

• Sentence Completion 2 Level 9

Directions: Complete the sentence using the word or set of words for each blank that best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

1. Because of the professor's reputation for being _____, the students in her class were surprised by her _____ in the first lecture of the semester.

A. garrulous ... bombast
B. pithy ... terseness
C. succinct ... congeniality
D. loquacious ... brevity
E. erudite ... intellect
2. Nearly every ancient culture had a myth involving a trickster character, a _____ individual who creates devilry either through cunningness or foolishness.

A. mischievous
B. venerable
C. stoic
D. portly
E. stern
3. The hall of fame committee was nearly unanimous in _____ the star athlete; only one voter _____ and did not support the athlete's induction.

A. dismissing ... saluted
B. praising ... duped
C. lauding ... dissented
D. reprimanding ... abstained
E. ruing ... refrained
4. The repair shop attempted to _____ the damaged automobile but ultimately decided it was irreparable.

A. sabotage
B. sap
C. salvage
D. retain
E. economize
5. Far more than being merely _____, the titular character in Herman Melville's *The Confidence-Man* appears to be downright _____; most contemporary scholars assume he is a fill-in for the devil.

A. villainous ... evil
B. restive ... furtive
C. decorous ... misanthropic
D. nefarious ... indecent
E. moral ... virtuous
6. The author's first novel had such a _____ story that critics quickly dismissed the author as a _____.

A. hackneyed ... professional
B. suspenseful ... poseur
C. transparent ... scamp
D. trite ... hack
E. convoluted ... realist

Answers and Explanations

1) D

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “because,” which sets up a cause-and-effect relationship between the two parts of the sentence. This means that the first clause explains why the students “were surprised” by the first lecture. The prompt does not give enough information to figure out what the missing words are, but they must be opposites of each other. After all, if the words had the same meaning, then the students would not be “surprised,” as the professor’s reputation would have been upheld by acting the same way in the first lecture. The correct choice will, therefore, provide a pair of opposites. *Loquacious* means talkative, while *brevity* is conciseness. These are opposites, so choice **(D)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites. *Garrulous* means talkative, while *bombast* is pompous speech. There is no relationship between these words.

(B) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites. *Pithy* means concise, while *terseness* is conciseness. Thus, these words have similar, not opposite, meanings.

(C) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites. *Succinct* means concise, while *congeniality* is pleasantness. Thus, there is no relationship between these words.

(E) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites. *Erudite* means learned or scholarly, while *intellect* is higher mental powers. Thus, these words have similar, not opposite, meanings.

2) A

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords in the prompt. Here, the keywords are “trickster” and the phrase “creates devilry.” Thus, the missing word must be an adjective that would describe a trickster who creates devilry. *Mischievous* means causing trouble in a playful or devilish way, so choice **(A)** is correct.

(B) is incorrect because *venerable* means deserving high respect, which is not something that would be said of a “trickster.”

(C) is incorrect because *stoic* means impassive, a word that has nothing to do with a “trickster” or “devilry.”

(D) is incorrect because *portly* means stout, a word that has nothing to do with a “trickster” or “devilry.”

(E) is incorrect because *stern* means strict, a word that would describe the opposite of a “trickster” who “creates devilry.”

3) C

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords in the prompt. Here, each missing word has its own set of keywords. The keyword for the first blank comes in the sentence’s second clause, when it is revealed that the athlete was inducted into the hall of fame. Thus, the committee must have praised the athlete, as it would not have been likely to vote for an athlete whom it did not praise.

The second missing word’s key phrase is in the first clause: “nearly unanimous.” “Nearly unanimous” implies that a vast majority, but not all, of the members voted for the athlete’s induction. Thus, one voter must have not supported the induction, or else it would have been a unanimous decision. The two words are, thus, opposites, as the first refers to supporting and the second to rejecting the athlete.

Of the choices, only choice **(C)** provides a word that implies “praising” for the first missing word and that implies at least one voter did not support the induction for the second missing word. *Lauding* means praising, while *dissented* means differed in opinion.

(A) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites that is appropriate in context. *Dismissing* means rejecting and *saluted* means honored. As the athlete was inducted into the hall of fame, the committee probably did not reject him. These words have the proper opposite meaning but would have to be in reverse order to work in context.

(B) is incorrect because only the first word could work in context. *Praising* means honoring, so it would work for the first blank; however, *duped* means fooled or tricked and, thus, has no connection to anything in the prompt.

(D) is incorrect because only the second word could work in context. *Reprimanding* means punishing and, as such, means the opposite of the word that would have to go in the first blank. However, *abstained* means refrained from participating and could refer to a person who did not support the athlete’s induction and, therefore, left the committee’s vote as “nearly unanimous.”

(E) is incorrect because only the second word could work in context. *Ruing* means bitterly regretting and, as such, has the opposite meaning of the first missing word. However, *refrained* means stopped oneself from doing something and could refer to something done by one voter who prevented the committee’s vote from being “unanimous” rather than “nearly unanimous.”

4) C

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords in the prompt. Here, the keyword is “irreparable,” a word that means the automobile could not be fixed. However, the prompt implies that the repair shop attempted

to fix the automobile before deciding it could not be fixed. The missing word describes what the repair shop “attempted to” do to the car before deciding it could not be fixed, so the missing word must mean fix. Because *salvage* means to rescue from loss or ruin, choice **(C)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because *sabotage* means to deliberately destroy and is, thus, the opposite of what a repair shop would attempt to do to a damaged automobile.

(B) is incorrect because *sap* means to undermine and is, thus, the opposite of what a repair shop would attempt to do to a damaged automobile.

(D) is incorrect because *retain* means keep or employ. A repair shop would not be likely to keep an “irreparable” automobile, so this word does not work in context.

(E) is incorrect because *economize* means to reduce one’s expenses. This does not work in context because a “damaged automobile” does not have expenses and, therefore, cannot be the subject of attempts to reduce its expenses.

5) A

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords in the prompt. Here, the keywords for both missing words are in the final clause: “most contemporary scholars assume he is a fill-in for the devil.” This clause describes the titular character, and the missing words likewise describe that character. This means that both missing words must mean devilish or bad. Furthermore, the construction of the prompt suggests that the first missing word is less bad than the second one, as the second missing word is “more than being merely” the first one. The correct choice will provide a pair of words that mean bad and really bad, respectively. *Villainous* means wicked, while *evil* means profoundly or completely wicked, so choice **(A)** is correct.

(B) is incorrect because it does not provide two words with similar meanings. *Restive* means impatient, while *furtive* means sneaky. Neither necessarily would be descriptive of the devil, either.

(C) is incorrect because it does not provide two words with similar meanings. *Decorous* means proper, while *misanthropic* means people hating. Of these, only the latter would describe the devil.

(D) is incorrect because it does not provide two words with similar meanings that work in context. *Nefarious* means very wicked, while *indecent* means improper. These are the right words in the wrong order. The prompt requires the more severe word to go in place of the second missing word, not in place of the first missing word.

(E) is incorrect because it does not provide two words with similar meanings that work in context. *Moral* means holding high principles of right and wrong, while *virtuous* means having very high moral standards. These words form the right relationship but do not work in context, as a “fill-in for the devil” would not be described as moral or virtuous.

6) D

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords in the prompt. Here, the keywords are “such” and “that,” which sets up a cause-and-effect relationship. This means that the novel’s “story” was such that, as a result, “critics dismissed the author as” being a certain way. Thus, the missing words must have a logical relationship. *Trite* means hackneyed, and a *hack* is a mediocre or unoriginal writer. In context, these words would imply that the novel had such a hackneyed plot that critics dismissed the author as being poor in quality. This makes sense, so choice **(D)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not form a logical relationship. *Hackneyed* means commonplace, while a *professional* is an expert. There is no clear relationship between these two words, and, in context, they would imply that the plot of the novel was commonplace so critics thought the novelist was an expert.

(B) is incorrect because it does not form a logical relationship. *Suspenseful* means exciting, while a *poseur* is someone who pretends to be sophisticated but is not. There is no relationship between these words, and, in context, they would imply that the plot of the novel was exciting so critics thought the novelist pretended to be more sophisticated than he actually was.

(C) is incorrect because it does not form a logical relationship. *Transparent* means clear, while a *scamp* is a rascal. These words have no clear relationship, and, in context, they would imply that the novel’s plot was clear so critics thought the novelist was a rascal.

(E) is incorrect because it does not form a logical relationship. *Convuluted* means intricate, while a *realist* is a person who represents things as they really are. If anything, these words have opposite meanings, not similar meanings, and, in context, they would imply that the novel’s plot was complicated so critics thought the novelist was interested in promoting a realistic representation of life.