distrustful

18. *The choleric foreman turned purple with rage over a broken tool, roaring until the whole yard fell silent.*

As used in the sentence, 'choleric' most nearly means

(A) coldly vindictive

(B) relating to the humor of bile

(C) colorful and brightly colored

(D) hot-tempered

(E) calm and mild

19. *Her ireful glare and clenched jaw told everyone that the broken promise had kindled a deep, smoldering anger.*

As used in the sentence, 'ireful' most nearly means

(A) quietly disappointed

(B) calm and forgiving

(C) eerie and unsettling

(D) iron-hard in resolve

(E) full of anger

20. *The debate turned vitriolic, each candidate hurling such caustic, corrosive insults that the moderators lost all control.*

As used in the sentence, 'vitriolic' most nearly means

(A) relating to sulfuric acid

(B) warmly gracious

(C) bitterly caustic

(D) glassy and vitreous

(E) bluntly honest

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness

node: grev.vocab.V16

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Practice

1. *Her haughtiness was unmistakable: she looked down her nose at the staff and never deigned to learn their names.*

   As used in the sentence, 'haughtiness' most nearly means

   (A) arrogant superiority
   (B) great height or loftiness
   (C) unassuming humility
   (D) hastiness and rashness
   (E) quiet aloofness

2. *The duchess received them with icy hauteur, her every gesture proclaiming that she considered*

them beneath her.

As used in the sentence, 'hauteur' most nearly means

(A) warm graciousness
(B) formal politeness
(C) an author or creator
(D) haughty superiority
(E) great altitude or a high place

3. *The supercilious waiter raised a single eyebrow at their order, making plain his contempt for their unrefined taste.*

As used in the sentence, 'supercilious' most nearly means

(A) superficial and shallow
(B) relating to the eyebrow
(C) coolly reserved
(D) contemptuously superior
(E) warmly respectful

4. *With an imperious wave, the director dismissed the crew, expecting instant obedience as if by royal command.*

As used in the sentence, 'imperious' most nearly means

(A) firmly assertive
(B) urgent or pressing
(C) domineering and commanding
(D) meekly deferential
(E) imperial, of an empire

5. *He gave the gift a disdainful glance and set it aside, plainly regarding it as beneath his notice.*

As used in the sentence, 'disdainful' most nearly means

(A) unwilling or disinclined to act
(B) scornfully contemptuous
(C) gratefully appreciative
(D) free of any stain; spotless
(E) mildly uninterested

6. *His overweening ambition knew no limit; convinced he could never fail, he gambled the whole firm on one deal.*

As used in the sentence, 'overweening' most nearly means

(A) boldly enterprising
(B) modest and restrained
(C) overpowering in sheer force
(D) overflowing with generosity
(E) excessively arrogant

7. *Puffed with vainglory, the general paraded his medals daily, boasting of triumphs that owed more to luck than skill.*

As used in the sentence, 'vainglory' most nearly means

(A) genuine humility
(B) earned, well-deserved pride
(C) futility or worthlessness
(D) a glorious military victory
(E) boastful vanity

8. *It was hubris that undid him; so certain the gods could not touch him, he ignored every warning and sailed straight into ruin.*

As used in the sentence, 'hubris' most nearly means

(A) a hub or central point
(B) healthy self-confidence
(C) cautious humility
(D) insolence toward the gods in Greek tragedy
(E) overweening pride

9. *The speaker's pomposity was insufferable, with grand phrases, self-important pauses, and endless reminders of his own importance.*

As used in the sentence, 'pomposity' most nearly means

(A) self-important pretension
(B) plain simplicity
(C) ceremonial splendor
(D) formal dignity
(E) roundness or plumpness

10. *The insolent recruit rolled his eyes at the sergeant and muttered a sarcastic reply, openly contemptuous of all authority.*

As used in the sentence, 'insolent' most nearly means

(A) boldly outspoken

(B) courteously respectful

(C) sun-struck, relating to sunlight

(D) rudely disrespectful

(E) unusual or unaccustomed

11. *She helped, but with such condescension, explaining the obvious slowly as if to a child, that the favor felt like an insult.*

As used in the sentence, 'condescension' most nearly means

(A) genuine respect

(B) patronizing superiority

(C) generous kindness

(D) a gracious stooping to another's level

(E) physical shrinking or compression

12. *It was presumptuous of the intern to rewrite the CEO's speech unasked, overstepping every boundary of his position.*

As used in the sentence, 'presumptuous' most nearly means

(A) boldly initiative-taking

(B) diffidently deferential

(C) resuming after a pause

(D) based on a prior assumption

(E) overstepping proper bounds

13. *He surveyed the newcomers with a lordly air, as though the whole building and everyone in it existed to serve him.*

As used in the sentence, 'lordly' most nearly means

(A) graciously noble

(B) arrogantly superior

(C) belonging to a lord; aristocratic

(D) orderly and tidy

(E) humbly self-effacing

14. *Despite the prize, her modesty held; she deflected all praise onto her team and downplayed her own part.*

As used in the sentence, 'modesty' most nearly means

(A) up-to-date and modern

(B) boastful conceit

(C) humble self-regard

(D) decency in dress or behavior

(E) crippling shyness

15. *His meekness was total: he accepted every rebuke without protest and yielded his place to anyone who asked.*

As used in the sentence, 'meekness' most nearly means

(A) sleekness and smoothness

(B) cowardly fearfulness

(C) faintness of a sound or light

(D) defiant assertiveness

(E) submissive humility

16. *Out of deference to the elders, the young chief stayed silent until every gray head had spoken, yielding to their judgment.*

As used in the sentence, 'deference' most nearly means

(A) a difference of opinion

(B) respectful yielding

(C) open defiance

(D) fearful submission

(E) a postponement or delay

17. *The scientist was strikingly self-effacing, crediting his students for every breakthrough and slipping quietly to the back at ceremonies.*

As used in the sentence, 'self-effacing' most nearly means

(A) shamelessly self-promoting

(B) coldly withdrawn

(C) erasing one's own writing

(D) modestly retiring

(E) facing oneself; introspective

18. *For all his fame the author was unassuming, dressing plainly and chatting with fans as if he were nobody special.*

As used in the sentence, 'unassuming' most nearly means

(A) unassuaged and unsatisfied

(B) timidly shy

(C) pompous and pretentious

(D) modest and unpretentious

(E) making no assumptions

19. *She gave a demure smile and lowered her eyes, too modest and reserved to accept the compliment openly.*

As used in the sentence, 'demure' most nearly means

(A) modestly reserved

(B) mature and adult

(C) coldly standoffish

(D) brashly forward

(E) to object or raise a scruple

20. *Mindful of his lowliness, the servant never presumed to sit at his master's table or to speak unless spoken to.*

As used in the sentence, 'lowliness' most nearly means

(A) loneliness and isolation

(B) quiet gentleness

(C) humble low station

(D) a low position in height or place

(E) lofty eminence

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity

node: grev.vocab.V17

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Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *Her candor was bracing after years of evasive managers: she told the staff exactly why the project had failed, sparing no one, least of all herself.*

As used in the sentence, 'candor' most nearly means

(A) brilliant whiteness
(B) guarded evasiveness
(C) diplomatic tactfulness
(D) frankness; open honesty
(E) sugary sweetness

2. *A forthright critic, she stated her objections plainly and to your face rather than hinting at them behind closed doors.*

As used in the sentence, 'forthright' most nearly means

(A) boldly going into battle
(B) evasive and roundabout
(C) direct and straightforward
(D) rudely blunt
(E) positioned straight ahead

3. *Jurors trusted the veracious witness because her account never bent a single fact, even when honesty embarrassed her own side.*

As used in the sentence, 'veracious' most nearly means

(A) wordy and rambling

(B) habitually lying

(C) merely believable-sounding

(D) truthful and honest

(E) greedy and grasping

4. *Rather than admit his terror, he dissembled, forcing a confident smile to mask the panic churning underneath.*

As used in the sentence, 'dissemble' most nearly means

(A) take apart into pieces

(B) conceal one's true feelings

(C) openly confess one's feelings

(D) mimic another person's manner

(E) wildly overstate one's emotions

5. *The broker's duplicity surfaced when the two clients discovered he had secretly promised each of them the very thing he had promised the other.*

As used in the sentence, 'duplicity' most nearly means

(A) the state of being twofold

(B) plain, simple lying

(C) double-dealing deceit

(D) scrupulous honesty

(E) wasteful duplication of effort

6. *She secured the contract through guile rather than merit, flattering the board to their faces while quietly discrediting her rivals.*

As used in the sentence, 'guile' most nearly means

(A) blunt honesty

(B) harmless cleverness

(C) aggressive force

(D) gnawing remorse

(E) cunning deceit; craftiness

7. *His warmth was pure artifice, a rehearsed performance engineered to disarm anyone who might question the figures.*

As used in the sentence, 'artifice' most nearly means

(A) fine artistic skill

(B) an ancient artifact

(C) cunning trickery; contrivance

(D) genuine sincerity

(E) a clever, neutral device

8. *Investigators tested the witness's veracity by matching each of her claims against the security footage, and every detail held up.*

As used in the sentence, 'veracity' most nearly means

(A) habitual lying

(B) the truth itself, as fact

(C) eagerness to cooperate

(D) a ravenous appetite

(E) truthfulness; accuracy

9. *It was disingenuous of him to feign surprise, since he had drafted the very memo he now claimed never to have seen.*

As used in the sentence, 'disingenuous' most nearly means

(A) candidly sincere

(B) insincere; falsely innocent

(C) boldly deceitful

(D) lacking any cleverness

(E) ungenerous and mean

10. *Asked point-blank whether he had authorized the payment, the official prevaricated, offering vague half-answers to avoid saying yes or no.*

As used in the sentence, 'prevaricate' most nearly means

(A) put off a task by procrastinating

(B) speak evasively to mislead

(C) waver and fluctuate

(D) flatly refuse to speak

(E) answer plainly and directly

11. *His gratitude was unfeigned; the tears came before he could compose a polite face, proving the feeling was entirely genuine.*

As used in the sentence, 'unfeigned' most nearly means

(A) unafraid or undaunted

(B) not yet fastened

(C) openly expressed

(D) sincere and genuine

(E) put on for show

12. *The merger unraveled once auditors exposed the chicanery: shell companies and forged invoices used to conceal the missing millions.*

As used in the sentence, 'chicanery' most nearly means

(A) petty legal quibbling

(B) aboveboard honest dealing

(C) trickery; underhanded deception

(D) clumsy, bungling error

(E) a sharp bend in a racetrack

13. *To get the documents past the guards, she resorted to subterfuge, hiding them inside a hollowed-out book.*

As used in the sentence, 'subterfuge' most nearly means

(A) an open, honest method

(B) a forced, violent break-in

(C) a lame excuse for blame

(D) a deceptive stratagem

(E) a hidden underground chamber

14. *To skip the meeting, he feigned a migraine, pressing his temples and wincing though he felt perfectly fine.*

As used in the sentence, 'feign' most nearly means

(A) genuinely experience

(B) grow weak and dizzy

(C) make a deceptive attacking move

(D) pretend; fake

(E) faintly suggest

15. *The guileful broker buried the penalty clause in fine print, counting on trusting clients never to read what he had cunningly concealed.*

As used in the sentence, 'guileful' most nearly means

(A) merely secretive
(B) cunningly deceitful
(C) frank and above-board
(D) burdened with guilt
(E) graceful in manner

16. *Skilled at concealment, the spy could dissimulate for hours, masking every flicker of recognition when his handler's name was mentioned.*

As used in the sentence, 'dissimulate' most nearly means

(A) hide one's true feelings or intentions
(B) reveal one's intentions openly
(C) invent an entirely false story
(D) make things seem alike
(E) spread apart or scatter

17. *Insisting the auction stay aboveboard, she posted every bid publicly so no one could suspect a secret arrangement.*

As used in the sentence, 'aboveboard' most nearly means

(A) open and honest
(B) on the upper deck
(C) elevated above the water line
(D) secretive and underhanded
(E) generously charitable

18. *Winning by an underhanded trick, he had quietly swapped the ballots when no one was watching, a move as sly as it was dishonest.*

As used in the sentence, 'underhanded' most nearly means

(A) thrown with a low, upward swing
(B) generous and openhanded
(C) secretly deceitful
(D) open and straightforward
(E) understaffed or short-handed

19. *The con artist relied on a familiar wile, posing as a stranded traveler to win sympathy before picking his mark's pocket.*

As used in the sentence, 'wile' most nearly means

(A) an act of plain honesty
(B) a cunning trick or ruse
(C) a bold, forceful demand
(D) a brief period of time
(E) a wild, untamed manner

20. *So guileless was the child that she repeated the family's secret to a stranger, never imagining anyone might use it against them.*

As used in the sentence, 'guileless' most nearly means

(A) lacking any feeling of guilt
(B) without direction or aim
(C) sly and manipulative
(D) free of deceit; innocent
(E) shy and withdrawn

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice

node: grev.vocab.V18

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Practice

1. *The library owed its existence to one donor's munificence: she gave not only the building but a fund large enough to run it for a century.*

As used in the sentence, 'munificence' most nearly means

(A) solid fortification
(B) impressive grandeur of scale
(C) tight-fisted stinginess
(D) great generosity in giving
(E) grudging, minimal charity

2. *His avarice knew no ceiling; even after amassing three fortunes he schemed to seize a struggling widow's last acre.*

As used in the sentence, 'avarice' most nearly means

(A) a taste for rich food
(B) careful thrift with money
(C) extreme greed for wealth
(D) a hunger for fame and status
(E) open-handed generosity

3. *The niggardly innkeeper served portions so small and fires so faint that guests left cold, hungry, and vowing never to return.*

As used in the sentence, 'niggardly' most nearly means

(A) constantly nagging others

(B) lavishly generous

(C) stingy; meanly ungenerous

(D) petty and irritable in temper

(E) modestly frugal by habit

4. *After the harvest the lord distributed largesse to the village, handing out grain, coin, and cloth to every family at his gate.*

As used in the sentence, 'largesse' most nearly means

(A) sheer physical bigness

(B) a strictly earned wage

(C) the widest part of a road

(D) hoarding of every resource

(E) generous giving of gifts

5. *Cupidity drove the executives to strip the pension fund, unable to resist the money even as workers who trusted them faced ruin.*

As used in the sentence, 'cupidity' most nearly means

(A) a reckless love of risk

(B) childish foolishness

(C) romantic desire or passion

(D) selfless charity toward others

(E) greed for money or possessions

6. *Though he sat on a vast fortune, his penurious habits meant he reused tea bags and refused to heat a single room in winter.*

As used in the sentence, 'penurious' most nearly means

(A) excessively stingy

(B) freely lavish with money

(C) thoughtful and reflective

(D) sensibly economical

(E) reduced to utter poverty

7. *His miserly nature showed at the register, where he counted out exact change and begrudged even a small tip to the exhausted server.*

As used in the sentence, 'miserly' most nearly means

(A) full of gloomy misery

(B) warmly generous

(C) hoarding; extremely stingy

(D) wretchedly uncomfortable

(E) quietly modest in taste

8. *The autumn table was bounteous, sagging under more roast, bread, and fruit than the gathered families could possibly finish.*

As used in the sentence, 'bounteous' most nearly means

(A) scarce and meager

(B) springy and elastic

(C) abundant; plentiful and giving

(D) clearly marked at the edges

(E) merely adequate in amount

9. *The empire's rapacity left conquered provinces bare, its armies seizing crops, livestock, and treasure until nothing remained to take.*

As used in the sentence, 'rapacity' most nearly means

(A) grasping greed; plunder

(B) sudden delight or joy

(C) ordinary competitiveness

(D) restrained self-denial

(E) great speed or swiftness

10. *She cast a covetous eye on her neighbor's new car, unable to enjoy her own until she owned something just as fine.*

As used in the sentence, 'covetous' most nearly means

(A) mildly curious about

(B) enviously desirous of others' things

(C) secretive and concealing

(D) snugly sheltered

(E) content with what one has

11. *The clinic ran on the doctor's quiet beneficence; she treated the poor without charge and never once asked for thanks.*

As used in the sentence, 'beneficence' most nearly means

(A) a financial profit or gain

(B) a formal blessing spoken aloud

(C) active kindness; doing good

(D) deliberate cruelty

(E) pleasant good looks

12. *His prodigal spending emptied the inheritance within a year, squandered on parties, cars, and gifts he could never truly afford.*

As used in the sentence, 'prodigal' most nearly means

(A) generously giving to others

(B) wastefully extravagant

(C) abundantly plentiful

(D) astonishingly talented

(E) carefully thrifty

13. *Known for his liberality, the merchant forgave small debts and slipped extra coins to apprentices whenever their families fell ill.*

As used in the sentence, 'liberality' most nearly means

(A) generosity; free giving

(B) mild leniency in judgment

(C) grudging tight-fistedness

(D) the freeing of a prisoner

(E) a left-leaning political stance

14. *Her motives were purely mercenary; she befriended the heiress only for the gifts and loans she could extract from the friendship.*

As used in the sentence, 'mercenary' most nearly means

(A) coldly efficient

(B) warmly selfless

(C) having a variable temper

(D) a paid professional soldier

(E) motivated only by money

15. *The prince's profligate court burned through the treasury on fireworks and feasts while the roads and granaries fell into ruin.*

As used in the sentence, 'profligate' most nearly means

(A) abundantly productive

(B) morally dissolute in conduct

(C) prudently economical

(D) recklessly wasteful

(E) highly skilled and fluent

16. *The hospital was founded on an eleemosynary basis, supported entirely by donations and treating anyone who could not pay.*

As used in the sentence, 'eleemosynary' most nearly means

(A) concerned with the elderly
(B) governed by strict fees
(C) relating to basic elements
(D) run strictly for profit
(E) charitable; relating to alms

17. *The grasping landlord raised the rent the moment tenants signed, always angling for one more fee no matter how tight their budgets.*

As used in the sentence, 'grasping' most nearly means

(A) clumsy with the hands
(B) greedily acquisitive
(C) openly generous
(D) firmly assertive
(E) quick to understand ideas

18. *She was stinting with praise, doling out a single 'adequate' where a warmer mentor would have offered real encouragement.*

As used in the sentence, 'stinting' most nearly means

(A) evenly fair-minded
(B) a fixed term of service
(C) sharply painful
(D) lavishly forthcoming
(E) sparing; giving grudgingly little

19. *An anonymous benefactor paid every student's tuition that year, asking nothing in return but that they help someone else one day.*

As used in the sentence, 'benefactor' most nearly means

(A) a paying customer
(B) a grasping exploiter
(C) a manufacturing plant
(D) the one who receives the aid
(E) a generous giver of aid

20. *The openhanded host waved away all offers to split the bill and pressed leftovers and taxi fare on every departing guest.*

As used in the sentence, 'openhanded' most nearly means

(A) welcoming to strangers

(B) empty-handed

(C) physically strong-gripped

(D) generous; freely giving

(E) tightfisted and grudging

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality

node: grev.vocab.V19

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Practice

1. *The judge was chosen for her probity: in thirty years on the bench, not one bribe, favor, or conflict of interest had ever touched her rulings.*

As used in the sentence, 'probity' most nearly means

(A) deep-seated corruption
(B) a trial period of assessment
(C) sharp mental cleverness
(D) the act of probing or testing
(E) unshakable honesty; integrity

2. *The customs office was a byword for venality; every stamp and signature had its price, and nothing moved without a bribe.*

As used in the sentence, 'venality' most nearly means

(A) incorruptible honesty
(B) a poisonous quality
(C) openness to bribery; corruptibility
(D) a mild, forgivable fault
(E) ordinary greed for wealth

3. *He was stripped of his license for moral turpitude after the court detailed a decade of fraud, perjury, and betrayal of clients.*

As used in the sentence, 'turpitude' most nearly means

(A) spotless virtue
(B) a lapse of poor judgment
(C) murky, cloudy water
(D) wicked depravity; baseness
(E) dullness or sluggishness

4. *Her rectitude was legendary; offered a fortune to overlook the safety violations, she reported every one and resigned rather than stay silent.*

As used in the sentence, 'rectitude' most nearly means

(A) an act of correction

(B) physical straightness of a line

(C) rigid stubbornness

(D) moral uprightness

(E) shameless dishonesty

5. *The witnesses described a scene of such depravity that even hardened investigators struggled to read the report aloud.*

As used in the sentence, 'depravity' most nearly means

(A) severe material poverty

(B) a state of deep sadness

(C) extreme moral corruption

(D) noble goodness

(E) a minor character flaw

6. *The prophet thundered against the city's iniquity, cataloguing the theft, cruelty, and betrayal that had rotted it from within.*

As used in the sentence, 'iniquity' most nearly means

(A) righteous virtue

(B) a lack of equality

(C) gross injustice; wickedness

(D) ordinary unfairness

(E) a state of unfairness in taxes

7. *Her testimony was unimpeachable; every claim was documented, dated, and corroborated, leaving the defense no thread to pull.*

As used in the sentence, 'unimpeachable' most nearly means

(A) easily discredited

(B) unable to be fenced or enclosed

(C) beyond question or reproach

(D) reasonably reliable

(E) not able to be removed from office

8. *The licentious court scandalized the pious countryside with its drunken revels and open disregard for every rule of decency.*

As used in the sentence, 'licentious' most nearly means

(A) strictly self-disciplined

(B) morally unrestrained; dissolute

(C) quick to sue in court

(D) holding an official permit

(E) casually informal

9. *Once a promising scholar, he sank into a dissolute life of gambling dens and midnight excess, his talents drowned in vice.*

As used in the sentence, 'dissolute' most nearly means

(A) merely carefree and idle

(B) broken up or disbanded

(C) unable to be resolved

(D) virtuous and disciplined

(E) morally loose; debauched

10. *The inspector's report documented outright malfeasance: officials had diverted relief funds into private accounts while victims went without aid.*

As used in the sentence, 'malfeasance' most nearly means

(A) honest but careless error

(B) wrongdoing by an official

(C) faithful discharge of duty

(D) a feast or banquet

(E) a defect in physical form

11. *The treasurer's peculation went undetected for years as he quietly siphoned public money into accounts under false names.*

As used in the sentence, 'peculation' most nearly means

(A) risky speculation on markets

(B) careful contemplation

(C) honest stewardship of money

(D) embezzlement of funds

(E) a strange or odd quality

12. *Prosecutors charged him with trying to suborn a witness, offering cash to anyone who would swear to a version of events he knew was false.*

As used in the sentence, 'suborn' most nearly means

(A) to be born beneath one's station

(B) honestly persuade with facts

(C) openly threaten with force

(D) to place in a lower rank

(E) bribe someone to do wrong

13. *Her scruples would not let her keep the overpayment; even though no one would notice, she returned every extra cent.*

As used in the sentence, 'scruples' most nearly means

(A) rough patches or scrapes

(B) practical worries about cost

(C) moral qualms; ethical hesitations

(D) readiness to cheat

(E) tiny units of weight

14. *The old reprobate had cheated every partner, abandoned every promise, and felt not a flicker of shame for any of it.*

As used in the sentence, 'reprobate' most nearly means

(A) an official who verifies wills

(B) one rejected as spiritually lost

(C) an upright, honorable person

(D) an unprincipled scoundrel

(E) a mildly mischievous prankster

15. *The heir squandered the estate on nightly debauchery, a blur of drink and dissipation that left him penniless and unwell.*

As used in the sentence, 'debauchery' most nearly means

(A) the unloading of a ship

(B) harmless festive celebration

(C) excessive indulgence in vice

(D) a heated argument

(E) temperate, sober living

16. *The commissioner proved incorruptible, returning every envelope of cash and reporting each attempt to buy his silence.*

As used in the sentence, 'incorruptible' most nearly means

(A) generally trustworthy

(B) unable to decay physically

(C) easily bought off

(D) free of computer errors

(E) impossible to bribe or corrupt

17. *Behind the firm's polished image lay a sordid history of kickbacks, cover-ups, and betrayed employees.*

As used in the sentence, 'sordid' most nearly means

(A) merely disorganized

(B) morally squalid; base

(C) sad and mournful

(D) clean and honorable

(E) physically dirty and grimy

18. *The venal clerk would alter any record for the right sum, and word spread that no document in his office was truly safe.*

As used in the sentence, 'venal' most nearly means

(A) beyond the reach of bribes

(B) relating to the veins

(C) simply money-hungry

(D) easily pardoned or minor

(E) open to bribery; corruptible

19. *Years of dissipation had wrecked his health and fortune alike, each night's excess leaving less of the promising man he had been.*

As used in the sentence, 'dissipation' most nearly means

(A) occasional harmless leisure

(B) disciplined moderation

(C) a slow drip of liquid

(D) wasteful indulgence in pleasure

(E) the scattering and fading of energy

20. *Critics blamed the empire's fall on the degeneracy of its rulers, whose cruelty and vice had replaced the discipline of earlier generations.*

As used in the sentence, 'degeneracy' most nearly means

(A) ordinary generational change

(B) the loss of biological function

(C) a failure to generate power

(D) moral decline; corruption

(E) steady moral improvement

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence

node: grev.vocab.V20

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Selects a meaning roughly opposite to the one the clue requires.

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sound-alike-or-association.
Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *Her assiduity impressed the lab; she checked every reading twice and stayed late for weeks until the stubborn experiment finally worked.*

As used in the sentence, 'assiduity' most nearly means

(A) careless laziness
(B) sharp sourness or bitterness
(C) assistance given to others
(D) persistent diligence
(E) occasional bursts of energy

2. *A summer of indolence left the garden overgrown; he lounged in the hammock for weeks, unwilling to lift so much as a trowel.*

As used in the sentence, 'indolence' most nearly means

(A) habitual laziness
(B) tireless industry
(C) reluctant obedience
(D) freedom from pain
(E) calm, restful leisure

3. *A heavy lassitude settled over the crew after the fever, leaving them too drained to raise the sails or even speak above a murmur.*

As used in the sentence, 'lassitude' most nearly means

(A) vigorous liveliness
(B) a lasting quality
(C) mild boredom
(D) weary lack of energy
(E) geographic distance north or south

4. *Her assiduous note-taking left nothing out; night after night she reviewed every lecture until the material was mastered.*

As used in the sentence, 'assiduous' most nearly means

(A) lazy and careless

(B) harshly bitter in tone

(C) merely enthusiastic

(D) constantly present or nearby

(E) diligent and hardworking

5. *Pure sloth kept him from applying; the deadline came and went while he told himself, from the couch, that tomorrow would do.*

As used in the sentence, 'sloth' most nearly means

(A) brief afternoon drowsiness

(B) a slow-moving tropical mammal

(C) a muddy, boggy ground

(D) laziness; aversion to effort

(E) restless industriousness

6. *In the afternoon heat a deep torpor gripped the town; shops shuttered, streets emptied, and no one stirred until the sun dropped.*

As used in the sentence, 'torpor' most nearly means

(A) a numbing electric shock

(B) sluggish inactivity

(C) brisk animation

(D) a sudden violent storm

(E) mild absent-mindedness

7. *She accepted the assignment with alacrity, already gathering her notes before the manager had finished describing it.*

As used in the sentence, 'alacrity' most nearly means

(A) bitter sharpness of taste

(B) sharp clarity of thought

(C) calm composure

(D) eager, prompt willingness

(E) reluctant foot-dragging

8. *The zealous volunteer knocked on every door in the district twice, refusing to quit until each household had been reached.*

As used in the sentence, 'zealous' most nearly means

(A) full of playful energy

(B) mildly interested

(C) envious of a rival

(D) fervently devoted; ardent

(E) indifferent and half-hearted

9. *The shiftless roommate let dishes pile for weeks, showing no drive to lift a finger toward any chore.*

As used in the sentence, 'shiftless' most nearly means

(A) simply disorganized

(B) lazy and unmotivated

(C) energetic and enterprising

(D) without a job shift assigned

(E) unable to change gears

10. *The listless students slumped over their desks, too drained by the heat to answer even the easiest question.*

As used in the sentence, 'listless' most nearly means

(A) bursting with vigor

(B) without a written list

(C) lacking energy or interest

(D) leaning to one side

(E) quietly attentive

11. *After the long lunch their conversation grew languid, sentences trailing off as a pleasant drowsiness settled over the table.*

As used in the sentence, 'languid' most nearly means

(A) tense and anxious

(B) long and drawn out in shape

(C) slow and lacking vigor

(D) relating to spoken language

(E) brisk and energetic

12. *The relentless humidity seemed to enervate the whole team, sapping the strength from their limbs until lifting a box felt impossible.*

As used in the sentence, 'enervate' most nearly means

(A) to make anxious or agitated

(B) invigorate and strengthen

(C) drain of energy; weaken

(D) to supply with nerves or feeling

(E) mildly distract

13. *His dilatory replies stalled the whole project; a question that needed an answer by Monday would sit untouched in his inbox for weeks.*

As used in the sentence, 'dilatory' most nearly means

(A) tending to expand or widen

(B) prompt and punctual

(C) carefully deliberate

(D) fond of idle chatter

(E) slow; inclined to delay

14. *The committee's report was largely otiose, restating what everyone already knew and recommending nothing that would ever be acted upon.*

As used in the sentence, 'otiose' most nearly means

(A) genuinely useful and productive

(B) somewhat repetitive

(C) excessively wordy

(D) useless; serving no purpose

(E) relating to the ear

15. *A punctilious host, he arranged the place cards to the millimeter and rehearsed each guest's name so no small courtesy would be missed.*

As used in the sentence, 'punctilious' most nearly means

(A) full of small holes

(B) attentive to fine details

(C) reliably on time

(D) quick to feel offended

(E) sloppy and heedless

16. *She pursued the cause with an ardor that never cooled, rising before dawn to organize and speaking late into every night.*

As used in the sentence, 'ardor' most nearly means

(A) quiet fondness

(B) great physical effort or labor

(C) burning enthusiasm; zeal

(D) listless apathy

(E) hard, tough resilience

17. *The lackadaisical staff let the phones ring and the line grow, shrugging at complaints as though nothing much needed doing.*

As used in the sentence, 'lackadaisical' most nearly means

(A) lacking enough daisies or flowers

(B) lacking care or enthusiasm

(C) keenly conscientious

(D) prone to daydreaming

(E) cheerfully easygoing

18. *The board was criticized as supine, accepting every demand from management without a single objection or condition.*

As used in the sentence, 'supine' most nearly means

(A) lying flat on the back

(B) passively submissive; inert

(C) cautiously deliberate

(D) exceptionally refined

(E) boldly assertive

19. *The lecturer's droning voice made the whole hall somnolent, heads nodding and eyes drifting shut row by row.*

As used in the sentence, 'somnolent' most nearly means

(A) wide awake and alert

(B) drowsy; inducing sleep

(C) walking while asleep

(D) solemn and grave

(E) mildly bored

20. *The industrious apprentice arrived first and left last, filling every spare minute by cleaning tools or studying the master's notes.*

As used in the sentence, 'industrious' most nearly means

(A) relating to factories and industry

(B) chronically idle

(C) cleverly inventive

(D) hardworking; diligent

(E) merely busy-looking

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability

node: grev.vocab.V21

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Practice

1. *The talks collapsed over the union's intransigence; it would not shift a single clause, and no counteroffer could move it an inch.*

As used in the sentence, 'intransigence' most nearly means

(A) firm but flexible resolve
(B) lack of clear communication
(C) a refusal to travel or move
(D) easy willingness to bend
(E) refusal to compromise

2. *The new pony proved wonderfully tractable, following the lead rope and standing still for the saddle without the least fuss.*

As used in the sentence, 'tractable' most nearly means

(A) providing good grip or traction
(B) physically strong and sturdy
(C) able to be traced or tracked
(D) wild and unmanageable
(E) easily managed; obedient

3. *Too tired to keep arguing, she finally acquiesced, agreeing to the plan she had resisted for weeks just to end the dispute.*

As used in the sentence, 'acquiesce' most nearly means

(A) agree reluctantly; give in
(B) enthusiastically endorse
(C) to acquire or obtain
(D) firmly refuse
(E) to become quiet or calm

4. *The creditor remained obdurate, unmoved by the family's pleas and refusing to grant even a single week's extension.*

As used in the sentence, 'obdurate' most nearly means

(A) obscure and hard to see

(B) readily sympathetic

(C) physically hard and durable

(D) mildly hesitant

(E) stubbornly unyielding

5. *The recalcitrant recruit ignored every order, argued with each drill, and had to be disciplined twice in his first week.*

As used in the sentence, 'recalcitrant' most nearly means

(A) meekly obedient

(B) hardened by heat like lime

(C) defiantly resistant to authority

(D) prone to repeated calculation

(E) quietly reluctant

6. *The docile students followed instructions to the letter, never questioning the assignment or straying from the method they were shown.*

As used in the sentence, 'docile' most nearly means

(A) eager and quick to learn

(B) rebellious and defiant

(C) shy and reserved

(D) situated at a dock or harbor

(E) easily led; submissive

7. *The young reed was pliant, bending flat in the storm and springing upright again while stiffer stalks around it snapped.*

As used in the sentence, 'pliant' most nearly means

(A) brittle and fragile

(B) rigid and unbending

(C) layered or folded in plies

(D) diligently applied to a task

(E) easily bent; flexible

8. *The dispute proved intractable; after three mediators and two years, the parties were no closer to any agreement than when they began.*

As used in the sentence, 'intractable' most nearly means

(A) unable to be traced back

(B) moderately difficult

(C) quickly and easily settled

(D) impossible to manage or resolve

(E) lacking traction on the road

9. *The refractory patient refused every treatment the doctors proposed, discharging himself twice against all medical advice.*

As used in the sentence, 'refractory' most nearly means

(A) mildly uncertain

(B) cooperative and compliant

(C) resistant to high heat, as a lining

(D) bending light like a lens

(E) stubbornly disobedient; unruly

10. *Surprisingly amenable to the change, she agreed to move the deadline the moment it was suggested and even offered to help replan.*

As used in the sentence, 'amenable' most nearly means

(A) open and agreeable; willing

(B) pleasant and mild in climate

(C) cautiously neutral

(D) flatly opposed

(E) subject to being answered for

11. *The compliant supplier changed its specifications every time the client asked, never once pushing back on a single request.*

As used in the sentence, 'compliant' most nearly means

(A) full of complaints

(B) defiantly uncooperative

(C) readily yielding to others

(D) merely polite in manner

(E) meeting a legal standard or rule

12. *A pertinacious researcher, she clung to her hypothesis through a hundred failed trials, refusing to abandon it until the data finally turned.*

As used in the sentence, 'pertinacious' most nearly means

(A) stubbornly persistent

(B) casually persistent

(C) boldly impertinent or rude

(D) clearly relevant to the matter

(E) quick to give up

13. *Held in contempt for his contumacious behavior, the defendant openly defied the judge's orders and refused to answer a single question.*

As used in the sentence, 'contumacious' most nearly means

(A) respectfully obedient

(B) mildly argumentative

(C) full of scornful insults

(D) willfully defiant of authority

(E) spreading by contact, as a disease

14. *The biddable assistant did whatever she was told at once, rearranging her whole day the moment a new instruction arrived.*

As used in the sentence, 'biddable' most nearly means

(A) eager and hardworking

(B) able to be folded away

(C) available for purchase at auction

(D) headstrong and willful

(E) obedient; easily directed

15. *His adamantine refusal never softened; through every plea and bribe he would not budge an inch.*

As used in the sentence, 'adamantine' most nearly means

(A) made of diamond or hard mineral

(B) easily persuaded

(C) adamant only briefly

(D) unyielding and inflexible

(E) sternly disapproving

16. *So complaisant was the new hire that he agreed to every request, eager to oblige whatever anyone asked.*

As used in the sentence, 'complaisant' most nearly means

(A) eager to please
(B) smugly self-satisfied
(C) defiant and uncooperative
(D) full of complaints
(E) polite merely in words

17. *Outnumbered and out of supplies, the garrison finally capitulated, laying down its arms and accepting every term the besiegers imposed.*

As used in the sentence, 'capitulate' most nearly means

(A) negotiate a compromise
(B) surrender; give in completely
(C) resist to the last
(D) to summarize under headings
(E) to invest fresh money

18. *He was downright mulish about the route, planting his feet and refusing to try the shortcut no matter how the others reasoned with him.*

As used in the sentence, 'mulish' most nearly means

(A) quietly hesitant
(B) easily persuaded
(C) resembling a mule in appearance
(D) soft and slushy
(E) stubborn; obstinate

19. *She was adamant that the schedule would not change, repeating her refusal in the same flat tone no matter how the others begged.*

As used in the sentence, 'adamant' most nearly means

(A) readily persuadable
(B) a legendary unbreakable stone
(C) the first man; a namesake
(D) somewhat reluctant
(E) utterly unyielding; firm

20. *The willful toddler insisted on doing everything herself, throwing the spoon aside and refusing all help with fierce determination.*

As used in the sentence, 'willful' most nearly means

(A) meekly compliant

(B) mildly assertive

(C) generously ready to give

(D) headstrong; bent on one's own way

(E) done on purpose, as an act

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly

node: grev.vocab.V22

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Practice

1. *Her sagacity in negotiations was legendary; she could read a room, anticipate every counter-offer, and choose exactly the right moment to press her advantage.*

As used in the sentence, 'sagacity' most nearly means

(A) reckless foolishness
(B) vast book learning
(C) a keen sense of smell in animals
(D) keen practical wisdom
(E) sacred solemnity

2. *His business acumen turned a failing corner shop into a national chain within a decade, thanks to shrewd pricing and uncanny timing.*

As used in the sentence, 'acumen' most nearly means

(A) sharp practical insight
(B) a sharp physical point or tip
(C) chronic poor judgment
(D) broad general knowledge
(E) accumulated wealth

3. *An astute observer, she noticed the one tiny inconsistency in his alibi that everyone else had overlooked.*

As used in the sentence, 'astute' most nearly means

(A) cunningly deceitful
(B) shrewdly perceptive
(C) dull and unperceptive
(D) highly educated
(E) physically agile

4. *A shrewd investor, he sold his shares the week before the market crashed, having sensed a downturn no one else saw coming.*

As used in the sentence, 'shrewd' most nearly means

(A) naively trusting

(B) intellectually brilliant

(C) sharp in practical judgment

(D) loudly quarrelsome

(E) biting or piercingly cold

5. *The judicious editor cut only what was necessary, weighing each deletion against the whole so the argument stayed intact.*

As used in the sentence, 'judicious' most nearly means

(A) sternly critical

(B) rash and careless

(C) strictly fair-minded

(D) relating to courts of law

(E) showing sound judgment

6. *Given the delicate diplomacy involved, she remained circumspect, weighing every word before she spoke lest she give offense.*

As used in the sentence, 'circumspect' most nearly means

(A) shy and reserved

(B) cautious and watchful

(C) rashly outspoken

(D) encircling or drawn in a circle

(E) under suspicion

7. *It takes real discernment to tell a masterful forgery from the original; only a trained eye catches the subtle wrongness of the brushwork.*

As used in the sentence, 'discernment' most nearly means

(A) indiscriminate acceptance

(B) the act of merely making something out

(C) sharp eyesight

(D) harsh disapproval

(E) keen judgment of quality

8. *Prudence dictated that they keep six months' savings in reserve rather than gamble it all on a single risky venture.*

As used in the sentence, 'prudence' most nearly means

(A) extreme stinginess

(B) reckless extravagance

(C) a woman's given name

(D) prudish modesty

(E) careful good sense

9. *The novel imagines a sapient octopus that reasons, plans, and reflects on its own existence much as we do.*

As used in the sentence, 'sapient' most nearly means

(A) highly trained

(B) wise and intelligent

(C) mindless and instinct-driven

(D) sap-producing

(E) having flavor; tasteable

10. *A percipient critic, she grasped the film's hidden theme on first viewing, long before others pieced it together.*

As used in the sentence, 'percipient' most nearly means

(A) sharply precise

(B) widely knowledgeable

(C) obtuse and unaware

(D) keenly perceptive

(E) an observer or witness

11. *The canny shopkeeper always seemed to know just how much a customer would pay, adjusting his patter to close the sale.*

As used in the sentence, 'canny' most nearly means

(A) book-smart

(B) hopelessly naive

(C) eerily strange

(D) shrewd and clever

(E) cozy or snug

12. *The committee's plan collapsed under its own fatuity: no budget, no timeline, and no grasp of the obvious obstacles.*

As used in the sentence, 'fatuity' most nearly means

(A) an illusory flickering light
(B) shrewd practicality
(C) deadliness or fatalness
(D) simple ignorance
(E) smug foolishness

13. *It was sheer imprudence to invest their entire pension in one volatile stock, and they lost nearly everything.*

As used in the sentence, 'imprudence' most nearly means

(A) careful foresight
(B) cheeky insolence
(C) mere boldness
(D) unwise recklessness
(E) immodesty or indecency

14. *His injudicious remark to the press, made without thinking, undid months of careful negotiation in a single afternoon.*

As used in the sentence, 'injudicious' most nearly means

(A) showing poor judgment
(B) unfair or biased
(C) not legally binding
(D) hesitant and indecisive
(E) tactful and well-considered

15. *He was so obtuse that he missed the insult entirely, smiling and thanking the man who had just mocked him.*

As used in the sentence, 'obtuse' most nearly means

(A) slow to understand
(B) quick-witted
(C) willfully stubborn
(D) abrasively rude
(E) greater than a right angle

16. *The plan was so asinine that even its own author laughed when he reread it the next morning.*

As used in the sentence, 'asinine' most nearly means

(A) utterly stupid
(B) mildly silly
(C) brilliantly clever
(D) acidic or caustic
(E) of or like a donkey

17. *Her speech was vacuous, full of applause lines but empty of a single concrete idea.*

As used in the sentence, 'vacuous' most nearly means

(A) empty of meaning
(B) boringly dull
(C) forming a vacuum or empty space
(D) rich with substance
(E) casually vacationing

18. *The senator's puerile name-calling during the debate embarrassed even his supporters, who had expected an adult argument.*

As used in the sentence, 'puerile' most nearly means

(A) childishly immature
(B) relating to boyhood
(C) pure or unspoiled
(D) maturely dignified
(E) playfully innocent

19. *Their feckless manager made grand promises but never followed through, letting every project drift into failure.*

As used in the sentence, 'feckless' most nearly means

(A) merely lazy
(B) poverty-stricken
(C) ineffective and irresponsible
(D) rash and heedless
(E) capable and dependable

20. *By the third hour of the lecture a dull hebetude had settled over the room; eyes glazed and no one could form a thought.*

As used in the sentence, 'hebetude' most nearly means

(A) habitual routine

(B) bluntness of a blade

(C) sharp alertness

(D) mental dullness or lethargy

(E) physical exhaustion

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance

node: grev.vocab.V23

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Practice

1. *The erudite footnotes cited sources in six languages, ranging from medieval Latin chronicles to obscure modern monographs.*

As used in the sentence, 'erudite' most nearly means

(A) unschooled and ignorant
(B) deeply learned
(C) pretentiously showy
(D) rude or abrasive
(E) cleverly quick-witted

2. *His erudition was staggering; he could trace a single word's history across three millennia without consulting a note.*

As used in the sentence, 'erudition' most nearly means

(A) natural cleverness
(B) profound ignorance
(C) wandering or roaming
(D) the act of instructing others
(E) extensive scholarly knowledge

3. *A true polymath, Hildegard composed music, wrote treatises on medicine, and sketched original cosmological diagrams.*

As used in the sentence, 'polymath' most nearly means

(A) a many-sided crystal or figure
(B) a parrot-like mimic
(C) person skilled in many disciplines
(D) a narrow specialist
(E) a gifted mathematician

4. *Never having attended university, the autodidact taught himself Greek, calculus, and cabinet-making entirely from library books.*

As used in the sentence, 'autodidact' most nearly means

(A) a private tutor
(B) a formally schooled pupil
(C) a self-taught person
(D) an automated teaching machine
(E) a dictatorial ruler

5. *Only a true cognoscente could tell the two vintages apart; his years of deep study let him name the estate from a single sip.*

As used in the sentence, 'cognoscente' most nearly means

(A) a casual hobbyist
(B) a knowledgeable expert
(C) an ignorant novice
(D) a recognizable public figure
(E) a scented or fragrant thing

6. *Though brilliant with his hands, the unlettered craftsman had never learned to read and knew nothing of books.*

As used in the sentence, 'unlettered' most nearly means

(A) simply shy or reserved
(B) unfettered and free
(C) having no engraved lettering
(D) uneducated and illiterate
(E) widely learned and bookish

7. *Her films are famously cerebral, appealing to the intellect with dense puzzles rather than to the emotions.*

As used in the sentence, 'cerebral' most nearly means

(A) relating to the brain as an organ
(B) intellectual rather than emotional
(C) ceremonial or solemn
(D) coldly unfeeling
(E) purely emotional

8. *An inquisitive child, she took apart every clock in the house just to see what made it tick.*

As used in the sentence, 'inquisitive' most nearly means

(A) eagerly curious
(B) nosily intrusive

(C) wholly incurious

(D) relating to an official inquiry

(E) greedy to acquire possessions

9. *A lifelong philomath, he enrolled in a new evening course every term purely for the joy of learning something fresh.*

As used in the sentence, 'philomath' most nearly means

(A) a merely dutiful student

(B) a charitable philanthropist

(C) a lover of learning

(D) one who scorns study

(E) a mathematics enthusiast

10. *His encyclopedic memory for baseball let him recite every World Series score, roster, and batting average since 1903.*

As used in the sentence, 'encyclopedic' most nearly means

(A) cyclical or recurring

(B) arranged like a reference book

(C) spotty and fragmentary

(D) comprehensive in knowledge

(E) merely retentive

11. *The bibliophile's home had no room left for furniture; first editions and rare bindings filled every shelf and stairwell.*

As used in the sentence, 'bibliophile' most nearly means

(A) a Bible scholar

(B) a merely diligent reader

(C) a rare-book dealer

(D) a lover of books

(E) one indifferent to books

12. *He decried the philistinism of an age that funded stadiums lavishly while letting its libraries and orchestras starve.*

As used in the sentence, 'philistinism' most nearly means

(A) stamp collecting

(B) the ways of the ancient Philistine people

(C) deep cultural refinement

(D) plain simplicity

(E) hostility or indifference to culture

13. *Reformers hoped that public schooling would lift a benighted population out of superstition and into the light of reason.*

As used in the sentence, 'benighted' most nearly means

(A) honored with knighthood

(B) overtaken by nightfall

(C) enlightened and informed

(D) impoverished

(E) intellectually unenlightened

14. *The travelogue condescendingly attributed the villagers' benightedness to their never having seen a printed book.*

As used in the sentence, 'benightedness' most nearly means

(A) gloominess of mood

(B) broad enlightenment

(C) nocturnal habit

(D) the condition of being stranded after dark

(E) a state of ignorance

15. *Far from admitting his nescience, the pundit spoke with total confidence on a subject he had never studied.*

As used in the sentence, 'nescience' most nearly means

(A) foreknowledge of events

(B) the doctrine that the divine is unknowable

(C) expert mastery

(D) innocent naivety

(E) lack of knowledge

16. *To the philistine in the back row, the abstract canvas was 'just paint splatters' unworthy of a museum.*

As used in the sentence, 'philistine' most nearly means

(A) a devout religious believer

(B) a person indifferent to culture

(C) a member of the ancient Philistine nation

(D) a cultured aesthete

(E) an uneducated laborer

17. *The nouveau-riche vulgarian bought the most expensive painting at auction not to admire it but to boast of its price.*

As used in the sentence, 'vulgarian' most nearly means

(A) a crass, tasteless person
(B) a speaker of the common tongue
(C) a plainly rude boor
(D) a person of refined taste
(E) a Bulgarian

18. *His parochial outlook could not conceive that customs beyond his own small town might be equally valid.*

As used in the sentence, 'parochial' most nearly means

(A) mocking or parodic
(B) broad and cosmopolitan
(C) relating to a church parish
(D) stubbornly opinionated
(E) narrowly provincial

19. *Decades of isolation had made the community insular, suspicious of any idea or visitor from outside its valley.*

As used in the sentence, 'insular' most nearly means

(A) insultingly rude
(B) merely shy
(C) open and outward-looking
(D) narrow and closed-off
(E) of or like an island

20. *Though untutored in formal theory, the fisherman could predict the weather better than any meteorologist.*

As used in the sentence, 'untutored' most nearly means

(A) expertly trained
(B) unintelligent
(C) lacking formal instruction
(D) unspoken or unuttered
(E) unsupervised or unguided

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion

node: grev.vocab.V24

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sound-alike-or-association.
Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *The detective's perspicacity was uncanny; from a scuffed shoe and a train ticket she reconstructed the suspect's entire day.*

As used in the sentence, 'perspicacity' most nearly means

(A) keenness of insight
(B) dull-wittedness
(C) profuse sweating
(D) clearness or transparency of a substance
(E) broad stored knowledge

2. *A perspicacious reader, he caught the author's buried irony that most took at face value.*

As used in the sentence, 'perspicacious' most nearly means

(A) sharply discerning
(B) imperceptive
(C) widely well-read
(D) perspiring heavily
(E) clearly expressed and easy to follow

3. *Even at ninety she retained perfect lucidity, explaining quantum ideas with a clarity her students envied.*

As used in the sentence, 'lucidity' most nearly means

(A) awareness within a dream
(B) a bright, shining quality
(C) brilliance of intellect
(D) muddled confusion
(E) clearness of mind or expression

4. *A discerning reader notices subtle shifts in tone that a careless one skims right past, catching distinctions others miss.*

As used in the sentence, 'discerning' most nearly means

(A) merely well-read
(B) keenly perceptive
(C) separating physically, as sifting grain
(D) harshly judgmental of others
(E) easily fooled and undiscriminating

5. *Where panicked colleagues saw only chaos, she remained clear-sighted, grasping exactly what was happening and why.*

As used in the sentence, 'clear-sighted' most nearly means

(A) having sharp visual acuity
(B) far-seeing about the distant future
(C) merely optimistic about outcomes
(D) confused and unable to make sense of things
(E) seeing a situation clearly

6. *His penetrating questions cut straight to the flaw in the argument that everyone else had overlooked.*

As used in the sentence, 'penetrating' most nearly means

(A) dull and superficial
(B) sharply insightful
(C) physically piercing a surface
(D) unpleasantly loud, as a shriek
(E) merely persistent

7. *After the concussion he was so addled he could not remember which day it was or how he had gotten home.*

As used in the sentence, 'addled' most nearly means

(A) sharp and fully alert
(B) merely tired
(C) agitated and angry
(D) rotten or spoiled, as an egg
(E) mentally muddled

8. *Two hours of sleep left her muzzy all morning, her thoughts blurred and slow as if wrapped in cotton.*

As used in the sentence, 'muzzy' most nearly means

(A) hazy and dull-witted
(B) affectionate and cuddly
(C) slightly forgetful
(D) fuzzy in outline, as a blurred photo
(E) crisp and clear-headed

9. *Her explanation was crystalline: every term defined, every link visible, not a trace of the fog that clouds most lectures.*

As used in the sentence, 'crystalline' most nearly means

(A) hopelessly obscure

(B) Christian or churchly

(C) coldly precise

(D) made of or like crystals

(E) perfectly clear

10. *The essay's luminous logic illuminated a subject usually left in shadow, making the once-baffling theory suddenly obvious.*

As used in the sentence, 'luminous' most nearly means

(A) bulky or voluminous

(B) cheerful or radiant in mood

(C) obscuring and dim

(D) brilliantly clear

(E) emitting or reflecting light

11. *The proposal foundered on its own nebulousness; no one could say what, concretely, it was actually asking anyone to do.*

As used in the sentence, 'nebulousness' most nearly means

(A) complexity

(B) resemblance to an astronomical nebula

(C) nervousness

(D) sharp definiteness

(E) vagueness or lack of definition

12. *The convoluted tax form left even the accountant befuddled, unable to tell which line applied to him.*

As used in the sentence, 'befuddled' most nearly means

(A) mildly annoyed

(B) thoroughly confused

(C) drunk to the point of stupor

(D) deliberately deceived by another

(E) perfectly clear about the task

13. *The tax form's opacity defeated even accountants; its sentences seemed designed to be impossible to parse.*

As used in the sentence, 'opacity' most nearly means

(A) the quality of blocking light

(B) impossibility of being understood

(C) sheer length

(D) transparent clarity

(E) lavish opulence

14. *He wore a bemused expression, plainly puzzled and lost in thought, as though the instructions made no sense to him.*

As used in the sentence, 'bemused' most nearly means

(A) mildly amused

(B) musical or given to music

(C) puzzled and bewildered

(D) clear and certain of his footing

(E) deeply absorbed in pleasant reverie

15. *The committee's goals were so amorphous that every member described them differently, and none could draw a firm boundary around them.*

As used in the sentence, 'amorphous' most nearly means

(A) loving or amorous

(B) clearly delineated

(C) flexible by design

(D) shapeless and undefined

(E) non-crystalline in structure

16. *Jet-lagged and discombobulated, she boarded the wrong train, her sense of time and place completely scrambled.*

As used in the sentence, 'discombobulated' most nearly means

(A) composed and well-oriented

(B) energetic and restless

(C) physically dismantled into parts

(D) disoriented and confused

(E) merely embarrassed

17. *His turbid explanation stirred up more confusion than it settled, clouding a simple point with needless qualifications.*

As used in the sentence, 'turbid' most nearly means

(A) confused and muddled

(B) turbulent or stormy

(C) clear and settled

(D) cloudy with sediment

(E) long-winded

18. *The manifesto's woolly thinking, big feelings, no definitions, and conclusions that did not follow, impressed no careful reader.*

As used in the sentence, 'woolly' most nearly means

(A) covered with or made of wool

(B) vague and muddled

(C) rigorously precise

(D) crafty or wily

(E) gentle or soft

19. *Grief befogged his judgment, and for weeks he could not think through even simple decisions with any clarity.*

As used in the sentence, 'befogged' most nearly means

(A) slightly distracted

(B) sharpened and made lucid

(C) clouded and obscured

(D) chilled and damp

(E) hidden by literal mist or haze

20. *The instructions were so muddled, steps out of order and terms undefined, that assembling the shelf took twice as long as it should.*

As used in the sentence, 'muddled' most nearly means

(A) clearly ordered

(B) crushed or mashed

(C) incomplete

(D) confused and jumbled

(E) mediocre or middling

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation

node: grev.vocab.V25

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Practice

1. *A born iconoclast, she overturned every convention her field held sacred, discarding methods others had followed unquestioned for a century.*

As used in the sentence, 'iconoclast' most nearly means

(A) a celebrated, iconic figure
(B) a mere rebel against authority
(C) a staunch traditionalist
(D) an attacker of tradition
(E) a destroyer of religious images

2. *His iconoclastic designs mocked the reverent styles of his teachers, replacing their marble solemnity with plastic and neon.*

As used in the sentence, 'iconoclastic' most nearly means

(A) reverently conventional
(B) merely eccentric
(C) attacking cherished conventions
(D) image-destroying in a religious sense
(E) iconic or emblematic

3. *That seminal paper founded an entire discipline; every later study traces its methods back to its few original pages.*

As used in the sentence, 'seminal' most nearly means

(A) relating to seed or reproduction
(B) very famous
(C) highly original and influential
(D) resembling a seminar
(E) derivative and forgettable

4. *The avant-garde troupe abandoned plot and dialogue entirely, staging experiments no established theater would have dared.*

As used in the sentence, 'avant-garde' most nearly means

(A) merely fashionable
(B) a garden or courtyard
(C) the vanguard of an army
(D) boldly ahead of convention
(E) conventional and traditional

5. *With inventive flair he solved the shortage by repurposing scrap that everyone else had thrown away.*

As used in the sentence, 'inventive' most nearly means

(A) unimaginative
(B) fabricated or made up
(C) creatively original
(D) attentive or watchful
(E) hardworking

6. *The engineers' ingenuity turned a broken pump and a garden hose into a working irrigation system overnight.*

As used in the sentence, 'ingenuity' most nearly means

(A) clever inventiveness
(B) frankness or innocence
(C) hapless incompetence
(D) sheer effort
(E) naive innocence

7. *The treaty was unprecedented; no two nations had ever before agreed to share sovereignty over a river in quite this way.*

As used in the sentence, 'unprecedented' most nearly means

(A) lacking a president
(B) long-established
(C) extremely rare
(D) never done before
(E) not preceded by a legal ruling

8. *Her novel approach to the old puzzle, reversing the question entirely, had simply never occurred to anyone before.*

As used in the sentence, 'novel' most nearly means

(A) a long work of prose fiction
(B) stale and familiar
(C) notable or noteworthy
(D) new and original
(E) strange

9. *The composer's style is sui generis: it fits no school, resembles no predecessor, and has never been convincingly imitated.*

As used in the sentence, 'sui generis' most nearly means

(A) highly unusual

(B) utterly typical

(C) self-generating or self-produced

(D) unique, in a class of its own

(E) a biological genus

10. *The screenplay leaned on every hackneyed line in the genre, 'we're not so different, you and I,' that audiences can now recite in their sleep.*

As used in the sentence, 'hackneyed' most nearly means

(A) strikingly fresh

(B) hacked into or broken open

(C) overused to the point of staleness

(D) simplistic

(E) worn out like an old hired horse

11. *Critics dismissed the band's derivative sound, noting that every riff seemed lifted note-for-note from acts a decade older.*

As used in the sentence, 'derivative' most nearly means

(A) imitative and unoriginal

(B) strikingly original

(C) old-fashioned

(D) a financial instrument or a rate of change

(E) mocking or derisive

12. *'Follow your dreams' struck the graduates as trite, a slogan so often repeated it had lost any power to move them.*

As used in the sentence, 'trite' most nearly means

(A) remorseful or contrite

(B) fresh and stirring

(C) dull from overuse

(D) worn thin by rubbing

(E) false

13. *The film's dialogue was so banal that every exchange felt like small talk overheard in an elevator.*

As used in the sentence, 'banal' most nearly means

(A) tropical, like a banana
(B) fresh and striking
(C) vulgar or coarse
(D) open to all tenants of a feudal lord
(E) dull and commonplace

14. *His platitudinous commencement address strung together tired maxims, 'reach for the stars,' 'be yourself,' without a single original thought.*

As used in the sentence, 'platitudinous' most nearly means

(A) full of fresh insight
(B) physically flat or level
(C) relating to latitude or geography
(D) full of stale truisms
(E) long-winded

15. *The hidebound faculty rejected the new method out of hand, refusing to imagine that the way things had always been done might be improved.*

As used in the sentence, 'hidebound' most nearly means

(A) merely cautious
(B) rigidly conventional
(C) open to innovation
(D) confined to the house
(E) having skin clinging tightly to the bones

16. *Critics dismissed the mimetic sequel as a shot-for-shot copy that added nothing the original had not already done.*

As used in the sentence, 'mimetic' most nearly means

(A) relating to genetic mutation
(B) boldly original
(C) imitative, copying
(D) vividly expressive
(E) magnetic and attractive

17. *The younger poets were mere epigones, echoing their master's cadences so faithfully that not one developed a voice of his own.*

As used in the sentence, 'epigone' most nearly means

(A) a devoted student

(B) an imitative follower

(C) a witty saying or epigram

(D) an original founder

(E) a son of the Seven against Thebes

18. *The novel is a knowing pastiche, stitching together the styles of a dozen earlier authors rather than forging one of its own.*

As used in the sentence, 'pastiche' most nearly means

(A) an imitative patchwork of styles

(B) a pistachio or pastry

(C) a parody

(D) a thick paste or blend

(E) a wholly original creation

19. *Every episode was formulaic: same setup, same twist, same tidy ending, so that after three you could predict the fourth exactly.*

As used in the sentence, 'formulaic' most nearly means

(A) formal or ceremonious

(B) unpredictably inventive

(C) expressed as a mathematical formula

(D) repetitive

(E) following a predictable set pattern

20. *The apprentice's early canvases were frankly imitative, copying his teacher's palette and brushwork before he found any style of his own.*

As used in the sentence, 'imitative' most nearly means

(A) copying rather than original

(B) mimicking natural sounds

(C) flattering

(D) boldly original

(E) irritating or annoying

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity

node: grev.vocab.V26

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Practice

1. *She listened with open incredulity, one eyebrow raised, plainly unwilling to believe a word of his tall tale.*

   As used in the sentence, 'incredulity' most nearly means

   (A) ready acceptance

(B) the wondrous quality of a tale

(C) shock or amazement

(D) unwillingness to believe

(E) impiety or lack of religious faith

2. *The jurors looked incredulous as the witness changed his story for the third time, exchanging glances that said they no longer believed him.*

As used in the sentence, 'incredulous' most nearly means

(A) confused

(B) trustingly convinced

(C) amazing or incredible

(D) unwilling to believe

(E) unbelieving in matters of faith

3. *A lifelong skeptic, he refused to accept the miracle cure until he had seen the controlled trials for himself.*

As used in the sentence, 'skeptic' most nearly means

(A) an infected or septic condition

(B) an uncritical believer

(C) a cynic

(D) an adherent of the ancient Skeptic school

(E) a habitual doubter

4. *A note of dubiety crept into her voice; she clearly half-doubted the very excuse she was offering.*

As used in the sentence, 'dubiety' most nearly means

(A) a doubtful or questionable matter

(B) a duty or obligation

(C) outright denial

(D) firm certainty

(E) a feeling of doubt

5. *His pyrrhonism went to an extreme: he doubted that anything at all could be known for certain, suspending judgment on every claim.*

As used in the sentence, 'pyrrhonism' most nearly means

(A) occasional mild uncertainty

(B) radical philosophical skepticism

(C) blind, total faith

(D) fascination with fire and pyrotechnics

(E) a hollow, costly victory

6. *Burned once before, she was mistrustful of the new partner's promises and demanded every figure be verified before she signed.*

As used in the sentence, 'mistrustful' most nearly means

(A) distrustful and doubting

(B) misty and unclear

(C) regretful about a past mistake

(D) openly hostile

(E) readily trusting

7. *After the scam, locals grew leery of any stranger offering easy money, suspecting a trick behind every promise.*

As used in the sentence, 'leery' most nearly means

(A) blurred or bleary of sight

(B) hostile

(C) warily suspicious

(D) openly trusting

(E) casting a sly, lustful glance

8. *She gave the salesman a quizzical look, one eyebrow raised in open doubt that his miracle cure could possibly work.*

As used in the sentence, 'quizzical' most nearly means

(A) relating to a school quiz

(B) wholly convinced

(C) playfully teasing

(D) skeptical and questioning

(E) dizzy or lightheaded

9. *Too cynical to believe any politician meant what he said, she assumed a hidden self-interest behind every promise.*

As used in the sentence, 'cynical' most nearly means

(A) pessimistic

(B) warmly trusting

(C) of the ancient Cynic philosophers

(D) coldly clinical

(E) distrustful of others' motives

10. *Years of betrayal had given him a jaundiced view of charity, so that he saw a scam in even the most sincere appeal.*

As used in the sentence, 'jaundiced' most nearly means

(A) lively and carefree
(B) momentarily angry
(C) generously open-minded
(D) prejudiced by bitterness and distrust
(E) yellowed from the disease jaundice

11. *Despite signing the contract, she felt a nagging misgiving that the deal was not what it appeared to be.*

As used in the sentence, 'misgiving' most nearly means

(A) a feeling of doubt or unease
(B) regret
(C) a stingy or grudging act of giving
(D) a misdeed or wrongdoing
(E) complete confidence

12. *Con artists prey on credulity, counting on victims to swallow an outlandish story without asking a single hard question.*

As used in the sentence, 'credulity' most nearly means

(A) honesty
(B) hard-headed skepticism
(C) readiness to believe too easily
(D) financial creditworthiness
(E) believability or credibility

13. *So credulous was the young heir that he handed his fortune to the first swindler with a confident smile and a fake prospectus.*

As used in the sentence, 'credulous' most nearly means

(A) credentialed or qualified
(B) creditable and trustworthy
(C) too ready to believe
(D) hard to convince
(E) generous

14. *The gullible recruit believed the veterans' claim that the mess hall served lobster on Sundays, and lined up eagerly all morning.*

As used in the sentence, 'gullible' most nearly means

(A) hard to fool
(B) easily deceived
(C) of or like a gull, the seabird
(D) guileless and without cunning
(E) obedient

15. *The scam preyed on the gullibility of investors who swallowed the impossible returns whole, believing every word without asking a single hard question.*

As used in the sentence, 'gullibility' most nearly means

(A) simple open-mindedness
(B) guilt over a bad choice
(C) hardened skepticism
(D) readiness to be duped
(E) greedy appetite for gain

16. *In her naivety she signed the loan without reading it, trusting the lender's smile more than the fine print.*

As used in the sentence, 'naivety' most nearly means

(A) a nativity or birth scene
(B) general foolishness
(C) innocent lack of experience
(D) untutored simplicity in art
(E) shrewd worldliness

17. *Too credent by half, the boy accepted every tall tale his uncle spun as literal, unquestioned truth.*

As used in the sentence, 'credent' most nearly means

(A) recently graduated with credentials
(B) readily believing, credulous
(C) a small decorative shelf
(D) stubbornly doubting
(E) worthy of belief

18. *His artless confession, blurted without a thought for how it looked, convinced the jury precisely because it was so unguarded.*

As used in the sentence, 'artless' most nearly means

(A) guilelessly natural

(B) heartless and unfeeling

(C) crude and inartistic

(D) cunningly calculated

(E) unskilled

19. *The callow lieutenant, fresh from the academy and untested by battle, mistook bluster for courage in his first command.*

As used in the sentence, 'callow' most nearly means

(A) immature and inexperienced

(B) cowardly

(C) hardened and unfeeling

(D) unfledged, without feathers

(E) seasoned and mature

20. *Fresh evidence lent credence to the once-dismissed theory, and scientists who had scoffed began, cautiously, to believe it.*

As used in the sentence, 'credence' most nearly means

(A) a small side table for Communion vessels

(B) acceptance as true; belief

(C) outright disbelief

(D) credentials or qualifications

(E) proof

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack

node: grev.vocab.V27

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Practice

1. *The garden's springtime profusion of blossoms overwhelmed every trellis, spilling color into paths that only weeks before had been bare.*

   As used in the sentence, 'profusion' most nearly means

   (A) a steady, measured supply
   (B) wasteful expenditure of money
   (C) a formal announcement
   (D) abundant quantity
   (E) a bare scarcity

2. *After a surfeit of rich food at the banquet, the guests grew queasy and swore off dessert for a week.*

   As used in the sentence, 'surfeit' most nearly means

   (A) an excessive amount

(B) a meager portion

(C) a smooth outer layer

(D) a generous helping

(E) disgust from overindulgence

3. *The remote outpost suffered a dearth of fresh water, forcing residents to ration every drop through the dry season.*

As used in the sentence, 'dearth' most nearly means

(A) an oversupply

(B) famine-level hunger

(C) the state of being dead

(D) a modest shortfall

(E) a scarcity

4. *Reviewers criticized the paper for its paucity of evidence: a single anecdote could not support so sweeping a claim.*

As used in the sentence, 'paucity' most nearly means

(A) a pause or break

(B) a slight imperfection

(C) a small amount

(D) an abundance

(E) poverty of spirit

5. *Faced with a plethora of options on the menu, she found the sheer number paralyzing rather than pleasing.*

As used in the sentence, 'plethora' most nearly means

(A) a pleasing variety

(B) an overabundance

(C) a scant few

(D) a bodily excess of humors

(E) a decorative flourish

6. *Living on an exiguous stipend, the graduate student stretched each meager check to cover rent, ramen, and little else.*

As used in the sentence, 'exiguous' most nearly means

(A) requiring an exit

(B) modestly sufficient

(C) lavishly ample

(D) urgently demanding

(E) scanty, meager

7. *Once wealthy, the gambler ended in utter penury, unable to afford even a room and begging for bread.*

As used in the sentence, 'penury' most nearly means

(A) great wealth

(B) a narrow peninsula

(C) a penalty imposed

(D) chosen thriftiness

(E) extreme poverty

8. *After the long rains the harvest was plenteous, granaries overflowing with more grain than the village could store.*

As used in the sentence, 'plenteous' most nearly means

(A) abundant and plentiful

(B) meager and sparse

(C) merely adequate

(D) plaintive and mournful

(E) pleasant and agreeable

9. *The editor trimmed the essay's superfluity of adjectives, arguing that three synonyms where one would do only cluttered the prose.*

As used in the sentence, 'superfluity' most nearly means

(A) an unnecessary luxury item

(B) shallow superficiality

(C) excess, more than needed

(D) a bare minimum

(E) a rich fullness

10. *The harvest festival table was a cornucopia of produce, squash, apples, and grain heaped so high they tumbled off the edges.*

As used in the sentence, 'cornucopia' most nearly means

(A) an abundant supply

(B) a tidy arrangement

(C) a bare cupboard

(D) a brass instrument

(E) a curved horn ornament

11. *The buffet was superabundant, dish after dish heaped in such excess that most of it went untouched and wasted.*

As used in the sentence, 'superabundant' most nearly means

(A) of superior quality

(B) supernaturally strange

(C) generously sufficient

(D) excessively plentiful

(E) scarce and rationed

12. *The valley's plenitude of game and berries meant the settlers never went hungry through their first autumn.*

As used in the sentence, 'plenitude' most nearly means

(A) abundance, fullness

(B) adequate rations

(C) utter emptiness

(D) complete perfection

(E) a plea or entreaty

13. *She asked only for a modicum of privacy, a single quiet hour, not the total seclusion he assumed.*

As used in the sentence, 'modicum' most nearly means

(A) a fair share

(B) a small amount

(C) a moderate temperament

(D) a vast quantity

(E) a fashionable trend

14. *A spate of resignations hit the firm all at once, five directors quitting within a single week.*

As used in the sentence, 'spate' most nearly means

(A) a gradual trickle

(B) a sudden rush or large number

(C) a lone occurrence

(D) a bitter quarrel

(E) a river flood

15. *The witness took copious notes, filling three notebooks with details others had overlooked.*

As used in the sentence, 'copious' most nearly means

(A) produced by copying
(B) carefully selective
(C) sparse and few
(D) abundant, plentiful
(E) wordy and repetitive

16. *The palace's opulence, gilded ceilings, marble floors, and chandeliers in every hall, announced the family's staggering wealth.*

As used in the sentence, 'opulence' most nearly means

(A) sheer abundance of anything
(B) tasteful comfort
(C) shabby poverty
(D) cloudy opaqueness
(E) lavish wealth, luxuriousness

17. *Reduced to indigence after the mill closed, the family relied on the parish for their daily bread.*

As used in the sentence, 'indigence' most nearly means

(A) extreme poverty, neediness
(B) native origin
(C) righteous anger
(D) comfortable affluence
(E) modest thrift

18. *For a full day's labor they paid him a pittance, barely enough for a loaf of bread.*

As used in the sentence, 'pittance' most nearly means

(A) an act of pity
(B) a fair wage
(C) a small pit or hollow
(D) a very small sum
(E) a princely sum

19. *Rations grew scanty as the siege dragged on, until each soldier's daily bread shrank to a few crumbs.*

As used in the sentence, 'scanty' most nearly means

(A) lavishly ample

(B) meager and insufficient

(C) quick and hurried

(D) carefully rationed

(E) scandalous or shocking

20. *Rumors abound in the empty office, multiplying so fast that no one can trace where any of them began.*

As used in the sentence, 'abound' most nearly means

(A) to exist in great numbers

(B) to circulate quietly

(C) to grow gradually over time

(D) to be scarce

(E) to be confined by limits

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife

node: grev.vocab.V28

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Practice

1. *After months of talks the rival unions reached an accord, signing a pact that ended the dispute to both sides' satisfaction.*

As used in the sentence, 'accord' most nearly means

(A) a friendly mood
(B) an agreement
(C) a musical chord
(D) a bitter deadlock
(E) one's own free will

2. *Dissension split the committee into warring factions, each shouting down the other until no vote could be taken.*

As used in the sentence, 'dissension' most nearly means

(A) a single dissenting vote
(B) unanimous agreement
(C) sharp disagreement
(D) polite debate
(E) a downward slope

3. *Years of quarreling gave way to a warm entente, the two rivals now settling disputes over friendly dinners rather than in court.*

As used in the sentence, 'entente' most nearly means

(A) a firm intention or plan

(B) bitter estrangement

(C) an entrance or doorway

(D) friendly understanding or accord

(E) a binding legal contract

4. *The treaty ushered in an era of concord, and neighboring states that had once raided each other now traded freely.*

As used in the sentence, 'concord' most nearly means

(A) a temporary truce

(B) harmony, agreement

(C) a supersonic jet

(D) open hostility

(E) a variety of grape

5. *Decades of amity linked the two towns, their citizens intermarrying and celebrating each other's festivals as if one community.*

As used in the sentence, 'amity' most nearly means

(A) a pleasant convenience

(B) a family bond by blood

(C) friendly relations

(D) mutual hostility

(E) a formal alliance

6. *The historic handshake signaled a rapprochement between the estranged nations, reopening embassies that had been closed for a generation.*

As used in the sentence, 'rapprochement' most nearly means

(A) a deepening rupture

(B) a renewal of friendly relations

(C) a close approach in space

(D) a first introduction

(E) a reproach or rebuke

7. *Their enmity ran so deep that the two would not share a room, let alone a conversation.*

As used in the sentence, 'enmity' most nearly means

(A) a great number, a legion

(B) cool indifference

(C) deep hostility

(D) an entity or being

(E) close friendship

8. *International comity requires that each nation extend to visiting diplomats the same courtesies it hopes in turn to receive.*

As used in the sentence, 'comity' most nearly means

(A) mutual courtesy and respect

(B) a governing committee

(C) rude contempt

(D) a humorous quality

(E) a binding law

9. *The divorce was steeped in acrimony, the couple trading insults so venomous that even the lawyers cringed.*

As used in the sentence, 'acrimony' most nearly means

(A) a sharp, acrid taste

(B) bitter harshness of feeling

(C) sweet cordiality

(D) firm disagreement

(E) a solemn ceremony

10. *There was a pleasing consonance between the report's findings and the team's own observations; the two agreed at every point.*

As used in the sentence, 'consonance' most nearly means

(A) jarring conflict

(B) a consonant letter

(C) agreement, harmony

(D) harmony of musical tones

(E) a passing similarity

11. *The summit produced a welcome detente, and the two powers that had bristled for years began quietly dismantling their arsenals.*

As used in the sentence, 'detente' most nearly means

(A) a signed peace treaty

(B) an easing of tensions

(C) a dental procedure

(D) an escalation of conflict

(E) a detention or holding

12. *The columnist's animus toward the mayor colored every article, each one dripping with barely concealed hatred.*

As used in the sentence, 'animus' most nearly means

(A) the soul or animating spirit

(B) an animal instinct

(C) sharp criticism

(D) hostility, ill will

(E) warm affection

13. *A bitter schism divided the church, one faction breaking away entirely to found a rival congregation.*

As used in the sentence, 'schism' most nearly means

(A) a sudden spasm

(B) a schematic diagram

(C) a lasting union

(D) a split or division

(E) a minor squabble

14. *The contentious professor turned every faculty meeting into a battle, disputing even points on which everyone already agreed.*

As used in the sentence, 'contentious' most nearly means

(A) deeply content and satisfied

(B) prone to arguing

(C) highly competitive

(D) easygoing and agreeable

(E) controversial, provoking dispute

15. *To conciliate the angry customers, the manager offered refunds and apologies, gradually calming the crowd into goodwill.*

As used in the sentence, 'conciliate' most nearly means

(A) to further enrage

(B) to flatter insincerely

(C) to appease, win over

(D) to hold a formal council

(E) to conceal from view

16. *The divorce turned acrimonious, each spouse hurling bitter accusations until civil conversation became impossible.*

As used in the sentence, 'acrimonious' most nearly means

(A) sharply sour in taste
(B) merely tense
(C) warm and harmonious
(D) bitter and hostile
(E) acrobatic and nimble

17. *The internecine feud consumed both branches of the family, ruining each side as thoroughly as the other.*

As used in the sentence, 'internecine' most nearly means

(A) internal or interior
(B) openly warlike
(C) mutually beneficial
(D) occurring between nations
(E) mutually destructive

18. *Despite the breakup, they remained amicable, dividing their books without a single harsh word.*

As used in the sentence, 'amicable' most nearly means

(A) friendly, good-natured
(B) capable of being loved
(C) passionately loving
(D) openly hostile
(E) readily fixable

19. *The witnesses gave discordant accounts, each contradicting the last, so that no coherent story emerged.*

As used in the sentence, 'discordant' most nearly means

(A) clashing, conflicting
(B) musically dissonant
(C) slightly varied
(D) perfectly consistent
(E) lacking a cord or rope

20. *Years of strife between the clans left the valley scarred, its fields burned and its bridges broken by constant fighting.*

As used in the sentence, 'strife' most nearly means

(A) a single skirmish

(B) earnest striving toward a goal

(C) a narrow strip of land

(D) bitter conflict

(E) lasting peace

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay

node: grev.vocab.V29

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Practice

1. *The 1920s saw an efflorescence of jazz, the art form suddenly blossoming into clubs, records, and radio across the country.*

As used in the sentence, 'efflorescence' most nearly means

(A) a flourishing, blossoming
(B) a pleasant fragrance
(C) a modest revival
(D) a withering decline
(E) a powdery crust on a surface

2. *Months in the cast caused the muscle to atrophy, shrinking and weakening until he could barely lift his own arm.*

As used in the sentence, 'atrophy' most nearly means

(A) to waste away
(B) to grow stronger
(C) the upper atmosphere
(D) a prize or award
(E) to shrink slightly

3. *The old dueling laws fell into desuetude, still technically on the books but unused for a century and forgotten by all.*

As used in the sentence, 'desuetude' most nearly means

(A) a state of disuse
(B) a sweet quality or sweetness
(C) constant active use
(D) a legal lawsuit
(E) gentle neglect

4. *The startup began to burgeon overnight, its user base doubling each month as demand exploded.*

As used in the sentence, 'burgeon' most nearly means

(A) to grow rapidly

(B) to shrink away

(C) to bud or sprout

(D) to hold steady

(E) a middle-class merchant

5. *Once thriving, the mill town was now moribund, its factories shuttered and its main street a row of boarded windows.*

As used in the sentence, 'moribund' most nearly means

(A) temporarily quiet

(B) gloomy or grim in mood

(C) tied or bound down

(D) vigorously thriving

(E) dying, near death

6. *The burgeoning startup doubled its staff twice in a year, its revenue swelling faster than the founders could track.*

As used in the sentence, 'burgeoning' most nearly means

(A) merely stable

(B) steadily shrinking

(C) rapidly growing

(D) budding but not yet open

(E) burdened with debt

7. *As autumn deepened, the daylight began to wane, each afternoon dimming earlier than the last.*

As used in the sentence, 'wane' most nearly means

(A) to grow larger

(B) to decrease, diminish

(C) to vanish permanently

(D) a cart or wagon

(E) to complain peevishly

8. *After the rains, luxuriant vines smothered the fence, their leaves so thick and lush they blocked the sun.*

As used in the sentence, 'luxuriant' most nearly means

(A) expensively lavish

(B) lush, abundantly growing

(C) sparse and stunted

(D) self-indulgent in comfort

(E) brightly illuminated

9. *The mansion had fallen into decrepitude, its roof sagging, its stairs rotted, everything crumbling from decades of neglect.*

As used in the sentence, 'decrepitude' most nearly means

(A) sturdy soundness

(B) physical frailty of an old person

(C) a state of decay from age

(D) quaint shabbiness

(E) a set of secret chambers

10. *Botanists study senescence in leaves, tracking how the tissue ages, yellows, and dies as the season ends.*

As used in the sentence, 'senescence' most nearly means

(A) quiet stillness

(B) youthful vigor

(C) gradual ripening

(D) keen sensory awareness

(E) the process of aging

11. *After the spring rains the hills turned verdant, blanketed in fresh green grass as far as the eye could see.*

As used in the sentence, 'verdant' most nearly means

(A) densely forested

(B) brown and barren

(C) inexperienced, naive

(D) a spoken verdict

(E) green with vegetation

12. *Deprived of water, the seedlings began to wither, their leaves curling brown and drooping to the soil.*

As used in the sentence, 'wither' most nearly means

(A) to shrivel and dry up

(B) to which place or direction

(C) to droop briefly

(D) to feel intense heat

(E) to bloom and swell

13. *Given warmth and moisture, the seeds finally germinate, sending up pale shoots through the softened soil.*

As used in the sentence, 'germinate' most nearly means

(A) of an idea, to start developing

(B) to grow to full size

(C) to spread like a germ

(D) to sprout, begin to grow

(E) to shrivel and die

14. *The tenement's dilapidation was total: broken windows, peeling paint, and stairs that gave way underfoot.*

As used in the sentence, 'dilapidation' most nearly means

(A) pristine repair

(B) a ruined, run-down condition

(C) wasteful squandering

(D) mild wear

(E) a flapping motion

15. *The stench of putrefaction filled the cellar where the forgotten meat had rotted for weeks.*

As used in the sentence, 'putrefaction' most nearly means

(A) the process of rotting

(B) fresh preservation

(C) moral corruption

(D) a public act of purifying

(E) gradual fermentation

16. *The delta's fecund soil yielded three harvests a year, its richness feeding an entire region.*

As used in the sentence, 'fecund' most nearly means

(A) highly fertile, productive

(B) barren and sterile

(C) second in order

(D) prolific in ideas

(E) well-watered

17. *Left in the summer heat, the unrefrigerated meat began to putrefy, its stench announcing the rot within hours.*

As used in the sentence, 'putrefy' most nearly means

(A) to rot and decay

(B) to merely spoil in flavor

(C) to freshen and preserve

(D) to purify or cleanse

(E) to petrify into stone

18. *The neighborhood's slow degeneration was unmistakable: thriving shops gave way to vacant lots and crumbling facades.*

As used in the sentence, 'degeneration' most nearly means

(A) a new generation of people

(B) decline, deterioration

(C) the production of electricity

(D) sudden collapse

(E) steady improvement

19. *In spring the dormant orchard seems to quicken, its buds swelling and sap rising as the trees come alive again.*

As used in the sentence, 'quicken' most nearly means

(A) to thicken or congeal

(B) to come to life, revive

(C) to grow still and lifeless

(D) to speed up, accelerate

(E) to strengthen gradually

20. *The senescent orchard bore ever fewer apples each autumn, its aging trees slowly declining toward barrenness.*

As used in the sentence, 'senescent' most nearly means

(A) sensing keenly

(B) aging and declining

(C) wise and sage-like

(D) young and vigorous

(E) dormant for the season

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure

node: grev.vocab.V30

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Practice

1. *With stealthy movements he slipped past the guards unheard, careful that no footstep would betray his presence.*

As used in the sentence, 'stealthy' most nearly means

(A) dishonest in business dealings
(B) merely swift
(C) sticky or clinging
(D) quietly secretive
(E) loud and openly announced

2. *His contempt was overt, not hidden at all; he rolled his eyes openly whenever she spoke.*

As used in the sentence, 'overt' most nearly means

(A) an opening or aperture
(B) open, undisguised
(C) excessive, too much
(D) secretly concealed
(E) boldly aggressive

3. *The program's real purpose was cloaked in vague language so outsiders could not tell what it actually did.*

As used in the sentence, 'cloaked' most nearly means

(A) wrapped in a literal cape
(B) hidden from view
(C) laid out in plain sight
(D) checked in at a coatroom
(E) briefly mentioned

4. *She took a surreptitious glance at the answer key, sliding it under her notes so the proctor would not notice.*

As used in the sentence, 'surreptitious' most nearly means

(A) creeping like a serpent
(B) done openly
(C) done secretly, stealthy
(D) extra or surplus
(E) cautiously slow

5. *The furtive way he pocketed the letter, glancing over his shoulder first, made everyone suspect he was hiding something.*

As used in the sentence, 'furtive' most nearly means

(A) covered in fur
(B) shy and timid
(C) open and forthright
(D) fervent or passionate
(E) secretive, sneaky

6. *The agency ran a covert operation, hidden even from the officials who had authorized it.*

As used in the sentence, 'covert' most nearly means

(A) hidden, secret
(B) subtly implied
(C) a thicket sheltering game
(D) publicly acknowledged
(E) a bedspread or covering

7. *He refused to divulge his source, keeping the informant's name secret even under threat of jail.*

As used in the sentence, 'divulge' most nearly means

(A) to keep hidden
(B) to split or diverge
(C) to hint at
(D) to make common or vulgar
(E) to reveal, disclose

8. *Behind the compliment lay a veiled threat, its menace hidden just beneath the polite surface.*

As used in the sentence, 'veiled' most nearly means

(A) blurred by tears
(B) stated openly and bluntly
(C) faint or weak
(D) partly concealed
(E) covered by a literal cloth veil

9. *Reporters pressed him for details, but he stayed cagey, giving guarded answers that revealed nothing.*

As used in the sentence, 'cagey' most nearly means

(A) irritable and snappish
(B) merely shy
(C) resembling or fitted with a cage
(D) guardedly secretive
(E) candid and forthcoming

10. *The manuscript dealt with occult knowledge, secrets hidden from all but a few initiates.*

As used in the sentence, 'occult' most nearly means

(A) supernatural or magical
(B) a cult or sect
(C) widely known
(D) hidden, secret
(E) rare and obscure

11. *She tried to conceal her disappointment, keeping it hidden behind a fixed and cheerful smile.*

As used in the sentence, 'conceal' most nearly means

(A) cancel or call off
(B) downplay in importance
(C) hide or keep secret
(D) reveal or make known
(E) seal shut with a stamp

12. *Her undisguised delight showed on her face for all to see; she made no attempt to hide how happy she was.*

As used in the sentence, 'undisguised' most nearly means

(A) not wearing a costume
(B) exaggerated for effect
(C) unrehearsed and spontaneous
(D) carefully hidden
(E) openly shown

13. *The celebrity traveled incognito, wearing a wig and a false name so that no fan would recognize her.*

As used in the sentence, 'incognito' most nearly means

(A) with identity concealed
(B) unknown or unrecognized generally
(C) unable to think clearly

(D) in full public view

(E) traveling quietly

14. *At the ceremony the company will unveil its new logo, revealing to the public what has been kept secret for months.*

As used in the sentence, 'unveil' most nearly means

(A) cover up or hide away

(B) lift a literal veil from a statue

(C) merely hint at

(D) reveal or disclose

(E) vote to approve

15. *He is an avowed skeptic, having openly declared his doubts rather than keeping them to himself.*

As used in the sentence, 'avowed' most nearly means

(A) openly declared

(B) recently adopted

(C) sworn under oath in court

(D) secretly held

(E) widely admired

16. *Under the new rule, firms must disclose any conflict of interest, making public what they once kept hidden.*

As used in the sentence, 'disclose' most nearly means

(A) make known publicly

(B) keep confidential

(C) investigate thoroughly

(D) merely acknowledge to oneself

(E) shut or fasten firmly

17. *When asked about the budget she was refreshingly forthcoming, freely sharing figures other officials had refused to give.*

As used in the sentence, 'forthcoming' most nearly means

(A) evasive and tight-lipped

(B) polite and agreeable

(C) about to happen soon

(D) openly informative

(E) generous with money

18. *She managed to secrete the documents in a hollowed-out book, where no searcher would ever think to look.*

As used in the sentence, 'secrete' most nearly means

(A) to store safely
(B) to display openly
(C) to produce and discharge a fluid
(D) to hide, conceal
(E) to keep a confidence

19. *The monks sequestered the relic, hiding it away in a sealed vault far from any public eye.*

As used in the sentence, 'sequester' most nearly means

(A) to display publicly
(B) to hide away, isolate
(C) a sequel or follow-up
(D) to isolate a jury from outside contact
(E) to store temporarily

20. *A veneer of charity cloaked his real motive, hiding a greed that only later came to light.*

As used in the sentence, 'cloak' most nearly means

(A) to strike the hour
(B) to hide, disguise
(C) to soften or excuse
(D) a sleeveless outer garment
(E) to expose plainly

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn

node: grev.vocab.V31

The skill. A vocabulary-in-context question is answered by the sentence, not by a memorized gloss. The sentence almost always plants a clue — a defining phrase, an example, a contrast, or a consequence — that pins down which meaning the writer intends. Read for that clue and predict a plain paraphrase before looking at the options. Then eliminate the traps: the option that means roughly the opposite of the clue; the near-synonym that lives in the right neighborhood but carries the wrong precise nuance; the real but contextually wrong dictionary sense of a word that has more than one; and the choice suggested only by the word's sound or the sentence's topic. The right answer is the one that could replace the word without disturbing the sentence's logic.

Approach Read · Plan · Solve · Check

Read. What clue in the sentence fixes the intended meaning of the word, and what plain paraphrase does that clue predict?

Plan. Predict a paraphrase from the clue before reading the options. Then match, discarding opposites, wrong-nuance near-synonyms, wrong dictionary senses, and sound-alikes.

Solve. Choose the option closest to your predicted paraphrase.

Check. Could my choice replace the word and preserve the sentence's logic? Have I resisted the opposite, the almost-right synonym, and the alternate sense the context rules out?

Common traps — every wrong answer is one of these

opposite-meaning.
Selects a meaning roughly opposite to the one the clue requires.

near-synonym-wrong-nuance.
Selects a meaning in the right general family but with the wrong precise nuance for this sentence.

wrong-dictionary-sense.
Selects a genuine alternate sense of the word that the context rules out.

sound-alike-or-association.
Selects a meaning suggested only by a similar-looking word or by the sentence's topic rather than by the word itself.

Practice

1. *The pilgrims approached the shrine with veneration, bowing low before a relic they held profoundly sacred.*

   As used in the sentence, 'veneration' most nearly means

   (A) the effect of venom
   (B) mild admiration
   (C) deep reverence
   (D) open contempt
   (E) obedient fear

2. *His proposal met only derision, the committee laughing it out of the room as absurd.*

   As used in the sentence, 'derision' most nearly means

   (A) a mathematical division
   (B) harsh criticism

(C) mockery, ridicule

(D) a firm decision

(E) sincere praise

3. *Colleagues held her in the highest esteem, valuing her judgment so much that no major decision was made without her.*

As used in the sentence, 'esteem' most nearly means

(A) rising vapor or heat

(B) high regard

(C) to estimate a quantity

(D) open contempt

(E) mere fondness

4. *The ceremony was meant to hallow the ground where the soldiers fell, treating it as sacred and worthy of reverence.*

As used in the sentence, 'hallow' most nearly means

(A) make holy; honor as sacred

(B) merely commemorate

(C) defile or desecrate

(D) to make hollow or empty

(E) to shout or call out loudly

5. *The students spoke of their old teacher with reverence, their voices hushed in respect for all she had given them.*

As used in the sentence, 'reverence' most nearly means

(A) deep respect

(B) a daydream or musing

(C) fond affection

(D) a reversal or turning back

(E) open scorn

6. *The courtiers made deep obeisance as the queen entered, bowing until their heads nearly touched the floor.*

As used in the sentence, 'obeisance' most nearly means

(A) a defiant snub

(B) an obituary notice

(C) a deferential gesture of respect

(D) excessive stoutness

(E) strict obedience

7. *The festival paid homage to the founder, honoring his memory with speeches and a bronze statue in the square.*

As used in the sentence, 'homage' most nearly means

(A) a feudal vassal's pledge of loyalty

(B) public ridicule

(C) public honor and respect

(D) a blended mixture

(E) a fond memory

8. *The prisoner endured contumely from the guards, a stream of insults and humiliations meant to break his spirit.*

As used in the sentence, 'contumely' most nearly means

(A) a state of calm continuity

(B) stubborn defiance

(C) courteous respect

(D) stern discipline

(E) insolent, contemptuous abuse

9. *The congregation gathered to adore their patron saint, kneeling in worshipful reverence before her image.*

As used in the sentence, 'adore' most nearly means

(A) worship or revere deeply

(B) hold in contempt

(C) to decorate or adorn

(D) to plead for a favor

(E) to merely like a great deal

10. *Her thesis won the committee's approbation, each examiner nodding warm approval of the work.*

As used in the sentence, 'approbation' most nearly means

(A) strong disapproval

(B) a trial or probation period

(C) a careful testing of proof

(D) approval, praise

(E) grudging acceptance

11. *He spoke in a reverent hush, his tone full of deep respect, as one might when standing in a great cathedral.*

As used in the sentence, 'reverent' most nearly means

(A) mocking and irreverent
(B) returning to an earlier state
(C) merely quiet
(D) trembling with fear
(E) showing deep respect

12. *Defeat brought ignominy to the general, whose name became a byword for shameful failure.*

As used in the sentence, 'ignominy' most nearly means

(A) glorious honor
(B) ignorance or lack of knowledge
(C) quiet regret
(D) public disgrace, shame
(E) an obscure, nameless status

13. *Critics were quick to deride the plan, mocking it as naive and laughing it out of the room.*

As used in the sentence, 'deride' most nearly means

(A) mildly criticize
(B) to strip away or remove
(C) ridicule or mock
(D) to steer or drive off course
(E) praise warmly

14. *Crowds gathered to revile the traitor, hurling curses and abuse as he was led through the streets.*

As used in the sentence, 'revile' most nearly means

(A) to warmly praise
(B) to revive or bring back
(C) to scold briefly
(D) to abuse with harsh language
(E) to make physically vile

15. *She met the bribe with scorn, refusing it with a look of utter contempt for those who had offered it.*

As used in the sentence, 'scorn' most nearly means

(A) cautious hesitation

(B) warm admiration

(C) mild disapproval

(D) a burnt or scorched mark

(E) open contempt

16. *He spurned their apology, rejecting it with disdain and turning his back on the outstretched hand.*

As used in the sentence, 'spurn' most nearly means

(A) reject with contempt

(B) to gush or spout suddenly

(C) gratefully accept

(D) politely decline

(E) to urge a horse forward with a spur

17. *The judge seemed to contemn the defendant, treating him with open scorn as though he were beneath notice.*

As used in the sentence, 'contemn' most nearly means

(A) to gently reprove

(B) despise or scorn

(C) to formally condemn or sentence

(D) to think deeply about

(E) hold in high honor

18. *Rivals tried to derogate her achievements, belittling them so that her reputation would seem smaller than it was.*

As used in the sentence, 'derogate' most nearly means

(A) to delegate a task

(B) extol and magnify

(C) to disagree with

(D) disparage or belittle

(E) to formally repeal part of a law

19. *Rather than encourage the intern, he chose to belittle her ideas, dismissing each one as trivial and childish.*

As used in the sentence, 'belittle' most nearly means

(A) to belong to a lower rank

(B) make seem unimportant

(C) praise and build up

(D) to make physically smaller

(E) to correct politely

20. *The experts scoffed at the amateur's theory, dismissing it with a laugh as beneath serious debate.*

As used in the sentence, 'scoff' most nearly means

(A) to eat greedily

(B) to mock, jeer at

(C) to gently tease

(D) to scuff or scrape

(E) to earnestly endorse

Answer Key — Vocabulary in Context

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q7
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q14
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q17
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q18
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q19
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: high-frequency GRE words — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q1
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(C)** charge-neutralized; **(D)** charge-flip; **(E)** register-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q2
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** charge-neutralized; **(C)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(D)** register-misjudged; **(E)** charge-flip.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** charge-flip; **(B)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(C)** register-misjudged; **(D)** charge-neutralized.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q4
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(C)** charge-flip; **(D)** register-misjudged; **(E)** charge-neutralized.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q5
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** charge-neutralized; **(C)** charge-flip; **(D)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(E)** register-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q6
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** register-misjudged; **(B)** charge-flip; **(C)** charge-neutralized; **(E)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(B)** charge-neutralized; **(C)** register-misjudged; **(D)** charge-flip.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** register-misjudged; **(C)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(D)** charge-flip; **(E)** charge-neutralized.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** charge-flip; **(C)** register-misjudged; **(D)** charge-neutralized; **(E)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** register-misjudged; **(B)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(D)** charge-neutralized; **(E)** charge-flip.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(B)** register-misjudged; **(D)** charge-neutralized; **(E)** charge-flip.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** register-misjudged; **(C)** charge-neutralized; **(D)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(E)** charge-flip.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** charge-flip; **(C)** register-misjudged; **(D)** charge-neutralized; **(E)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** charge-flip; **(C)** register-misjudged; **(D)** charge-neutralized; **(E)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** charge-neutralized; **(B)** charge-flip; **(C)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(E)** register-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q16
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(B)** charge-flip; **(C)** charge-neutralized; **(E)** register-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** charge-flip; **(B)** charge-neutralized; **(C)** register-misjudged; **(D)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** register-misjudged; **(B)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged; **(C)** charge-flip; **(D)** charge-neutralized.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** charge-flip; **(C)** charge-neutralized; **(D)** register-misjudged; **(E)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: connotation and register — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** charge-flip; **(B)** charge-neutralized; **(C)** register-misjudged; **(E)** intensity-or-balance-misjudged.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-sense word; **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** antonym/contradicts context.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(D)** antonym/-contradicts context; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** antonym/contradicts context; **(E)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** wrong-sense word; **(D)** antonym/contradicts context.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q6
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** antonym/contradicts context.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** wrong-sense word; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(B)** wrong connotation/register; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q9
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** antonym/contradicts context.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q10
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** wrong-sense word; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-sense word; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q1
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-sense word; **(B)** wrong connotation/register; **(D)** antonym/contradicts context; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q4
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-sense word; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(C)** wrong connotation/register; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** antonym/contradicts context; **(E)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** wrong connotation/register; **(E)** antonym/contradicts context.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** wrong-sense word; **(E)** wrong connotation/register.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-sense word; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** wrong connotation/register.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 4 — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** wrong connotation/register; **(D)** antonym/contradicts context; **(E)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-sense word; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(C)** wrong connotation/register; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(B)** wrong connotation/register; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** wrong connotation/register.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(D)** wrong connotation/register.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong connotation/register; **(C)** wrong-sense word; **(D)** antonym/contradicts context; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** wrong-sense word; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** wrong connotation/register; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(E)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** wrong connotation/register.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** wrong connotation/register; **(D)** wrong-sense word; **(E)** antonym/contradicts context.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 5 — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-sense word; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(C)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** wrong connotation/register.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** wrong connotation/register; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(E)** wrong-sense word.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** wrong-sense word; **(E)** antonym/contradicts context.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q4
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** wrong connotation/register; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(C)** wrong-sense word; **(D)** wrong connotation/register; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** wrong-sense word; **(E)** wrong connotation/register.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q7
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(C)** wrong-sense word; **(D)** antonym/contradicts context; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** antonym/contradicts context; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** wrong connotation/register; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** antonym/contradicts context; **(C)** wrong-sense word; **(D)** wrong connotation/register; **(E)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance; **(B)** wrong connotation/register; **(C)** wrong-sense word; **(E)** antonym/contradicts context.

Vocabulary in context: precision among near-synonyms, set 6 — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong connotation/register; **(B)** wrong-sense word; **(C)** antonym/contradicts context; **(D)** near-synonym, imprecise nuance.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q8
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q16
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q19
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: brevity vs. verbosity — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q10
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q15
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q18
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q19
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity vs. obscurity of expression — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q7
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q8
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q10
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q18
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q19
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: praise & flattery — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q1
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q2
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q3
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q4
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q8
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q16
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: criticism, censure & rebuke — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q1
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q4
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q5
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q7
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q8
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q10
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q14
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: eloquence & persuasion — Q20
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q6
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q10
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q14
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q15
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q16
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q18
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q19
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: composure versus turmoil — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q1
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q6
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q9
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q12
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intrepidity versus diffidence — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q1
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q3
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q7
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q12
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q19
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: buoyancy versus despondency — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q4
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q5
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q7
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q10
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q13
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q17
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q19
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q14
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q15
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q17
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: hauteur versus meekness — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q4
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q10
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q12
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q18
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: frankness vs. duplicity — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q8
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q10
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q12
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q14
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q19
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: munificence vs. avarice — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q4
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q8
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q10
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q13
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q15
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q19
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: probity vs. venality — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q5
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q12
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q16
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q18
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: assiduity vs. indolence — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q1
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q3
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q10
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q14
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q19
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: intransigence vs. tractability — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q14
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q18
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q19
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: wisdom and discernment against folly — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q1
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q2
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q6
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q7
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q9
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q14
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q15
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q16
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q18
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q19
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: erudition and curiosity against ignorance — Q20
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q4
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q12
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q14
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q16
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q18
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q19
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: clarity of understanding against confusion — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q3
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q4
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q7
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q9
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q12
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q13
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q15
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q16
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q18
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q19
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: originality against convention and imitation — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q2
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q4
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q9
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q11
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q12
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q13
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q16
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q18
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: skepticism and doubt against credulity — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q3
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q5
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q6
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q9
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q10
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q11
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q13
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q15
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q16
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: abundance and excess vs. scarcity and lack — Q20
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q1
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q3
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q4
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q5
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q6
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q8
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q9
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q10
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q11
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q15
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q16
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q17
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q18
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q19
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: harmony and concord vs. discord and strife — Q20
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q1
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q2
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q3
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q7
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q8
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q9
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q10
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q12
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q13
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q14
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q17
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q18
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: growth and flourishing vs. decline and decay — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q1
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q2
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q4
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q5
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q6
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q7
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q8
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q9
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q11
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q12
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q13
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q15
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q17
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. openness and disclosure — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q1
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q2
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q3
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** opposite-meaning; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q4
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q5
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q6
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q7
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q8
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q9
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q10
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q11
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q12
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** sound-alike-or-association.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q13
Correct: **(C)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(B)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q14
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** opposite-meaning; **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q15
Correct: **(E)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q16
Correct: **(A)**. *Traps:* **(B)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q17
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(C)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q18
Correct: **(D)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(B)** opposite-meaning; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(E)** wrong-dictionary-sense.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q19
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** sound-alike-or-association; **(C)** opposite-meaning; **(D)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(E)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance.

Vocabulary in context: respect and reverence vs. contempt and scorn — Q20
Correct: **(B)**. *Traps:* **(A)** wrong-dictionary-sense; **(C)** near-synonym-wrong-nuance; **(D)** sound-alike-or-association; **(E)** opposite-meaning.