Text Completion: three blanks

A three-blank sentence rewards patience over speed

Lesson grev.tc.C4

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The idea

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.

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

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

Watch every step

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) coaxes, (iii) teeming ✗ *right-direction-wrong-word*

B. (i) inert, (ii) lulls, (iii) verdant ✗ *ignores-signal*

C. (i) inert, (ii) lulls, (iii) arid ✗ *topic-attractive*

✓ **D.** (i) inert, (ii) lulls, (iii) teeming

E. (i) frenetic, (ii) lulls, (iii) teeming ✗ *opposite-charge*

Why D — "(i) inert, (ii) lulls, (iii) teeming." Select the triple whose (i), (ii), and (iii) each match their predictions.

Now a harder one

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) circumspect, (ii) baldly, (iii) citations ✗ *ignores-signal*

B. (i) circumspect, (ii) baldly, (iii) archives ✗ *topic-attractive*

C. (i) reckless, (ii) baldly, (iii) caveats ✗ *opposite-charge*

D. (i) circumspect, (ii) baldly, (iii) caveats

E. (i) circumspect, (ii) tersely, (iii) caveats ✗ *right-direction-wrong-word*

Why D — "(i) circumspect, (ii) baldly, (iii) caveats." Select the triple whose (i), (ii), and (iii) each match their predictions.

The method, in one line

Text Completion: three blanks

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

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

Watch out: two traps to dodge

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.

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

Try it, then watch the walk-through

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Watch the walk-through