

## VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 1

**Directions:** Each sentence below has one or more blanks, each blank indicating that something has been omitted. Beneath the sentence are five words for one-blank questions and sets of three words for each blank for two- and three-blank questions. Choose the word or set of words for each blank that best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

1. In spite of its popularity, *The Merchant of Venice* remains a (i) \_\_\_\_\_ play, with many critics (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ the extent of Shakespeare's anti-Semitism.

Blank (i)	
A	controversial
B	celebrated
C	histrionic

Blank (ii)	
D	assuaging
E	augmenting
F	debating

2. The cotton gin played a (i) \_\_\_\_\_ role in advancing the textile industry, (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ its negative effects can be seen in the rapid development of slavery as the economic base of the American South.

Blank (i)	
A	controversial
B	crucial
C	trivial

Blank (ii)	
D	although
E	so
F	plus

3. Although Thomas Paine was (i) \_\_\_\_\_ his political pamphlets, he was in fact (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ writer on many different subjects.

Blank (i)	
A	inimical to
B	condemned for
C	famous for

Blank (ii)	
D	an abstruse
E	a prolific
F	a terrible

4. St. Elmo's fire is a weather phenomenon that, (i) \_\_\_\_\_ it has been documented from ancient times, was not (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ until recently.

Blank (i)	
A	because
B	since
C	although

Blank (ii)	
D	incinerated
E	reported
F	understood

5. Though the poet's work was praised highly by critics, sales of his anthologies were (i) \_\_\_\_\_; it is possible the poor sales were due to his language being too (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ to be readily understood.

Blank (i)		Blank (ii)	
A	scanty	D	lucid
B	robust	E	prosaic
C	singular	F	abstruse

6. (i) \_\_\_\_\_ its many difficult and mature themes, *Hamlet* remains a (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ choice for introducing teenagers to Shakespeare.

Blank (i)		Blank (ii)	
A	Due to	D	neglected
B	Despite	E	popular
C	Because of	F	spurned

7. Because she was so \_\_\_\_\_, Mary rarely spoke in groups of people.

- (A) reticent
- (B) congenial
- (C) brusque
- (D) gregarious
- (E) scurrilous

8. The patterns of the stock market seem \_\_\_\_\_ to many beginners, but they can be decoded with dedication and patience.

- (A) unwelcoming
- (B) arcane
- (C) harmonious
- (D) shocking
- (E) lucid

9. The band's new album was universally panned by critics, with many \_\_\_\_\_ their change to a simpler sound.
- (A) lauding
  - (B) ignorant of
  - (C) tolerating
  - (D) deriding
  - (E) apathetic to
10. Because he was convinced of his own \_\_\_\_\_, Adam never accepted criticism.
- (A) genius
  - (B) acclamation
  - (C) shrewdness
  - (D) infallibility
  - (E) popularity
11. She was appalled at the mayor's policy, feeling he had \_\_\_\_\_ the promises made during his campaign.
- (A) challenged
  - (B) exaggerated
  - (C) misunderstood
  - (D) hindered
  - (E) abjured
12. Much to his \_\_\_\_\_, he was forced to acknowledge the flaw in his reasoning; he responded gracefully, however, and soon returned with a new defense of his argument.
- (A) irritation
  - (B) befuddlement
  - (C) chagrin
  - (D) bemusement
  - (E) resentment

13. When Jen learned that her manager's nephew had been promoted over her, she became irate, claiming that the company practiced \_\_\_\_\_.

- (A) altruism
- (B) relativism
- (C) malfeasance
- (D) ingratitude
- (E) nepotism

14. Given the gravity of the situation, Terrence's \_\_\_\_\_ quips were inappropriate; he did not seem to realize it was not the time or place for sarcasm.

- (A) supercilious
- (B) coarse
- (C) sardonic
- (D) fatuous
- (E) ribald

15. Historians often use the merciless Russian winter as \_\_\_\_\_ for the failure of various military invasions of Russia; they cite the armies of Charles XII of Sweden, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Adolf Hitler as examples of forces that suffered heavy casualties due to the harsh conditions.

- (A) a defense
- (B) an excuse
- (C) a justification
- (D) an explanation
- (E) a rationalization

16. Although he \_\_\_\_\_ an image of anti-authoritarianism, Johnny Cash was a frequent visitor to the White House and friends with several presidents during his life.

- (A) advocated
- (B) cultivated
- (C) patronized
- (D) supported
- (E) snubbed

17. (i) \_\_\_\_\_ mushrooms are popular in many cuisines, it is  
(ii) \_\_\_\_\_ to eat those found in the wild, as many frequently found  
mushrooms resemble edible mushrooms but are, in fact, (iii) \_\_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)	
A	Considering
B	While
C	Because

Blank (ii)	
D	imprudent
E	cheaper
F	ingenuous

Blank (iii)	
G	poisonous
H	bland
I	toothsome

18. Considered one of his most (i) \_\_\_\_\_ works, its incomplete status at  
the time of his death has given Mozart's Requiem Mass in D Minor a certain  
(ii) \_\_\_\_\_ in Western culture, and many (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ stories  
have arisen surrounding it; unfortunately, the truth is lost to us.

Blank (i)	
A	ignominious
B	inconspicuous
C	famous

Blank (ii)	
D	obscurity
E	indifference
F	mystique

Blank (iii)	
G	fraudulent
H	apocryphal
I	verified

19. The octopus is remarkable for its (i) \_\_\_\_\_, demonstrating  
exceptional problem-solving skills and memory; beyond its mental  
(ii) \_\_\_\_\_, the octopus possesses exceptional physical  
(iii) \_\_\_\_\_, allowing it to precisely manipulate objects.

Blank (i)	
A	physiology
B	intelligence
C	creativity

Blank (ii)	
D	acumen
E	acridity
F	trenchancy

Blank (iii)	
G	brilliance
H	genius
I	dexterity



## VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 2

Directions: Each sentence below has one or more blanks, each blank indicating that something has been omitted. Beneath the sentence are five words for one-blank questions and sets of three words for each blank of two- and three-blank questions. Choose the word or set of words for each blank that best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

1. With the rise of automated support, technical support workers feel that their services are being \_\_\_\_\_; technical support, they argue, is not something that can be provided in a predictable manner but rather is a case-by-case effort that requires a skill set built upon training and experience.
- (A) devalued  
(B) tarnished  
(C) ridiculed  
(D) vituperated  
(E) impaired
2. The spice saffron is made from the stigma of the *Crocus sativus* plant; the (i) \_\_\_\_\_ number of blossoms required to produce saffron and the (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ of the flower makes the spice the most expensive in the world.

Blank (i)		Blank (ii)	
A	vast	D	color
B	meager	E	hardiness
C	unique	F	delicacy

3. The field of cryptozoology is the search for animals unknown to science and those for which we have no scientific attestation; (i) \_\_\_\_\_ physical evidence, it relies upon (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ sightings for proof of creatures such as the Loch Ness Monster.

Blank (i)		Blank (ii)	
A	ignoring	D	anecdotal
B	lacking	E	imagined
C	needing	F	nominal

4. The humor of Oscar Wilde remains a classic example of \_\_\_\_\_ wit; his terse remarks and deadpan delivery belied an acerbic sarcasm and brilliant insight into the world around him.

(A) ostentatious  
(B) pointed  
(C) brusque  
(D) crotund  
(E) laconic

5. The neglect of the old theater was (i) \_\_\_\_\_ in the extreme (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ of the building, which was no longer safe to enter.

Blank (i)		Blank (ii)	
A	hinted at	D	dilapidation
B	suggested	E	depilation
C	manifest	F	radiance

6. The Battle of Thermopylae has been one of the most (i) \_\_\_\_\_ battles in history and has become so surrounded in anecdotes and exaggerations that it is often difficult to tell what is history and what is re-created; nevertheless, its cultural impact on the Western world cannot be (ii) \_\_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)		Blank (ii)	
A	sensationalized	D	doubted
B	intriguing	E	supported
C	sanguine	F	arrogated

7. (i) \_\_\_\_\_ property insurance, he (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ do little when the earthquake struck but accept his losses and move on.

Blank (i)		Blank (ii)	
A	Due to	D	cared to
B	Lacking	E	could
C	Protected by	F	disdained to

8. Stonehenge is arguably the most widely recognized megalithic site in the world, and, despite many popular images, was completed more than a millennium before the Celtic druids arrived in Britain; the (i) \_\_\_\_\_ can likely be traced to William Stukeley, a pioneer of British archaeology who (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ the druids in his writings about megalithic sites.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
A revelation	D ignored
B proof	E blamed
C misconception	F credited

9. Meteorologists predict \_\_\_\_\_ temperatures for this summer and caution against overexposure to the heat without adequate protection and hydration.

- (A) muggy
- (B) brisk
- (C) torrid
- (D) crisp
- (E) unusual

10. The Book of Kells is one of the most magnificent and famous extant illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages; combining masterful artwork and superb calligraphy, it is truly \_\_\_\_\_ artifact of the past.

- (A) a mythical
- (B) an august
- (C) an infamous
- (D) an underappreciated
- (E) a quaint



11. Although many developments have been made in the burgeoning field of artificial intelligence, the ultimate goal of matching human intelligence remains elusive, and its actual \_\_\_\_\_ remains unknown.
- (A) morality
  - (B) popularity
  - (C) feasibility
  - (D) ideal
  - (E) price.
12. Their friendship has been tested many times without fracturing, and today I can see that they are \_\_\_\_\_ each other.
- (A) inseparable from
  - (B) estranged from
  - (C) distanced from
  - (D) acrimonious to
  - (E) ambivalent to
13. The modern apartment building can be traced back to the *insulae* of ancient Rome, where the stories above business establishments were \_\_\_\_\_ the lower classes who could not afford to own their own residences.
- (A) squatted in
  - (B) sold to
  - (C) given to
  - (D) leased to
  - (E) inhabited by
14. Tired of being \_\_\_\_\_ by her family, she left home at an early age in order to become more independent.
- (A) neglected
  - (B) cosseted
  - (C) chastised
  - (D) overlooked
  - (E) mollified

15. Although unfinished at the time of his death, Chretien de Troyes's *Perceval* was an immediate success in medieval literature, \_\_\_\_\_ a fascination in the knightly quest for the Holy Grail, which it introduced to the European imagination.
- (A) continuing
  - (B) renewing
  - (C) advancing
  - (D) igniting
  - (E) demonstrating
16. Her \_\_\_\_\_ personality made her an effective organizer, but it sometimes left her uncomfortable in informal social situations because she expected others to choose their words as carefully as she did.
- (A) punctual
  - (B) reticent
  - (C) meticulous
  - (D) efficient
  - (E) sophisticated
17. As we seek alternative energy sources, one of the most \_\_\_\_\_ is the use of photovoltaic material on the exterior of buildings, which can provide an affordable energy source for residential, commercial, and other structures.
- (A) costly
  - (B) advanced
  - (C) environmental
  - (D) economical
  - (E) conscientious

18. The countless (i) \_\_\_\_\_ days left everyone (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ for the sudden downpour; the deluge brought traffic to a halt as it (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ the roads.

Blank (i)

A	arid
B	calm
C	humid

Blank (ii)

D	waiting
E	unprepared
F	anxious

Blank (iii)

G	inundated
H	soaked
I	sprayed

19. They (i) \_\_\_\_\_ the scientist's (ii) \_\_\_\_\_, suspecting his (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ had affected the study, and he was later found to have tampered with the data so that they better fit his desired results.

Blank (i)

A	decried
B	discounted
C	challenged

Blank (ii)

D	objectivity
E	dedication
F	rhetoric

Blank (iii)

G	biases
H	guile
I	conduct

20. Although (i) \_\_\_\_\_ small amounts of seawater is not dangerous to humans, the high salinity of the water makes it (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ to consume in large quantities; from this comes the (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ lamented by the narrator of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*: "Water, water, everywhere,/Nor any drop to drink."

Blank (i)

A	guzzling
B	quaffing
C	imbibing

Blank (ii)

D	harsh
E	difficult
F	inadvisable

Blank (iii)

G	setting
H	quandary
I	tragedy