Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. . . .

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



Lesson `grev.vocab.V30`

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

The manuscript dealt with occult knowledge, secrets hidden from all but a few initiates.

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

A. widely known ✗ *opposite-meaning*

B. rare and obscure ✗ *near-synonym-wrong-nuance*

C. supernatural or magical ✗ *wrong-dictionary-sense*

D. a cult or sect ✗ *sound-alike-or-association*

E. hidden, secret

Why E — "hidden, secret." Choose the option closest to your predicted paraphrase.

Now a harder one

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. secretly held ✗ *opposite-meaning*

B. recently adopted ✗ *near-synonym-wrong-nuance*

C. sworn under oath in court ✗ *wrong-dictionary-sense*

D. widely admired ✗ *sound-alike-or-association*

E. openly declared

Why **E** — "openly declared." Choose the option closest to your predicted paraphrase.

The method, in one line

Vocabulary in context: secrecy and concealment vs. . . .
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

Watch the walk-through