Vocabulary in context: wrath, choler, and asperity

A vocabulary-in-context question is answered by the sentence, not by a memorized. . .



Lesson `grev.vocab.V15`

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The idea

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.

What clue in the sentence fixes the intended meaning of the word, and what plain paraphrase does that clue predict?

Predict a paraphrase from the clue before reading the options. Then match, discarding opposites, wrong-nuance near-synonyms, wrong dictionary senses, and sound-alikes.

Watch every step

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. calm approval ✗ *opposite-meaning*

B. mild annoyance ✗ *near-synonym-wrong-nuance*

C. settled, long-held hatred ✗ *wrong-dictionary-sense*

D. a strand of metal wire ✗ *sound-alike-or-association*

E. anger

Why E — "anger." Choose the option closest to your predicted paraphrase.

Now a harder one

Tired and hungry, the toddler grew peevish, whining and fretting over every little thing.

As used in the sentence, 'peevish' most nearly means

A. sunnily good-natured ✗ *opposite-meaning*

B. furiously enraged ✗ *near-synonym-wrong-nuance*

C. irritably fretful

D. sulkily silent and withdrawn ✗ *wrong-dictionary-sense*

E. pale and sickly ✗ *sound-alike-or-association*

Why C — "irritably fretful." Choose the option closest to your predicted paraphrase.

The method, in one line

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Predict a paraphrase from the clue before reading the options. Then match, discarding opposites, wrong-nuance near-synonyms, wrong dictionary senses, and sound-alikes.

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?

Watch out: two traps to dodge

⚠ 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.

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

Try it, then watch the walk-through

Explore this live

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