Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary

At this level the trap is rarely a word you have never seen; it is two or three. . .



Lesson grev.tc.C2

The idea

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. . .

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

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

Watch every step

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. ostentatious ✗ *ignores-signal*

B. enduring ✗ *opposite-charge*

C. intermittent ✗ *right-direction-wrong-word*

D. meteoric ✗ *topic-attractive*

E. evanescent

Why E — "evanescent." Choose the option whose exact meaning matches the prediction and obeys the signal.

Now a harder one

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.** cajole ✗ *right-direction-wrong-word*
- **C.** counsel ✗ *topic-attractive*
- **D.** distract ✗ *ignores-signal*
- **E.** agitate ✗ *opposite-charge*

Why A — "assuage." Choose the option whose exact meaning matches the prediction and obeys the signal.

The method, in one line

Text Completion: single blank — advanced vocabulary

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

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?

Watch out: two traps to dodge

⚠ 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.

Name the trap before you pick — most wrong answers are one of these two.

Try it, then watch the walk-through

Explore this live

Watch the walk-through