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PART TWO

Verbal Reasoning

CHAPTER 3

Introduction to Verbal Reasoning

OVERVIEW

The Verbal Reasoning section of the GRE tests complex reasoning skills and your ability to analyze the relationships between words and sentences. Vocabulary will be tested contextually, and the reading passages are both dense and written with a sophisticated level of diction. The goal of the test's content, with its emphasis on analytical skills, is to make the test an accurate indicator of your ability to understand what you're reading and apply reasoning skills to the various question types. These skills will translate directly to study at the graduate level.

In this section of the book, we'll take you through all the types of Verbal Reasoning questions you'll see on the GRE and give you the strategies you'll need to answer them quickly and correctly. Also, the vocabulary words you'll most frequently encounter on the test are included in Appendices A–C in the “GRE Resources” section at the back of this book. Think of the glossary and word lists there as building blocks for the questions you will see on the test.

VERBAL REASONING QUESTION TYPES

The GRE contains two Verbal Reasoning sections with approximately 20 questions each. Each section will last 30 minutes and be composed of a consistent, predictable selection of the following question types:

- Text Completion
- Reading Comprehension
- Sentence Equivalence

The Verbal Reasoning portion of the GRE draws heavily upon your vocabulary and assesses your comprehension of written material. Specifically, it evaluates your ability to do the following:

- Analyze sentences and paragraphs
- Derive a word's meaning based upon its context
- Detect relationships among words
- Understand the logic of sentences and paragraphs
- Draw inferences
- Recognize major, minor, and irrelevant points
- Summarize ideas
- Understand passage structure
- Recognize an author's tone, purpose, and perspective

Within each section of Verbal Reasoning questions on the GRE, you will see an assortment of question types.

PACING STRATEGY

The GRE allows you to move freely backward and forward within each section, which can be a big advantage on Test Day. If you get stuck on a particular question, you can flag it and come back to it later when you have time. You only score points for correct answers, so you don't want to get bogged down on one problem and lose time you could have used to answer several other questions correctly. You also are not penalized for incorrect answers, so never leave a question blank.

You will have 30 minutes to work on each Verbal Reasoning section. The approximately 20 questions in each section will be an assortment of Text Completion, Sentence Equivalence, and Reading Comprehension items. However, these types of questions are not distributed equally. The chart below shows how many questions you can expect of each type, as well as the average amount of time you should spend per question type.

	Text Completion	Sentence Equivalence	Reading Comprehension
Number of Questions	approx. 6	approx. 4	approx. 10
Time per Question	1–1.5 minutes, depending on the number of blanks	1 minute	1–3 minutes, depending on the length, to read the passage and 1 minute to answer each question

Use these timing estimates as you work on practice questions and exams. With repetition, you will become comfortable keeping to the same amounts of time on Test Day. Additionally, you will be prepared to use the Mark and Review buttons to your advantage while taking the actual test.

NAVIGATING THE VERBAL REASONING SECTION OF THIS BOOK

The next chapter, Verbal Foundations and Content Review, will review the classic verbal concepts and topics that you will encounter on the GRE. This section of the book also includes individual chapters on Text Completion, Sentence Equivalence, and Reading Comprehension questions. Each of those chapters includes an introduction and definition of the relevant question types, followed by a review and examples of the strategies to follow to answer those questions quickly and correctly. In addition, you'll find a practice set with answers and explanations for each of the question types you'll encounter on the GRE.

Finally, at the end of this section, you'll find the Verbal Reasoning Practice Sets, which include not only practice questions but also answers and explanations. Use the Verbal Reasoning Practice Sets to test your skills and pinpoint areas for more focused study. When you are finished with this section of the book, you will have prepared for every question type you might encounter on the Verbal Reasoning section of the GRE.

CHAPTER 4

Verbal Foundations and Content Review

INTRODUCTION

The GRE tests your mastery of sophisticated language and a wide range of comprehension skills. These concepts include the following:

- Text Completion and Sentence Correction Concepts
 - Basics of Vocabulary Building
 - Word Groups
 - Greek and Latin Roots
 - Words in Context
 - Parts of Speech
 - The Testmaker's Favorite GRE Words
- Reading Comprehension Strategies
 - Read the First Third of the Passage
 - Determine the Topic, Scope, and Author's Purpose
 - Read Strategically

This chapter will cover all these vocabulary concepts as well as specific Reading Comprehension strategies to conquer any questions you might have pertaining to each concept.

KAPLAN'S TIPS FOR STUDYING VOCABULARY

While any word can appear on the GRE, some words are more common than others. Many of the words you'll encounter most often during your prep can be found in an appendix of this book. This handy reference tool contains thousands of the words that you're most likely to find on the GRE. Studying these words is a more effective way to build the kind of vocabulary you need than simply reading the dictionary from *aardvark* to *zygote*.

The vocabulary words found on the GRE are usually members of a very particular class of prefixed and suffixed words that typically are derived from Latin or Greek. You probably remember from middle-school English that prefixes and suffixes are attached to the stem of a word to change its meaning. For instance, *contraindicate*, a verb meaning “to give an indication against,” is a great GRE word. So is *contradict*, another verb meaning “to assert the contrary.” Recognizing the prefix *contra-*, meaning “against,” in one of these words can help you to figure out other words with the same prefix (*contravene*, *contraband*, *contraceptive*, etc.). A solid knowledge of prefixes and suffixes will help you derive the meaning of thousands of words you’re not familiar with, especially when they’re used in context.

One of the major goals of the verbal portion of the GRE is to test your understanding of vocabulary words in context. This means that on any particular question, you’ll always be able to deduce correct answers from contextual clues given.

If you see a word in this book—or anywhere in your reading—that’s unfamiliar, take a moment to make a note of it. A good practice for acquiring vocabulary is to keep a vocabulary journal of unfamiliar terms and then practice integrating them into your own working vocabulary.

BASICS OF VOCABULARY BUILDING

Most people build their vocabulary by hearing or reading words in context. Reading is ultimately the best way to increase your vocabulary, but it also takes a great deal of time. There are a couple of techniques you can use to quickly build a more robust vocabulary. In your vocabulary journal, you should be noting words in your reading that aren’t familiar to you. As a mental exercise, generate a list of synonyms and antonyms. By compiling such lists, you’ll be able to build your vocabulary into an organized structure in your head. It will also be easier to assimilate new words into your active vocabulary if you can easily relate them to other words you already know. For example, if you know what *progressive* means, you’ll understand *regressive* immediately if you think of it as the antonym of *progressive*. Making these kinds of cognitive connections will go a long way toward stocking your vocabulary vault.

One final study exercise for vocabulary building is to practice using each unfamiliar word in a sentence. This will help you to internalize the word and its meaning because you'll be using it *in context*.

We'll be going over some of these concepts in more detail later in this chapter, but for now you should be aware of the following tools you can use to build your GRE vocabulary:

- Record and define unfamiliar words.
- Generate synonyms and antonyms.
- Put unfamiliar words in context by using them in sentences.

WORD GROUPS

While it is helpful to have a broad and diverse (but classically rooted) vocabulary, such as you would be likely to encounter in a graduate-level degree program, the GRE does not test whether you know *exactly* what a particular word means. If you have only an idea of what a word means, you have as good a chance of correctly answering a question as you would if you knew the precise dictionary definition of the word. Learning words in groups based upon similar meanings is an excellent way to expand your useful vocabulary. If you have an idea of what a word means, you can use contextual clues to help nail down the nuances of the correct answer choice.

The words in the list below all mean roughly the same thing. Some of them are different parts of speech, but that's OK. They all have something to do with the concept of criticism, which often appears on the GRE. The goal is to be able to identify words that have similar meanings.

CRITICIZE/CRITICISM

ASPERSION	BELITTLE	BERATE
CALUMNY	CASTIGATE	DECRY
DEFAMATION	DENOOUNCE	DERIDE/DERISIVE
DIATRIBE	DISPARAGE	EXCORIATE
GAIN SAY	HARANGUE	IMPUGN
INVEIGH	LAMBASTE	OBJURGATE
OBLOQUY	OPPROBRIUM	PILLORY
REBUKE	REMONSTRATE	REPREHEND
REPROVE	REVILE	TIRADE
VITUPERATE		

On the test, for instance, you might see a Sentence Equivalence question like this one:

Select the **two** answer choices that, when inserted into the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole **and** yield complete sentences that are similar in meaning.

The angry pedestrian _____ the careless driver for his recklessness.



- A castigated
- B reviled
- C atoned
- D vouchsafed
- E lauded
- F reproved

The blank in this Sentence Equivalence question describes how an angry pedestrian would behave toward a careless and reckless driver. The correct answers are *castigated* (**A**) and *reviled* (**B**). If you know that *castigate* means something like “criticize harshly,” that should be enough to know that *reviled* (which means to assail with harsh language) will yield a sentence that means nearly the same thing. *Reproved* is a tempting but deceptive choice. *Reproved* also has a connotation suggestive of criticism. However, the charge of the word *reproved* is far milder than that of the other two words. Therefore, it would produce a sentence that is much less strident in tone. Only *castigated* and *reviled* produce equivalent sentences.

The *criticize* group is not the only group of synonyms whose members appear frequently on the GRE. There are plenty of others. And lists of synonyms are much easier to learn than many words in isolation. Learn them with a thesaurus. Make synonym index cards based on the common groups of GRE words and peruse those lists periodically.

You can certainly add to the word group lists provided in the appendices to this edition, or you can start to generate your own. In addition to synonyms and antonyms, you can put together lists grouped by etymology, similar meaning, and positive and negative connotations.

If you think this suggestion might be fallacious, consider the following: the words in the following list all have something to do with the concept of falsehood. Their precise meanings vary: *erroneous* means “incorrect,” whereas *mendacious* means “lying.” But the majority of test questions won’t require you to know the exact meanings of these words. You will most likely get the question right if you simply know that these words have something to do with the concept of falsehood. If you do have to differentiate between different shades of meaning, that’s where contextual clues will help you out.

FALSEHOOD

APOCRYPHAL	CANARD	CHICANERY
DISSEMBLE	DUPPLICITY	EQUIVOCATE
ERRONEOUS	ERSATZ	FALLACIOUS
FEIGNED	GUILE	MENDACITY
PERFIDY	PREVARICATE	SPECIOUS
SPURIOUS		

Consider this Text Completion question:

Though he was prone to _____, the corrupt executive was still capable of moments of honesty.



- (A) displeasure
- (B) mendacity
- (C) failure
- (D) levity
- (E) histrionics

The contrast key word "though" indicates that the blank should mean the opposite of "honesty." You might not know the exact denotation of *mendacity*, but because you studied word groups, you'll know that it has the connotation of "false," which will be enough to get the question right.

GREEK AND LATIN ROOTS

Because GRE words are so heavily drawn from Latin and Greek origins, learning word roots can be extremely useful, both in deciphering words with obscure meanings and in guessing intelligently. Studying Latin and Greek roots can allow you to figure out the definitions of words you've never even seen before!

Any individual word root will apply to numerous words, and you'll learn more words in less time if you learn them in groups. For example, once you know that the root PLAC means "to please," you have a hook for remembering the meanings of several words: *placate*, *implacable*, *placid*, *placebo*, and *complacent*.

Sometimes you can use roots to figure out the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Suppose, for example, you come across the word *circumnavigate* and don't know what it means. If you know that the root CIRCUM means "around" and that the root NAV means "ship, sail," then you can guess that *circumnavigate* means "to sail around," as in "*circumnavigate* the globe." Once you've learned the root, you will be able to recognize the meanings of other words with that root, such as *circumvent* or *circitous*.

Consider the word *panoptic*. It comes from the Greek PAN, meaning “all,” and OPTIC, meaning “to see/observe.” If you put it all together, you’ll arrive at a definition like “everything visible in one view.” If you know that, you’ll have an advantage in deconstructing other words that incorporate similar constituent parts. You’ll have an easier time parsing language with words like *panacea*, *optician*, and *pandemonium*.

Roots offer a common denominator for words thousands of years old—but language changes a lot over time, and words take on new meanings or lose old meanings. Roots don’t always give accurate clues about meaning. For example, the word *pediatrician* has PED for a root, and PED has to do with the foot. But a *pediatrician* is a children’s doctor. A *podiatrist* is a foot doctor. The reason for this is that PED in regard to feet is a Latin root but PED in regard to children is a Greek root.

The good news is that these aberrations are precisely that: exceptions that prove the rule. More often than not, you should be able to use etymology to your advantage.

WORDS IN CONTEXT

Learning words in context is one of the best ways for the brain to retain word meanings. In GRE Resources at the back of this book, we’ve not only listed the top 200 GRE words with their definitions, but we’ve also used all of these words *in context* to help you to remember them. After all, the test is trying to measure how well prepared applicants are for graduate-level academic study. Most graduate students spend much of their time deciphering dense, high-level writing. Given that, your best bet is to read material written for an educated audience, at the graduate level.

As mentioned above, reading is ultimately the best way to increase your vocabulary, although it also takes the most time. Of course, some types of reading material contain more GRE vocabulary words than others. You should get into the habit of reading publications written in a sophisticated register with dense prose, such as the *Wall Street Journal* and the *New York Times*. And because you’ll have to read from the computer screen on Test Day, Kaplan recommends that you start reading these publications online, if possible. You might as well start getting accustomed to reading in the testing mode.

This is also a good place to incorporate a technique mentioned earlier: composing practice sentences using the words you’re studying. This will ingrain the words in your mind by situating them within a meaningful context.

PARTS OF SPEECH

The GRE never directly tests your ability to classify words by part of speech, but you will get a higher score on Test Day if you can distinguish nouns, adverbs, adjectives, and verbs. If you know how an answer choice must fit into a sentence, you’ll be better equipped to narrow down the possible answer choices. Use your understanding of grammar and syntax to help you arrive at the correct answer.

Words with Multiple Meanings

Remember that words can have more than one meaning. They can also function as more than one part of speech. Here's a single word used as a noun, adjective, and verb:

As the test tube rested overnight, some *precipitate* formed. (noun)

It would be better to proceed with caution than to take *precipitate* action.
(adjective)

Passage of the resolution could well *precipitate* rebellion. (verb)

The same word, *precipitate*, has vastly different meanings when used in these various forms. As a noun, it means solid matter forming in a solution; as an adjective, it denotes a hasty or rushed action; and, as a verb, it means to force suddenly, often into violence. If you're able to identify the different meanings some words have when they function as different parts of speech, you'll have one more weapon in your arsenal for attacking Sentence Equivalence and Text Completion questions.

Nouns

A noun names a person, place, or thing and answers the questions “Who?” “Where?” or “What?” A noun can function as the subject (“The *eulogy* was eloquent.”) or as the object of a verb (“He wrote an eloquent *eulogy*.”).

If you know the meaning of a word, you can tell if it's a noun by thinking about the way it would be used in a sentence.

- If the word can function as the subject of a sentence, it's a noun.
- If it can be replaced by a nominative pronoun (*he*, *she*, *it*, or *they*), it's a noun.
- If you can put the word *a*, *an*, or *the* in front of it, it's a noun.
- If you don't know the meaning of a word but it has one of the following suffixes, then it's probably a noun.

-ACY	-AGE	-ANCE
-ANCY	-DOM	-ENCE
-ENCY	-ERY	-HOOD
-ICE	-ICS	-ISM
-IST	-ITY	-MENT
-NESS	-OGY	-OR
-RY	-SHIP	-SION
-TION	-TUDE	-URE

Adjectives and Adverbs

An adjective describes a noun, answering the questions “What kind?” “Which one?” or “How many?” In a sentence, you will generally find adjectives right in front of the nouns they describe (“The book is full of *sophomoric* humor.”) or after a form of the verb *to be* or some other verb that links subject and adjective (“The book’s humor is *sophomoric*.”).

If you know the meaning of a word, you can tell if it’s an adjective by thinking about the way the word would be used in a sentence. If the word can be used to describe a noun, it’s an adjective. Some adjectives have comparative and superlative forms (for example, *rife*, *rifer*, and *rifest*; *sanguine*, *more sanguine*, and *most sanguine*).

You should also be able to identify adverbs, which function in the same way as adjectives except that they describe verbs, adjectives, whole sentences, or other adverbs. Most adjectives can be turned into adverbs by adding *-ly* (*harshly*).

If you don’t know the meaning of a word but it has one of the following suffixes, then it’s probably an adjective.

-ABLE	-AL	-ANE
-ANT	-AR	-ENT
-FUL	-IBLE	-IC
-ILE	-INE	-ISH
-IVE	-LESS	-OSE
-OUS		

Verbs

A verb is a word that represents an action, state, or relationship between two or more things. Every sentence must have at least one verb. The main verb usually comes right after the subject (“They *squander* their fortunes.”), but sometimes it is separated from the subject (“The contestant with the second highest vote total *wins* the consolation prize.”), and sometimes it even precedes the subject (“Quickly *flow* the years.”).

If you don’t know the meaning of a word but it has one of the following suffixes, then it’s probably a verb.

-EN	-ESCE
-IFY	-IZE

THE TESTMAKER'S FAVORITE GRE WORDS

The research team at Kaplan keeps tabs on GRE vocabulary words and determines which words appear more frequently than others. The following words all turn up time and again on the GRE, so it makes sense to memorize these words if you don't already know them. Of course, some words appear on the GRE more frequently than others.

The top 12 words on the GRE are these:

ANOMALY	ASSUAGE	ENIGMA
EQUIVOCAL	ERUDITE	FERVID
LUCID	OPAQUE	PLACATE
PRECIPITATE	PRODIGAL	ZEAL

The next 20 most popular words are these:

ABSTAIN	ADULTERATE	APATHY
AUDACIOUS	CAPRICIOUS	CORROBORATE
DESICCATE	ENGENDER	EPHEMERAL
GULLIBLE	HOMOGENEOUS	LACONIC
LAUDABLE	LOQUACIOUS	MITIGATE
PEDANT	PRAGMATIC	PROPRIETY
VACILLATE	VOLATILE	

The Top GRE Words in Context section at the end of this book reviews these and 150 other top GRE words. Make sure you spend the time to get to know these words. At least some of them are bound to appear on the GRE you take.

VOCABULARY CONCEPTS PRACTICE SET

Directions: For each sentence below, choose one word for each blank. Select the words that best fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

1. Historical biographers do more than merely paraphrase objective assessments and empirical (i) _____. There is an inherently subjective aspect to the genre that (ii) _____ the biographer's claim to objective neutrality.



Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
A reminiscences	D disparages
B data	E belies
C speculations	F bolsters

2. The aging engineer found it strange that the (i) _____ etching process she pioneered as a graduate student was still considered (ii) _____ after nearly four decades of continual use.



Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
A porous	D antiquated
B innovative	E translucent
C implausible	F novel

3. Auctions have (i) _____ character: most people only hear about the rare sales in which unique items part for (ii) _____ prices, but there are (iii) _____ auctions where items sell well below their estimates.



Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
A a prestigious	D incongruous	G somber
B an infamous	E unprecedented	H myriad
C a contradictory	F pretentious	I quixotic

Directions: For each of the following questions, choose the **two** answer choices below that, when used to complete the sentence, produce two completed sentences that are similar in meaning.

4. Celebrities who exhibit shameful behavior in public often become the subject of _____.



- [A] gossip
- [B] derision
- [C] provocation
- [D] scorn
- [E] commendation
- [F] prestige

5. Although the scientist was cognizant that such vicissitudes were _____ to the field of quantum mechanics, she was not discouraged.



- [A] salient
- [B] salubrious
- [C] inherent
- [D] helpful
- [E] opprobrious
- [F] endemic

6. High-quality treatment for neuropathic pain is difficult to implement consistently because the scientific research on the subject features strong _____ in the populations studied, especially in children, rendering comparisons impossible.



- [A] zeal
- [B] propriety
- [C] nuance
- [D] differentials
- [E] variance
- [F] justification

VOCABULARY CONCEPTS PRACTICE SET ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. B, E

A key phrase in the first sentence is “objective assessments,” and the missing word parallels this phrase—this missing word is connected to “objective assessments” with the conjunction “and.”

Neither (A) *reminiscences* nor (C) *speculations* correlates with “objective assessments” as well as (B) *data* does. Both *reminiscences* and *speculations* are subjective in nature, whereas “objective assessments” and *data* concern dispassionate evaluation of facts.

Paraphrase the second complex sentence to predict the correct answer: “There is a subjective aspect that _____ their claim to objectivity.” A good prediction is “denies.” Choice (E) *believes* means “to contradict,” so it’s the correct answer. Choices (D) and (F), *disparages* and *bolsters*, have different connotations that are either too negative or too positive, respectively, for the context of this sentence, so they’re incorrect.

2. B, F

The key word “still” allows you to understand the relationship between the blanks; both must contain words with similar meanings. An engineer would not have created a (A) *porous* (full of holes) or (C) *implausible* (difficult to believe) etching process, so the answer for the first blank can only be (B) *innovative*. This also corresponds to the word “pioneered” in the sentence. While the word “strange” might at first indicate a direct contrast between the two blanks, such as (D) *antiquated*, an aging engineer would actually not find it strange if the etching process she developed as a student were currently considered *antiquated*. She also wouldn’t consider it strange for the process to be (E) *translucent* (easily understandable). She would, however, find it quite strange if it were still considered (F) *novel* (new).

3. C, E, H

The first part of the sentence doesn’t have enough information in it for you to fill in the first blank, so you have to read further for clues. Fortunately, it includes a detour road sign (“but”) that contrasts “rare” auctions, where unique items sell for certain prices, with auctions whose items sell for less than anticipated. The word in the first blank that best characterizes these dissimilar auctions is choice (C) *contradictory*. Choices (A) and (B), *prestigious* and *infamous*, would not capture this contrast.

For the second blank, you can paraphrase in order to predict the blank: “There are rare auctions where ‘high’ prices are paid for unique items, but at other auctions, items sell for below their estimates.” If you scan the answer choices, none of the words means exactly that, but (E) *unprecedented*, “like nothing that has come before,”

best completes the meaning of the sentence. A high price for a unique item isn't necessarily (**D**) *incongruous* ("incompatible") or (**F**) *pretentious* ("pompous") because at least one person—the buyer—thought the item was worth what he paid.

Finally, the third blank describes occasions when items sell for less than their estimated value. You know from the detour road sign that this sentence includes a contradiction. Sales where prices are high are described as "rare," so sales where items sell below estimate must be frequent. The answer choice that best matches "frequent" is (**H**) *myriad*, "a great number." Choices (**G**) *somber* ("gloomy") and (**I**) *quixotic* ("foolishly idealistic") make no sense in context.

4. B, D

In this brief sentence, you are not given too many context clues. However, you do know that celebrities are behaving in a "shameful" way that makes them the subject of something. The correct answers will have a negative charge to match "shameful."

Remember, when answering a Sentence Equivalence question, you need to select the two words that complete the sentence in the most similar way. In analyzing the choices, you see that answer choices (**B**) *derision* ("ridicule") and (**D**) *scorn* ("contempt") not only have similar definitions but also give the sentence similar meanings. Do not be tempted by choices (**E**) *commendation* and (**F**) *prestige*. These words may appear similar, but they are not. *Commendation* means "the act of bestowing praise," while *prestige* means "high status or distinction." These two words are not close enough in meaning, and they are too positive. In addition, (**C**) *provocation* does not make sense in the sentence, and (**A**) *gossip*, while appropriate to the context, does not have a matching word to complete the pair.

5. C, F

Paraphrase this sentence: there is something that is discouraging about studying the field of quantum mechanics (i.e., the undefined "vicissitudes" to which it is subject). (**A**) *salient* does not work because there is no other answer choice that means the same thing, and (**B**) *salubrious* and (**D**) *helpful* do not work because they have a positive connotation, which does not make sense with "discouraged." (**C**) *inherent* and (**F**) *endemic* both mean "naturally a part of," and therefore both produce sentences that have the same meaning. Note that (**E**) *opprobrious* yields a sentence that makes sense, but there is no other term that will make a sentence of similar meaning to that one.

6. D, E

This passage is explaining why certain treatment protocols for neuropathy cannot be implemented. The end of the sentence suggests they are not used consistently because the results of studies are very different in the populations studied, making them impossible to compare. Hence, you're looking for two words that have the meaning of "differences" or "divergences." Both will produce sentences that have

the meaning of “the results are based on populations with too many differing characteristics to be reliable.” Choices **(D)** and **(E)**, *differentials* and *variance*, do that nicely. Note that you didn’t need to know the exact definition of either *variance* or *differentials*, but you knew what the correct answers would have to mean, roughly. Knowing the roots of *differentials* and *variance* (*differ* and *vary*) makes the question much easier.

HOW TO APPROACH READING COMPREHENSION

You’re going to spend a great deal of your time breaking down dense, complicated prose passages while taking the GRE. These skills, and the ability to wrestle with some very difficult reading, are exactly what you’ll need for your work in graduate school. Even engineering and science majors will need to read abstruse technical documents or lab reports, so the best way to excel on the test is to review the skills you’ll need to analyze such texts.

BREAKING DOWN THE TEXT

As noted, the texts you’ll encounter on the GRE Verbal Reasoning sections are similar to the complex reading you’ll encounter in graduate school. These principles hold true for every type of question you’ll come across in GRE Reading Comprehension. Keep them in mind as you work through the passages and question sets.

1. Read the first third of the passage.

The first third of a Reading Comprehension passage usually introduces its topic and scope, the author’s main idea or primary purpose, and the overall tone. It almost always hints at the structure that the passage will follow. Before diving into the rest of the passage, try to get a handle on the structure of the passage by reading the first third of it carefully. Look for key words such as *however*, *thus*, or *likewise*. These will help to indicate the direction, shape, and thrust of the passage. Pay close attention to how these key words affect the passage’s tone and structure.

Structure and Tone. A key strategy for Reading Comprehension is to understand not only the passage’s purpose but also its structure and tone. Many question sets will contain a question that concerns how the author organizes or expresses her ideas. Here are some classic GRE passage structures:

- Arguing a position (often a social sciences passage)
- Discussing something specific within a field of study (for example, a passage about Shakespearean sonnets in literature)
- Explaining some significant new findings or research (often a science passage)

Tone refers to an author's attitude toward his topic, or how he expresses a point of view. In passages that cite significant new findings or research, the tone is likely to be academic and detached. In passages that argue a position, the tone may be more forceful and opinionated. In some passages, the author may be describing the opinions of someone else. In this case, the tone might be narrative or descriptive. The tone would be argumentative if the author mentions the opinions of others in order to then debunk them. The correct answer choice for a question about tone will use language similar to that found in the passage; a correct answer choice will not use language more extreme than that used in the passage.

2. Determine the topic, scope, and author's purpose.

Every passage boils down to one or more main ideas. Your job is to cut through the prose and find the main idea. Everything else in the passage supports the main idea. Almost every type of Reading Comprehension question will be easier to answer once you establish the main idea, because correct answer choices will be consistent with it and incorrect choices will not. You can identify the main idea of a passage by determining the topic, scope, and purpose of the passage.

Topic vs. Scope. A topic is broad; its scope is focused. Scope is particularly important because answer choices that go beyond it will always be wrong.

The broad topic of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, for example, would be a lot to cover in 200 words. So if you encounter a passage about *Ulysses*, ask yourself, "What aspect of this topic does the author focus on?" Because of length limitations, it must be a narrow aspect. Whatever it is—the author's use of stream of consciousness, the novel's Homeric influences, its aftermath, the principal characters—is the passage's scope. Answer choices that deal with anything outside this narrowly defined aspect of the topic will be wrong.

Author's Purpose. As an author writes a passage, she chooses to develop it by including certain aspects of the topic at hand and excluding others. Those choices reflect the author's purpose and main idea. From the broadly stated topic (for example, solving world hunger), identify the narrower scope (a high-yield farming technique for doing so). That scope leads you to the author's purpose (to describe a new farming technique and its promise) and main idea (that the technology currently exists to solve the problem of world hunger). Once you identify the author's purpose, you will be better able to answer the harder questions associated with a particular passage. Knowing the author's purpose will allow you to more easily answer questions about the author's main idea. It will also help you to make inferences about her reason for including a particular passage or paragraph.

As you read each passage, remember to do the following:

- Identify the topic.
- Narrow it down to its precise scope.
- Identify the author's purpose.

3. Read strategically.

This principle highlights the difference between passive and active reading. Most reading is done passively. For example, you might read a magazine article or novel from beginning to end, without assimilating the details, themes, or connections. That kind of reading is inappropriate for the GRE.

Instead, you'll need to read *actively*. This means you'll have to get good at paraphrasing, looking for key words, and anticipating the direction the author is taking. These strategies help you think carefully about what you read *as you read it*. When you read actively, you don't just absorb the passage—you attack it! You can be an active reader by doing the following:

- Thinking about what you're reading
- Paraphrasing complex ideas
- Asking yourself questions about the passage as you read
- Jotting down notes about the author's arguments and counterarguments

Now that you have a grip on the argument(s) being made in support of the author's position, try to identify the counterarguments. The Verbal Reasoning portion of the GRE obliges you to wrestle a bit with the text. That's part of reading actively, which is exactly what you'll be doing in graduate school. It's not enough just to acknowledge and accept what's presented in the text as received wisdom. Note that how you engage with and analyze a passage will inevitably vary from passage to passage.

Try your hand at a short passage to get the hang of breaking it down. You can use the steps of the process above to help you deconstruct Reading Comprehension passages such as this one:

The admissions policy at Carver City University stipulates that in considering applications for freshman admission from potential students who meet the entrance requirements, preference will be given to high school graduates who are permanent residents of Carver City. This policy is followed consistently by all admissions officers; however, although over 600 students have graduated from Carver City's high schools in the past year, some slots in the freshman class of 200 are filled by students who are not permanent residents of Carver City.

1. Read the first third of the passage.

The topic here is readily obvious: it's college admissions. The first sentence sets up the basic facts of the situation. The key word to take note of—found in the second sentence—is *however*. It indicates that the author is setting up a conclusion that contradicts what you might expect from the evidence. In a passage this short, the structure is fairly simple as well. The first sentence presents the information you need about the admissions process, and the second presents an outcome that is counterintuitive to that evidence.

2. Determine the topic, scope, and author's purpose.

As noted above, the topic is fairly obvious: college admissions at Carver City University. The specific scope is the university's admissions policy relating to high school graduates from Carver City itself. The author seems to be concerned mostly with the dearth of freshmen at Carver City University who are also permanent residents of Carver City. The author cites the friendly admissions policy for local applicants as part of his argument.

3. Read strategically.

Now, let's nail down what the author is actually saying. Trying to figure out the author's position tests our understanding of the passage's complicated logic. It's a bit tricky with this particular passage because the position is not explicitly stated. There's not a succinct thesis statement (a statement of the author's main idea), so you'll have to unpack things a bit. The author is trying to assert something about the high school graduates who are permanent residents of Carver City. The author makes sure you know that in the last year, 600 students have graduated from Carver City's high schools. If any qualified Carver City resident who wants a slot in the class may have one, but not every slot in the class is filled by a Carver City resident, something must be amiss, as the freshman class consists of only 200 students. Since Carver City high school grads have preference and there are more than enough of them (600 to fill 200 spots), they must either be unqualified in some way or they must not be applying to Carver City University. Remember the admissions policy states that successful applicants must meet entrance requirements. Therefore, some of the slots in the freshman class must have been filled by applicants who both met entrance requirements and were not permanent residents of Carver City. You could paraphrase the position as "There were some slots in the freshman class for which no qualified permanent resident applied."

Now consider what the author is implying. Though the author does not explicitly state it, he is intimating something about the previous year's graduating class. It could be that not enough qualified applicants chose to apply or that those who did apply did not meet entrance requirements. This is the kind of active reading of the text you'll need to do on the Reading Comprehension questions on the GRE.

READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES PRACTICE SET

Questions 1 – 3 are based on the passage below.

Among the earliest published literature by African Americans were slave narratives—autobiographical accounts of the lives of slaves who lived primarily in the American South in the early to mid-1800s. These accounts—which included letters, notes, and diaries—often discussed escapes, slave auctions, interactions with plantation owners and abolitionists, and the forced separation of family members, often parents and children. Some of the best-known slave narratives were written by Josiah Henson and Frederick Douglass. In the last three decades, a renewed awareness of the lives of enslaved African Americans has prompted a wave of novels and biographies, sometimes called “neo-slave narratives,” in which modern writers such as Toni Morrison and Octavia Butler offer a historical or fictional representation of the lives of slaves.

1. The author would likely consider each of the following a slave narrative EXCEPT:

- (A) an autobiography by a freeborn African American man who lived in New Orleans in the 1830s.
- (B) personal papers of African American field hands who were enslaved in Alabama.
- (C) correspondence between two sisters who were auctioned to different plantation owners in rural Georgia.
- (D) a letter smuggled to an escaped slave from her brother, a slave in South Carolina.
- (E) the diary of a Mississippi slave who was captured while attempting to escape.

2. Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

With which of the following statements would the author be likely to agree?

- [A] No neo-slave narratives were published later than the early to mid-1800s.
- [B] Neo-slave narratives are written primarily by women, while most slave narratives were written by men.
- [C] Some neo-slave narratives are fictional, but all slave narratives are first-hand accounts.

3. The passage provides the most support for which one of the following conclusions?

- (A) The work of abolitionists in the Northern states helped bring about the publication of slave narratives.
- (B) All of the narratives published in the early to mid-1800s were written by slaves living in Southern states.
- (C) Most slave narratives were not published until over a century after they were written.
- (D) In the mid-1900s, fewer people knew about slave narratives than have people in the last ten years.
- (E) Neo-slave narratives such as those by Butler and Morrison have helped to bring attention to slave narratives by earlier writers.



Questions 4 – 6 are based on the passage below.

The problematic relationship between Heidegger's political views and his seminal status as a philosopher is a continuing point of contention in the historical assessment of his achievements. His contributions to Continental philosophy in works such as *Sein und Zeit* have been read, in some circles, through the critical lens of his affiliation with National Socialism in Nazi Germany during the Second World War. His writing during that time covered a broad range of subjects, including philosophy, politics, and aesthetics. His work on ontology directly influenced his contemporary philosophical thinkers, such as Jean-Paul Sartre. Though he is widely regarded within philosophical circles as one of the preeminent luminaries, along with Husserl, in the modern development of ontology, certain scholars and thinkers militate against the value of his thought in its entirety. To regard Heidegger's work highly would be, in their eyes, to absolve him of his support of the politics of Nazism, even though he is being evaluated solely on the basis of his contributions to the study of philosophy and not in any political context.

4. Select the sentence in the passage in which the author summarizes the competing attitudes toward Heidegger within the academic community.
5. Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.
The author asserts which of the following about Heidegger?
- (A) Some academics view him positively for both his political and philosophical work.
 - (B) His legacy has been affected by opinions he expressed during World War II.
 - (C) Some academics view him positively, while others cannot countenance him at all.



6. Which conclusion is implied by the author in his description of the status of Heidegger’s legacy?



- (A) Heidegger’s work should not be given serious recognition due to his political views.
- (B) The Second World War fostered a climate of intellectual innovation in Europe.
- (C) It is possible to critically evaluate Heidegger’s contributions to philosophy while not absolving him of responsibility for his political views.
- (D) Scholars should consider the entire body of work of a thinker, in every field to which he or she contributed, when assessing that thinker’s legacy in any one field.
- (E) It is impossible to divorce the study of politics from the study of philosophy.

In the chapters that follow this one, you will learn how to approach the three basic types of Verbal Reasoning problems on the GRE. Although the format of these problems—Text Completions, Sentence Equivalence, and Reading Comprehension—varies from problem to problem, one thing is the same: they are all built on the foundations you studied in this chapter.

READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES PRACTICE SET ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. A

The first two sentences outline defining characteristics of slave narratives and provide examples of the kind of content they might include. Of the answer choices, the only one that falls outside the scope of the question is (A); slave narratives were written by enslaved people, not by free people. Choices (B), (C), (D), and (E) all fit the passage’s criteria in terms of subject matter, authorship, and geography; choice (A) is the only one that deviates.

2. C

The passage’s last sentence tells us that neo-slave narratives have been published in the last three decades, so clearly they have been published more recently than the mid-1800s. Choice (A) is incorrect. Although the authors of the slave narratives mentioned are both men and the authors of the neo-slave narratives mentioned are both women, there’s no basis for us to conclude that this distinction holds true on a broader scale, (B). Only choice (C) addresses a distinction the author draws between slave and neo-slave narratives. The passage supports the statement that all slave narratives were autobiographical, whereas neo-slave narratives may be biographical or fictional.

3. D

This question asks us to evaluate which conclusions follow logically from what the author says. The mention of “renewed awareness” implies a previous lapse or reduction in interest, so (D) is a reasonable conclusion. The passage doesn’t mention abolitionists or the process that led to the narratives’ publication, so (A) is out of scope. The language of (B) is too extreme; you’re told that the narratives were primarily, not completely, authored by slaves from the South. Choice (C) directly contradicts the first sentence of the passage. Choice (E) reverses the order of events presented in the passage; renewed interest in the narratives led to Butler and Morrison’s writing, not the other way around.

4. Though he is widely regarded within philosophical circles as one of the pre-eminent luminaries, along with Husserl, in the modern development of ontology, certain scholars and thinkers militate against the value of his thought in its entirety.

The sentence you’re looking for is one that sums up how the intellectual community, as a whole, views Heidegger. This means the sentence should encompass all parties, both those that are receptive to him and those that view him negatively. The second sentence, “His contributions to Continental philosophy in works such as *Sein und Zeit* have been read, in some circles, through the critical lens of his affiliation with National Socialism in Nazi Germany during the Second World War,” may be tempting, but this is telling you the way in which his work has been interpreted,

not the reactions or attitudes of the academic community. It also doesn't mention any "competing" feelings toward his work. The last sentence provides justification for *why* certain scholars view him as they do, but it does not account for the other schools of thought. The next-to-last sentence, "Though he is widely regarded within philosophical circles as one of the preeminent luminaries, along with Husserl, in the modern development of ontology, certain scholars and thinkers militate against the value of his thought in its entirety," sums up the complete range of reaction to Heidegger across the academic community.

5. B, C

Choice **(A)** is incorrect. The author nowhere explicitly states or implies that anyone has a positive reaction to Heidegger's political views. She only intimates that scholars working in the study of philosophy have been influenced by his work in that field. Choice **(B)** is correct because the author states that Heidegger's work, even in philosophy, has been viewed through this "critical lens." Answer choice **(C)** is also correct. The author cites philosophers, such as Sartre, who have reacted positively to Heidegger's philosophy and asserts that those who view him negatively do so because they cannot abide absolving him of guilt for his support of the Nazis.

6. C

This question asks you to engage the text at a deep level and to infer what the author is suggesting. It is important to pay close attention to the author's tone. The passage's main idea is the evaluation of a thinker's body of work by academic scholars in different fields. The author points out both Heidegger's tremendous accomplishments in the field of philosophy and his less-than-admirable involvement with the Nazi party. Choice **(B)** is dealt with nowhere in the passage. Choice **(E)** goes beyond the scope of the passage. Choice **(A)** is incorrect, because the author emphasizes Heidegger's influence on philosophers like Sartre and makes certain to point out that it is in "their eyes" that Heidegger is so viewed, not the author's own. Choice **(D)** is incorrect because it is the opposite of what the author implies. Choice **(C)** is the correct answer because, in the last sentence of the passage, the author stresses that it is only Heidegger's contributions to philosophy that are being considered, not his political views. The author seems to be suggesting that the two can be judged apart from one another.

CHAPTER 5

Text Completion

INTRODUCTION TO TEXT COMPLETION

In the Text Completion question type, you will be asked to select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Each question may include as many as three blanks.

You will find about six Text Completion questions in each Verbal Reasoning section. In each of these questions, one or more words from the sentence will be missing. This question type tests your ability to read critically—to recognize the point of the sentence and find the best word(s) to fit this meaning.

The directions for Text Completion will look like this:

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.

A Text Completion question with one blank will look like this:

Sample Question

Exit Section Review Mark Help Back Next

1. Organic farming is more labor intensive and thus initially more _____, but its long-term costs may be less than those of conventional farming.

uncommon
stylish
restrained
expensive
difficult

Click to select your choice.

A Text Completion question with two blanks will look like this:

Sample Question

Exit Section Review Mark Help Back Next

1. The sisters could not have been more different; Kate, the older of the two, was (i) _____ and quiet, but Jacie was quick, unpredictable, and well known for her (ii) _____ nature.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
petulant	mercurial
tempestuous	boring
placid	pliant

Click to select your choices.

A Text Completion question with three blanks will look like this:

Sample Question

Exit Section Review Mark Help Back Next

1. As a result of the (i) _____ pace of life, urban living
(ii) _____ many young professionals the opportunity to
(iii) _____ their lives with a sense of constant excitement.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
intrinsic	instigates	eschew
ephemeral	affords	inter
frenetic	arrogates	imbue

Click to select your choices.

THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR TEXT COMPLETION (ONE-BLANK)

- STEP 1 Read the sentence, looking for clues.**
- STEP 2 Predict an answer.**
- STEP 3 Select the choice that most closely matches your prediction.**
- STEP 4 Check your answer.**

HOW THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR TEXT COMPLETION (ONE-BLANK) WORKS

Now let's discuss how the Kaplan Method will help you answer these questions correctly.

► STEP 1

Read the sentence, looking for clues.

There are always clues in the sentence that will point you to the right answer. The missing words in Text Completion questions will usually have a relationship with key words in the sentence. Key words and key phrases are descriptors that lead to the meaning of the missing words.

A road sign is a structural key word that signals a connection between ideas; it also determines the direction of the relationship. There are road signs in the GRE that tell you to go straight ahead and those that tell you to take a detour. A semicolon also functions as a road sign, indicating a close connection between two clauses.

“Straight-ahead” road signs are used to make one part of the sentence support or elaborate upon another part. They continue the sentence in the same direction. The positive or negative connotation of what follows is not changed by these clues.

“Detour” road signs change the direction of the sentence. They make one part of the sentence contradict or qualify another part. The positive or negative connotation of an answer is changed by these clues.

Review the following examples of road signs. Interpreting the road sign will help you to determine which way the sentence is going and predict what words will best complete the blanks.

Straight-ahead road signs:

And
Since
Also
Thus
Because
; (semicolon)
Likewise
Moreover
Similarly
In addition
Consequently

Detour road signs:

But
Despite
Yet
However
Unless
Rather
Although
While
On the other hand
Unfortunately
Nonetheless
Conversely

► STEP 2**Predict an answer.**

Once you've found the road sign and the key word(s) relevant to the blank, predict an answer for the blank. Your prediction does not have to be a sophisticated or complex word or phrase; it just needs to be a paraphrase that logically fits into the sentence. By predicting, you avoid the temptation of trying every answer choice on its own, which can take up valuable time on Test Day.

► STEP 3**Select the choice that most closely matches your prediction.**

Quickly go through the choices, see which one most closely matches, and eliminate whichever choices do not fit your prediction. If none of the choices match your prediction, reread the question and revisit Steps 1 and 2.

► STEP 4**Check your answer.**

This step is simply double-checking that you did your work correctly and that your answer choice is correct in context. If your answer makes sense when you read your choice back into the sentence, you can confirm and move on. If your choice does not make sense when you read it back into the sentence, you should reread the question and revisit Steps 1–3.

HOW TO APPLY THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR TEXT COMPLETION (ONE-BLANK)

Now let's apply the Kaplan Method to a Text Completion (One-Blank) question:

The yearly financial statement of a large corporation may seem _____ at first, but the persistent reader soon finds its pages of facts and figures easy to decipher.



- (A) bewildering
- (B) surprising
- (C) inviting
- (D) misguided
- (E) uncoordinated

► STEP 1

Read the sentence, looking for clues.

The sentence contains the detour road sign *but*, which indicates that the correct answer will mean the opposite of another key word or key phrase in the sentence. The key phrase to note in this example is “easy to decipher.”

► STEP 2

Predict an answer.

Knowing that the blank must contrast with the phrase “easy to decipher,” you can predict that the missing word will be similar to “difficult to understand.”

► STEP 3

Select the choice that most closely matches your prediction.

Quickly go through the choices and see which one most closely matches “difficult to understand,” which in this case is choice (A) *bewildering*.

► STEP 4

Check your answer.

Plugging the word *bewildering* into the sentence fits the context: “The yearly financial statement of a large corporation may seem *bewildering* at first, but the persistent reader soon finds its pages of facts and figures easy to decipher.”

Now let's apply the Kaplan Method to a second Text Completion (One-Blank) question:

Although the initial cost of installing solar panels to produce electricity can be _____, the financial benefits are realized for years to come in the form of reduced electric bills.



- (A) encouraging
- (B) minimal
- (C) exciting
- (D) misleading
- (E) exorbitant

► STEP 1

Read the sentence, looking for clues.

The sentence contains the detour road sign *although*, which indicates that the correct answer will mean the opposite of a key word or key phrase in the sentence. The key phrase to note in this example is “reduced electric bills.”

► STEP 2

Predict an answer.

Knowing that the blank must contrast with the phrase “reduced electric bills,” you can predict that the correct answer will be similar to “increased or high payments or costs.”

► STEP 3

Select the choice that most closely matches your prediction.

Quickly go through the five choices and see which one most closely matches “increased or high payments or costs,” which in this case is choice (E) *exorbitant*.

► STEP 4

Check your answer.

Plugging the word *exorbitant* into the sentence fits the context: “Although the initial cost of installing solar panels to produce electricity can be *exorbitant*, the financial benefits are realized for years to come in the form of reduced electric bills.”

THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR TEXT COMPLETION (TWO-BLANK AND THREE-BLANK)

- STEP 1** Read the sentence, looking for clues.
- STEP 2** Predict an answer for the easier/easiest blank.
- STEP 3** Select the choice that most closely matches your prediction.
- STEP 4** Predict and select for the remaining blanks.
- STEP 5** Check your answers.

HOW THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR TEXT COMPLETION (Two-BLANK AND THREE-BLANK) WORKS

Now let's discuss how the Kaplan Method for Text Completion changes when there are multiple blanks.

► STEP 1

Read the sentence, looking for clues.

This step is the same.

► STEP 2

Predict an answer for the easier/easiest blank.

Instead of immediately making a prediction for the first blank, take a moment to identify the easier/easiest blank to work with. Once you've found the road sign and the key word(s) relevant to the easier/easiest blank, predict an answer for that blank.

► STEP 3

Select the choice that most closely matches your prediction.

This step is the same.

► STEP 4

Predict and select for the remaining blanks.

Once you have completed the easier/easiest blank, you have more context in which to interpret the remaining blanks.

For two-blank Text Completions, use the context to help you choose the answer for the remaining blank. If the answers for the second blank are not working out, you know you need to go back to Step 2.

For three-blank Text Completions, repeat Steps 2 and 3 for the next easiest blank. You now have two completed blanks to provide context for the last, most difficult blank. This way, your approach to two- and three-blank questions is just a logical extension of your approach to one-blank questions.

► STEP 5

Check your answers.

This step is the same.

HOW TO APPLY THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR TEXT COMPLETION (TWO-BLANK AND THREE-BLANK)

Now let's apply the Kaplan Method to a Text Completion (Two-Blank) question:

Everyone believed the team was favored with athletic talent and a seasoned, successful coaching staff; consequently, it was difficult to (i) _____ why the team was (ii) _____ so badly against one of the worst teams in the division.



Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
A fathom	D elevating
B interpolate	E dominating
C explore	F floundering

► STEP 1

Read the sentence, looking for clues.

In this sentence, the straight-ahead road sign “consequently” indicates that the correct answer will support or elaborate on another word or phrase in the text. The key word to note in this example is “badly.”

► STEP 2

Predict an answer for the easier/easiest blank.

Knowing that the second blank must support or elaborate on the phrase “so badly,” you can predict that the correct answer will be similar to “not doing very well.”

► STEP 3

Select the answer choice that most closely matches your prediction.

Quickly go through the three choices and see which one most closely matches “not doing very well,” which, in this case, is choice (F) *floundering*.

► STEP 4

Predict and select for the remaining blanks.

Once you have completed the easier blank, you have a context in which to interpret the remaining missing word.

For the remaining blank, select the choice that will most logically complete the sentence. The first clause in the sentence indicates that the team should be good. However, the team is doing poorly, and this is “difficult” for everyone because it does

not make sense. In other words, it is hard to understand. The answer choice most like “understand” is **(A) fathom**.

STEP 5

Check your answers.

Plugging the selected words into the sentence fits the context: “Everyone believed the team was favored with athletic talent and a seasoned, successful coaching staff; consequently, it was difficult to *fathom* why the team was *floundering* so badly against one of the worst teams in the division.”

Now let’s apply the Kaplan Method to a Text Completion (Three-Blank) question:

It seemed there would be no resolving the matter since both sides felt they had reached an (i) _____; neither side would (ii) _____, and the resulting (iii) _____ would keep their relationship strained and fragile for years to come.



Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
A apogee	D capitulate	G acrimony
B epiphany	E regress	H cacophony
C impasse	F impugn	I sinecure

STEP 1

Read the sentence, looking for clues.

In this sentence, there are clues in the phrases “no resolving the matter” and “strained and fragile,” which, along with the straight-ahead road signs “since” and “and,” suggest that the correct answers are going to describe or support a conflict between disagreeing parties. In this example, you may already sense the words that complete at least one of the blanks just from the construction of the sentence.

STEP 2

Predict an answer for the easier/easiest blank.

Determine that the answer for the first blank must support or elaborate on the phrase “no resolving the matter.”

STEP 3

Select the answer choice that most closely matches your prediction.

Quickly go through the choices and see which one most closely matches “no resolving the matter.” You can predict the answer will be **(C) impasse**.

► STEP 4

Predict and select for the remaining blanks.

For the remaining blanks, select the choice that will most logically complete the sentence. The sentence tells us the sides are at an *impasse*, or blocked path. Predict the answers for the second and third blanks by thinking how groups at an impasse would feel and act. Determine that they are not willing to (D) *capitulate*, or give in on their demands, and that the result would be (G) *acrimony*, or bitter feelings, between the two sides.

► STEP 5

Check your answers.

Plugging the words *impasse*, *capitulate*, and *acrimony* into the sentence fits the context: “It seemed there would be no resolving the matter since both sides felt they had reached an *impasse*; neither side would *capitulate*, and the resulting *acrimony* would keep their relationship strained and fragile for years to come.”

KAPLAN’S ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR TEXT COMPLETION QUESTIONS

Look for what’s directly implied and not an ambiguous interpretation

The questions you’ll encounter are written in sophisticated but still logical and straightforward prose. Therefore, the correct answer is the one most directly implied by the meanings of the words in the sentence. These sentences are constructed to allow you to identify the answer using the inferential strategies you just practiced.

Don’t be too creative

Read the sentence literally, not imaginatively. Pay attention to the meaning of the words instead of to any associations or feelings that might come up for you.

Paraphrase long or complex sentences

You may encounter a sentence that, because of its length or structure, is hard to get a handle on. When faced with a complex sentence, slow down and put it in your own words. You could break it into pieces as well and tackle one phrase at a time.

Use word roots

In the GRE Resources section at the back of this book, you can learn the Latin and Greek roots of many common GRE words. If you can’t figure out the meaning of a word, take a look at its root to try to get close to its meaning. Etymology can often provide clues to meaning, especially when you couple a root definition with the word in context.

TEXT COMPLETION PRACTICE SET

Try the following Text Completion questions using the Kaplan Method for Text Completion. If you’re up to the challenge, time yourself; on Test Day, you’ll want to spend only 1 to 1.5 minutes on each question, depending on the number of blanks.

1. The young man always had to have the last word; he would rather be disliked than _____.



- (A) gainsaid
- (B) selfish
- (C) remembered
- (D) praised
- (E) different

2. The giant squid’s massive body, adapted for deep-sea life, breaks apart in the reduced pressures of shallower ocean depths, making the search for an intact specimen one of the most _____ quests in all of marine biology.



- (A) meaningful
- (B) elusive
- (C) popular
- (D) expensive
- (E) profitable

3. Although well built and well kept, the little brick house seemed

- (i) _____ compared to the ornate, almost (ii)_____ new house beside it.



Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
A impressive	D translucent
B dilapidated	E diminutive
C desirable	F ostentatious

4. The (i) _____ gave such an impassioned speech that even the most forlorn members of the crowd were briefly moved to (ii) _____.



<u>Blank (i)</u>	<u>Blank (ii)</u>
A orator	D despair
B miscreant	E duress
C interloper	F ebullience

5. His explosive, rude remarks convinced many that he was (i) _____ and of (ii) _____ character, suddenly making his future as a politician seem (iii) _____.



<u>Blank (i)</u>	<u>Blank (ii)</u>	<u>Blank (iii)</u>
A indifferent	D courageous	G guaranteed
B charming	E virtuous	H precarious
C volatile	F ignoble	I facetious

TEXT COMPLETION PRACTICE SET ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. A

The semicolon between these clauses is a straight-ahead road sign; these two ideas are closely related or elaborate upon each other. Since the blank is in the second clause, look to the first for direction. There you discover that this person always has to be right or have the last word in an argument. The second clause will be consistent with this notion; it explains just how much he needs to have the last word. He would rather be disliked than have what happen? A good prediction would be: “He’d rather be disliked than contradicted.”

Choice (A) *gainsaid* matches the prediction, but look at the others just to be sure. Scanning the other choices quickly, you see that all of the remaining options do not support the first part of the sentence. None of these other choices reinforces the idea that he always has to be right, so even if you aren’t familiar with the word *gainsaid*, you can still get the right answer.

2. B

The key word here is “intact,” which means that although specimens have been collected, they have rarely (if ever) been in one piece when recovered. You can fairly assume that recovering an intact specimen is difficult. When you look for a synonym for “difficult” in the answer choices, you recognize *elusive* (B) as your answer.

3. B, F

In this case, the second blank is easier to predict than the first, so start with that one. The word “almost” before the second blank tells you the correct choice will be a word that means nearly the same as “ornate.” Something *ostentatious* is considered showy, excessive, or ornate, so the correct choice is (F).

There are several road signs, key words, and phrases in this sentence that give clues. “Although” with “compared” tells you there is something different about the two houses. The detour road sign “although” allows us to predict that the choice in the first blank will have a meaning opposite to “ornate” and will be close in meaning to “plain.” Such a condition is not considered *impressive* (A) or *desirable* (C), so the correct choice is (B) *dilapidated*.

4. A, F

The key phrase for the first blank is “impassioned speech.” You can tell the correct answer for the first blank is someone who can speak expressively. *Miscreants* (B) and *interlopers* (C) are not necessarily excellent speakers, but *orators* are. The correct choice is (A).

For the second blank, the key words are “impassioned” and “moved,” which tell you the speaker’s words had a positive effect on the crowd. Since *despair* (**D**) and *duress* (**E**) are not positive, the answer is (**F**) *ebullience*.

5. C, F, H

For the first blank, the key phrase is “explosive, rude remarks.” Choice (**A**) *indifferent* suggests neutrality, but being explosive and rude is far from being neutral. The second choice, *charming* (**B**), does not make sense because someone who is “explosive” and “rude” is not seen as being charming. Choice (**C**) *volatile* means “unstable,” the same as “explosive.”

Since we know the subject of the sentence is explosive, rude, and volatile, we can predict his character will be seen in negative ways. Because *courageous* and *virtuous* have positive connotations, choice (**F**) *ignoble* is the correct choice.

With the information that he is explosive, rude, volatile, and ignoble, predict what kind of “future as a politician” he will have. This is the key phrase for identifying the third blank. His character suggests he is not popular, so we can conclude his future is not (**G**) *guaranteed*. Choice (**I**) *facetious* means “flippant,” which does not make sense as a description of the politician’s future. Choice (**H**) *precarious* means “uncertain,” which fits the context of the sentence and is the correct choice.

Verbal Practice Tests

1. Although she earned her fame for her striking murals, the artist felt that her sculpture deserved greater _____.



- disdain
- acclaim
- deliberation
- viewing
- publicity

Here, the word *although* is a classic structural clue. It tells you that you can expect a change of direction in the sentence. The first half tells you that the artist became famous as a muralist, but that she thought her sculpture deserved more BLANK. The word ***although*** tells you that she must think her sculptures are even better than her murals, and that they merit more praise, or ***acclaim***.

Look for What's Directly Implied and Expect Cliches

We're not dealing with poetry here. These sentences aren't excerpted from the works of Toni Morrison or William Faulkner. The correct answer is the one most directly implied by the meanings of the words in the sentence. Very often, for example, the definition of the missing word is provided in the sentence:

2. Because Gould's theory has been neither completely rejected nor completely accepted by the scientific community, its status remains _____.



- repudiated
- sanctioned
- quizzical
- preferable
- debatable

Here, choice (5), ***debatable***, means "neither completely rejected nor completely accepted."

Sometimes you can choose the correct answer because the missing words are part of familiar-sounding phrases or because they simply sound right in the context of the sentence:

3. The increasing acceptance of the notion that the news media is not a(n) _____ commentator upon events, but rather, a mouthpiece for the vested interests of its powerful owners, demonstrates the public's growing _____ large corporations.



- disinterested...mistrust of
- meddlesome...suspicion of
- official...apprehension of
- impartial...satisfaction with
- manipulative...confusion with

In the above example, the correct answer, choice (1), works because the phrases *disinterested commentator* and *growing mistrust of simply sound* correct.

Look for "Structural Road Signs"

Some words such as *since, however, or because--* give clues to the structure of the sentence that will point you to the right answer. The following are road signs found in GRE CAT sentence completions:

Straight-Ahead Road Signs

These make one part of the sentence support or elaborate on another part. They continue the sentence in the same direction. Examples include: *and, similarly, in addition, since, also, thus, because, ; (semicolon), and likewise.*

Detour Road Signs

These words indicate a change in the direction of the sentence. They make one part of the sentence contradict or qualify another part. Examples include: *but, despite, yet, however, unless, rather, although, while, unfortunately, and nonetheless.*

Watch Out for Common Wrong-Answer Types

If you get stumped on any GRE CAT sentence completion, you **can** still earn points by using the process of elimination. Do this by ruling out as many wrong answer choices as you can, and then picking from the remaining choices. Here are some common **wrong** answer types to look out for:

Half-Right/Half-Wrong

In a sentence that contains two blanks, one of the two words provided in a given answer choice fits while the other one doesn't. Make sure that both words fit the context of the sentence!

Au Contraire

In a sentence that contains one blank, the word in the given answer choice means exactly the opposite of the word you're looking for.

Clunkers

The word(s) in a given answer choice simply do not sound right in the context of the sentence.

FILL IN THE BLANK

When working through a sentence completion question:

- Look for clues in the sentence
- Focus on what's directly implied
- Pay attention to 'structural road signs'

Drill

In the following examples, test your knowledge of sentence completion road signs by selecting the word that most correctly completes the sentence.

1. The singer's lyrics were quite lovely, but her vocal tone was extremely (harsh, melodious).
2. Fred was so annoyed with his publicist that he repeatedly (praised, lambasted) him in public.
3. Because Mabel had the reputation of being a mediocre cook, most believed her chances of winning the bake-off were (good, slim).
4. Despite the fact that the racehorse's performance in recent competitions had been disappointing, the oddsmakers were predicting a (win, disappointment) at the Derby.
5. Many felt the rules for the scholarship competition had been unfair and, furthermore, the judges were (biased, fair).
6. Although they appear quite cuddly, brown bears actually pose a large (threat, attraction) to tourists.

THE KAPLAN FOUR-STEP METHOD

Now that you have learned the basics, you're ready to learn Kaplan's strategic approach to sentence completions on the GRE CAT. Approaching sentence completions in a systematic manner is the best way to avoid common pitfalls and improve your score.

① Read the Whole Sentence

- Look for road signs to help you determine what type of word you're looking for.
- If the sentence is long or clumsy, rephrase the sentence in your own words.

② Predict an Answer

- In two-blank questions, try to predict for both **blanks**.
- Use the road signs and logic you found in Step 1 to determine the direction in which the sentence is heading.

Scan the Answer Choices, Choosing the One That Best Fits Your Prephrase

- Look for those that match your prediction.
- Eliminate answer choices that don't come close to your prediction.
- On two-blank sentences, work with one blank at a **time**, eliminating answer choices as you go.



④ Read Your Selected Answer Choice Back into the Sentence

- If it makes sense, you have a winner.
- If it doesn't make sense, go back to the answer choices and find one that works better.
- If you get stuck, eliminate answer choices that you know are wrong and guess among the remaining choices.

Try It Out

Let's apply the Kaplan Four-Step Method for sentence completions to an example.

4. We will face the idea of old age with _____ as long as we believe that it invariably brings poverty, isolation, and illness.



- regret
- apprehension
- enlightenment
- veneration
- reverence

- ❶ Let's begin by reading the whole sentence strategically. Immediately note the structural clue ***as long as***. This phrase will tell us what to expect when we prepare to fill in the blank. The sentence tells us that old age brings **poverty**, **isolation**, and **illness**. Naturally, therefore, we would face it with something like "fear."

- ❷ Now it's time to predict our answer. As we decided in Step 1, we should look in the answer choices for a word that means **fear**.

- ❸ Here's where we scan the answer choices and look for one that best fits our predicted answer. **Apprehension** means "fear," so choice (2) is our best answer. But let's eliminate some answers that we know are wrong, just to be sure. Choice 1, **regret**, is tempting, but you feel regret for something that has already happened, not for something you will face in the future. **Veneration** and **reverence** both mean "great respect," so we can eliminate choices 4 and 5, too.

- ❹ Now we'll plug our answer into the sentence: **We will face the idea of old age with apprehension as long as we believe that it invariably brings poverty, isolation, and illness**. This sentence certainly makes sense, **so** we have found our winner!

PRACTICE SET

Now try the following sentence completion questions on your own, using the Kaplan Four-Step Method. Time yourself: Give yourself a maximum of 30–45 seconds to do each example.

1. Despite much informed _____, the relationship between sunspot cycles and the earth's weather remains _____



- argument ... decisive
- confusion ... tenuous
- conjecture ... ambiguous
- evidence ... clear
- analysis ... systematic

2. As a consequence of the Antarctic's _____ climate, the only forms of plant life to be found in the continent's interior are a few _____ lichens and mosses that cling to the frozen rocks.



- frigid ... hardy
- extreme ... mysterious
- harsh ... luxuriant
- freezing ... complex
- changing ... tiny

3. Conflict between generations may be a problem that has persisted for centuries, but the nature and intensity of the conflict obviously _____ in response to changes in social and economic conditions.



- increases
- disappears
- declines
- varies
- wanes

Think about how you solved these sentence completion questions. To maximize your score, it's important to start practicing the techniques we covered in this chapter. On the pages that follow, you'll find sets of GRE sentence completion practice questions that will help you to hone your skills with this question type. Try these practice sets under testlike conditions, moving from one question to the next at a rapid pace. Complete, strategic explanations to all of these questions follow so that you can check your answers and learn the most efficient means for completing each question correctly.

CHAPTER 6

Sentence Equivalence

INTRODUCTION TO SENTENCE EQUIVALENCE

Each Verbal Reasoning section features approximately four Sentence Equivalence questions. In each sentence, one word will be missing, and you must identify two correct words to complete the sentence. The correct answer choices, when used in the sentence, will result in the same meaning for *both* sentences. This question type tests your ability to figure out how a sentence should be completed by using the meaning of the entire sentence.

The directions for Sentence Equivalence will look like this:

Select the **two** answer choices that, when inserted into the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole **and** yield complete sentences that are similar in meaning.

A Sentence Equivalence question will look like this:

Sample Question

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1. She volunteered to work in a soup kitchen because of her _____ nature.

selfish
 naive
 altruistic
 baneful
 candid
 benevolent

Click to select your choices.

THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR SENTENCE EQUIVALENCE

- STEP 1** Read the sentence, looking for clues.
- STEP 2** Predict an answer.
- STEP 3** Select the two choices that most closely match your prediction.
- STEP 4** Check your answers to see if the sentence retains the same meaning.

HOW THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR SENTENCE EQUIVALENCE WORKS

Now let's discuss how the Kaplan Method will help you answer these questions correctly.

➤ STEP 1

Read the sentence, looking for clues.

As you read the sentence, pay attention to the part of speech that the answer choice will be and compare it with the answer choices. Also look for specific words in the sentence that will help you to understand its meaning. These are called “key words” or “road signs”—descriptive phrases or contextual clues that suggest the meaning of the missing word.

Words that connect one part of a sentence to another (“straight-ahead” road signs) include the following:

And	Likewise
Since	Moreover
Also	Similarly
Thus	In addition
Because	Consequently
; (semicolon)	

Words that indicate one part of the sentence contradicts another part of the sentence (“detour” road signs) include these:

But	Although
Despite	While
Yet	On the other hand
However	Unfortunately
Unless	Nonetheless
Rather	Conversely

Being aware of these road signs will help you to figure out the meaning of the sentence and the relationship of the missing word to other ideas in the sentence.

► STEP 2

Predict an answer.

Once you have read the sentence and identified clues to words that will complete the sentence, predict an answer. Your prediction should be a word that you choose on your own *before* you look at the answer choices. The prediction word should also be a simple word that logically completes the sentence.

► STEP 3

Select the two choices that most closely match your prediction.

Quickly review the six answer choices and choose the two words that, when plugged into the sentence, most closely make the intended meaning of the sentence match your prediction. Eliminate the answer choices that do not fit your prediction. Sometimes you will need to adjust your prediction in order to find two answer choices that match each other.

► STEP 4

Check your answers to see if the sentence retains the same meaning.

Read the sentence with each answer choice plugged in to check that you have selected the correct answers. Make sure that both answer choices make sense in the context of the sentence. Pay close attention to the charge of a word’s meaning. For example, “dislike” and “despise” both mean the same thing, but “despise” has a much *stronger* degree of charge to that meaning. Each sentence should have the same meaning. If one or both of your answers do not make sense when you reread the sentence, revisit the question and repeat Steps 1, 2, and 3.

HOW TO APPLY THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR SENTENCE EQUIVALENCE

Now let’s apply the Kaplan Method to a Sentence Equivalence question.

1. She volunteered to work in a soup kitchen because of her _____.

 A selfish
 B naive
 C altruistic
 D baneful
 E candid
 F benevolent

► STEP 1**Read the sentence, looking for clues.**

One way to determine the correct answer in this sentence is to figure out the part of speech of the missing word. The missing word in this sentence is an adjective because it modifies the noun “nature.” Another clue in this sentence is the key word “volunteer.” A volunteer is someone who offers her time or skills without pay. The blank will be an adjective with a positive connotation that describes the type of person who volunteers.

► STEP 2**Predict an answer.**

Knowing that the blank must describe someone who offers her time or skills without pay, you can predict that the correct answer will be similar to “helpful.”

► STEP 3**Select the two choices that most closely match your prediction.**

Quickly review the six answer choices to see which two words most closely match “helpful,” which in this case are choice **(C) altruistic** and choice **(F) benevolent**.

► STEP 4**Check your answers to see if the sentence retains the same meaning.**

Plug each answer choice into the sentence to see if it matches the context. Make sure that each sentence has the same meaning:

“She volunteered to work in a soup kitchen because of her altruistic nature.”

“She volunteered to work in a soup kitchen because of her benevolent nature.”

Now let’s apply the Kaplan Method to a second Sentence Equivalence question.

2. While the first speaker at the conference was confusing and unclear, the second speaker was _____.



- A articulate
- B experienced
- C melancholy
- D ambiguous
- E eloquent
- F vociferous

STEP 1**Read the sentence, looking for clues.**

In this sentence, the clue word “while” is a detour road sign. “While” indicates that the second part of the sentence will mean the opposite of the first part of the sentence. The first speaker was described as “confusing” and “unclear,” which are the key words in this question. The correct answer means the opposite.

STEP 2**Predict an answer.**

Knowing that the blank will mean the opposite of “confusing” and “unclear,” you can predict that correct answers will be similar to “clear.”

STEP 3**Select the two choices that most closely match your prediction.**

Quickly go through the six answer choices and see which two words most closely match “clear” in the context of speaking. In this case, these are choice (A) *articulate* and choice (E) *eloquent*.

STEP 4**Check your answers to see if the sentence retains the same meaning.**

Plug each answer choice into the sentence to see if it matches the context. Make sure that each sentence has the same meaning:

“While the first speaker at the conference was confusing and unclear, the second speaker was articulate.”

“While the first speaker at the conference was confusing and unclear, the second speaker was eloquent.”

KAPLAN’S ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR SENTENCE EQUIVALENCE

Consider all answer choices.

Make sure to read and check all answer choices in the sentence before making your final choice. An answer may fit well in the sentence and closely match your prediction, but if there is no other answer choice that also completes the sentence with the same meaning, it isn’t correct.

Paraphrase the question.

If you rephrase a difficult or longer sentence into your own words, it will be easier to make a prediction for the answer. Paraphrasing will also make sure that you understand the meaning of the sentence.

Look beyond synonyms.

Simply finding a synonym pair in the answer choices will not always lead you to the correct answer. Answer choices may include a pair of words that are synonyms but do not fit in the context of the sentence. Both of those two choices will be incorrect. The meaning of each sentence must be the same *and* correct. Be sure to try both words in the sentence, checking that each sentence has the same meaning, before making your final choice.

Use prefixes, suffixes, and roots.

Think about the meaning of the prefixes, suffixes, and roots in words that you know if you are struggling to figure out the definition of a word.

SENTENCE EQUIVALENCE PRACTICE SET

Try the following Sentence Equivalence questions using the Kaplan Method for Sentence Equivalence. If you’re up to the challenge, time yourself; on Test Day, you’ll want to spend only about one minute on each question.

1. He was unable to move his arm after the stroke; in addition, the stroke _____ his ability to speak.



- [A] appeased
- [B] satisfied
- [C] impeded
- [D] helped
- [E] hindered
- [F] assisted

2. Although the lab assistant openly apologized for allowing the samples to spoil, her _____ did not appease the research head, and she was let go.



- [A] insincerity
- [B] frankness
- [C] falsehoods
- [D] candor
- [E] inexperience
- [F] hesitation

3. Afterward the deceased man’s wife could not stop crying; his daughter was similarly _____.



- [A] overjoyed
- [B] morose
- [C] abashed
- [D] lucid
- [E] nonplussed
- [F] dolorous

4. Her last-minute vacation was _____ compared to her usual trips, which are planned down to the last detail.



- [A] expensive
- [B] spontaneous
- [C] predictable
- [D] satisfying
- [E] impulsive
- [F] atrocious

5. After staying up all night, she felt extremely _____; however, she still ran three miles with her friends.



- [A] apprehensive
- [B] lethargic
- [C] controversial
- [D] sluggish
- [E] vigorous
- [F] energetic

SENTENCE EQUIVALENCE PRACTICE SET ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. C, E

The straight-ahead road sign “in addition” in this sentence is a clue that both parts of the sentence are related. Since the missing word is in the second part of the sentence, the first part gives a clue to what your prediction should be. The person had a stroke and was unable to move his arm.

Use this to make a prediction such as “He was unable to move his arm after the stroke; in addition, it prevented his ability to speak.”

Quickly review the answer choices, looking for two words that closely match your prediction. Choices (C) *impeded* and (E) *hindered* both have the meaning “to interfere with” and produce sentences with equivalent meaning. The other four choices do not have meanings anywhere close to “prevented.” Choices (A) *appeased*, (B) *satisfied*, (D) *helped*, and (F) *assisted* all have too positive a connotation to be correct. *Appeased* has the same meaning as *satisfied*, and *helped* and *assisted* both mean “to aid.”

2. B, D

The clue in this sentence is the detour road sign “although,” which indicates contrast. Her “open” apology would be expected to “appease” her boss, but she was fired anyway; paraphrasing further, she did something good but suffered bad consequences. The word in the blank will express the good thing she did, so you can predict that the correct answers will be similar to “honesty.” Choices (A), (C), (E), and (F) are not synonyms for “honesty,” leaving choices (B) and (D). (B) *frankness* and (D) *candor* both carry the meaning of “forthright.” They’re your answers.

3. B, F

The word “similarly” in this sentence is a straight-ahead road sign that you can use to figure out the blank. It indicates that the sentence will continue to move in the same direction. In the sentence, the wife was crying, and her daughter felt the same way.

Use this to make a prediction such as “Afterward, the late man’s wife could not stop crying; his daughter was similarly sad.”

Quickly review the answer choices, looking for a match. Both (B) *morose* and (F) *dolorous* fit the sentence and mean the same thing. Choice (A) *overjoyed* is the opposite of “sad,” so it does not make sense. Someone who feels *abashed*, choice (C), is embarrassed. A *lucid* person, choice (D), is very clearheaded, and *nonplussed* (E) means perplexed.

4. B, E

The phrase “compared to her usual trips” is a clue that the first half of the sentence will have an opposite meaning to the second half; that is, her “last-minute” vacation was apparently *not planned in detail*.

You can use this phrase to make a prediction such as: “Her last-minute vacation was unplanned compared to her usual trips, which are planned down to the last detail.”

Something that is unplanned is done without much preparation or careful thought. Both choice (B) and choice (E) match this prediction. Choice (B) *spontaneous* means something that happens without planning, and choice (E) *impulsive* means doing something without careful thought. Choice (A) *expensive* doesn’t fit with “unplanned,” nor does (C) *predictable* (the opposite), (D) *satisfying*, or (F) *atrocious*.

5. B, D

When someone stays up all night, she is usually very tired. The detour road sign in this sentence is “however” in the second clause. It indicates that the person in the sentence went running, which takes a lot of energy, even though she was up all night.

You can use this clue to make a prediction such as “After staying up all night, she felt extremely tired; however, she still ran three miles with her friends.”

Scan the answer choices, looking for a match. You will find it in (B) *lethargic* and (D) *sluggish*, both of which mean “tired.” Choices (E) *vigorous* and (F) *energetic* are the opposite of “tired.” Choice (A) *apprehensive* can be used to describe someone who is anxious but not someone who is tired. Choice (C) *controversial* can be used to describe something that is open to debate.

CHAPTER 7

Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION TO READING COMPREHENSION

Reading Comprehension is the only question type that appears on all major standardized tests, and with good reason. No matter what academic discipline you pursue, you'll have to make sense of dense, complex written material. This means that being able to understand and assess what you read is a critical skill for every graduate student.

To make the test as relevant as possible and to better evaluate your ability to understand graduate-level material, ETS adapts its content from real-world, graduate-level documents. The GRE traditionally takes its topics from four disciplines: social sciences, biological sciences, physical sciences, and the arts and humanities.

The GRE includes roughly 10 reading passages spread between the two Verbal Reasoning sections of the test. Many of these passages are one paragraph in length, although a few are longer. Each passage is followed by one to six questions that relate to that passage. These questions will test your ability to ascertain the author's purpose and meaning, to consider what inferences can properly be drawn from the passage, to research details in the text, and to understand the meaning of words and the function of sentences in context.

A sentence that tells how many questions are based on each passage will appear in boldface before the passage, like this:

Questions 1–3 are based on the passage below.

A Reading Comprehension passage will look like this:

Many baseball enthusiasts are aware of the story of how Abner Doubleday invented the game of baseball with some friends in 1839 and introduced it to a nation during the Civil War. However, most baseball historians now agree that this story is a convenient fiction, propagated by Albert Spalding, a player, manager, owner, and one of the first manufacturers of sporting equipment. Spalding's desire to distinguish baseball, which so keenly mirrored American interests and pursuits, from similar games played in England, such as cricket and rounders, led Spalding to seek out a purely colonial origin of the sport. Spalding's entire basis for the foundation of baseball history lay in a handwritten letter from 1907 that he said came from a man who claimed to have gone to school with Doubleday and attributed the invention to him. Despite the speculative and dubious claims of the letter, Spalding and other members of his commission were quick to adopt the narrative as gospel and began to market their sport to the masses as a truly American pursuit.

Reading Comprehension questions will take one of three forms. The first will ask you to select the best answer from a set of five possible answers. A Reading Comprehension question of this type will look like this:

Sample Question

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Sample Passage

Many baseball enthusiasts are aware of the story of how Abner Doubleday invented the game of baseball with some friends in 1839 and introduced it to a nation during the Civil War. However, most baseball historians now agree that this story is a convenient fiction, propagated by Albert Spalding, a player, manager, owner, and one of the first manufacturers of sporting equipment. Spalding's desire to distinguish baseball, which so keenly mirrored American interests and pursuits, from similar games played in England, such as cricket and rounders, led Spalding to seek out a purely colonial origin of the sport. Spalding's entire basis for the foundation of baseball history lay in a handwritten letter from 1907 that he said came from a man who claimed to have gone to school with Doubleday and attributed the invention to him. Despite the speculative and dubious claims of the letter, Spalding and other members of his commission were quick to adopt the narrative as gospel and began to market their sport to the masses as a truly American pursuit.

1. Which of the following statements is suggested by the passage?

Abner Doubleday did invent the game of baseball.
 Claiming baseball to be invented by an American would help Spalding sell more sporting equipment.
 Baseball is not truly an American sport.
 Many people in Spalding's day wanted to believe baseball was invented by an American.
 The other members of Spalding's commission knew that the letter about Abner Doubleday was probably fraudulent.

Click on your choice.

The second type of question gives you three answer choices, one or more of which are true. You will be asked to mark down all correct answers. All correct answers must be selected, and no partial credit will be given for only getting some of the right answers. The directions for this type of question will look like this:

Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

A Reading Comprehension question of this type will look like this:

Sample Question

Exit Section Review Mark Help Back Next

Sample Passage

Many baseball enthusiasts are aware of the story of how Abner Doubleday invented the game of baseball with some friends in 1839 and introduced it to a nation during the Civil War. However, most baseball historians now agree that this story is a convenient fiction, propagated by Albert Spalding, a player, manager, owner, and one of the first manufacturers of sporting equipment. Spalding's desire to distinguish baseball, which so keenly mirrored American interests and pursuits, from similar games played in England, such as cricket and rounders, led Spalding to seek out a purely colonial origin of the sport.

Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

2. Which of the following statements is true based on the passage?

Abner Doubleday was not a real person.
 Albert Spalding had a lot of influence over the business of baseball.
 Baseball has a lot in common with the game of cricket.

Click on your choice(s).

A third type of question asks you to select a sentence within the passage that best demonstrates the function or information requested by the question. A Reading Comprehension question of this type will look like this:

Sample Question

Exit Section Review Mark Help Back Next

Sample Passage

Many baseball enthusiasts are aware of the story of how Abner Doubleday invented the game of baseball with some friends in 1839 and introduced it to a nation during the Civil War. However, most baseball historians now agree that this story is a convenient fiction, propagated by Albert Spalding, a player, manager, owner, and one of the first manufacturers of sporting equipment. Spalding's desire to distinguish baseball, which so keenly mirrored American interests and pursuits, from similar games played in England, such as cricket and rounders, led Spalding to seek out a purely colonial origin of the sport.

3. Select the sentence in the passage in which the author states that there was only one piece of evidence supporting the Abner Doubleday origin of baseball.

Click on your choice.

THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR READING COMPREHENSION

- STEP 1 Read the passage strategically.**
- STEP 2 Analyze the question stem.**
- STEP 3 Research the relevant text in the passage.**
- STEP 4 Make a prediction.**
- STEP 5 Evaluate the answer choices.**

HOW THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR READING COMPREHENSION WORKS

Now let's discuss how the Kaplan Method will help you answer these questions correctly.

► STEP 1

Read the passage strategically.

Reading strategically means identifying the topic, scope, and purpose of a passage, as well as noting the passage's structure and main points. The topic is the general subject matter, and the scope is the specific aspect of the topic that the author focuses on. The topic of the passage above is Abner Doubleday and baseball, but the scope is limited to the myth about his role in creating the sport.

In order to nail down topic, scope, and purpose, you should target the bones of the piece in the form of the passage's main ideas, primary arguments, secondary arguments, supporting statements or evidence, and conclusions. At this point you should start making a passage map. A passage map is a guide to the organization and main points of a passage. For each paragraph, write a one- to two-sentence summary that highlights the main points. For any given passage, you should be able to both summarize the text and identify the main points in your own words before proceeding. It is also important to use the key words and phrases connected to the sentences to identify the important ideas and statements.

With each passage, you need to look for the purpose of the text: Why was it written? While numerous facts will be provided in any given piece, not all passages are purely informative. Each passage will attempt to persuade the reader to some degree, if only to convince you that the subject is important. The key is to identify early on whether the piece is primarily informative or argumentative. This can be done by recognizing the tone the author uses. *Tone*, loosely defined, is the attitude the author has toward his subject. Tone is indispensable in nailing down an author's purpose, especially if that purpose is not entirely explicit. If the author makes use of comparisons (*better, more effective*) or assertions (*should, must, need to*), then the author is likely trying to persuade you. If the author writes in a more straightforward style with no persuasive or judgmental terminology, the piece is likely informative.

Pieces written in that tone are more likely to have the purpose of explanation or description in mind. Purpose is itself important, as it is closely tied to the author's *opinion* on the subject matter. This is of crucial importance for Inference questions.

In general, a social sciences piece is likely to argue a position, as the complex nature of human behavior and interaction is open to wide interpretation. Likewise, a discussion of a piece of art or literature will likely contain arguments as the author asserts an interpretation of these art forms. Scientific articles, on the other hand, will be mainly informative, seeking primarily to explain a scientific concept or discovery. Still, arguments may be advanced or conclusions drawn about the importance of these discoveries or principles in daily application. Therefore, you should pay close attention to tone, as it greatly informs the argument.

► STEP 2

Analyze the question stem.

Many test takers attempt to “shortcut” the process of a Reading Comprehension passage by reading the question stems before reading the passage itself in hopes of giving themselves a “clue” about what to look for as they read. This is almost always a mistake. All Reading Comprehension requires an active awareness and understanding of what is being read, as described in Step 1. The nature of the question stem should not dissuade you from making your own interpretations prior to reading the passage. Therefore, you should be cautious and try not to allow the nature of the stem to influence your interpretation of a passage.

Also, one question stem following the passage may concern itself with a passage’s tone, whereas another question may focus on a vocabulary term in context. Trying to read with these questions in mind will affect your sense of priority in interpreting the main ideas of the passage. It is more important for you to be able to use the question stem to know where to look in researching the passage for details than for you to try to use the stem as a road map in advance. Your passage map and/or notes will organize the reading well enough to allow you to find the correct answer(s) quickly.

The purpose of analyzing a question stem is to look for guidance as to the specificity and uniqueness of the answer being sought. Some questions are general questions that you may already have the answer to, such as “What is the purpose of this passage?” or “Which of these mirrors the author’s conclusion?” By having followed Step 1, you may already have the information needed to answer this question.

In many cases, however, the question stem indicates a relationship between the answers that should serve as a clue as to how to proceed. If a question asks for the “best” answer or the one that “most closely describes” something in the passage, there may be more than one answer that arguably applies, but only one answer will most closely fit the question stem.

The question stem might also require you to go a step further and make a contrasting judgment against an idea in the passage. A question that asks for the “least likely”

answer or the answer that “differs” from the author’s perspective would require you to understand the author’s conclusions or viewpoints well enough to select the choice that is most opposed to them.

► STEP 3

Research the relevant text in the passage.

Once you have analyzed and fully understood the question stem, you should already have an idea of where in the passage the answer will be found, due to your active reading in Step 1. You should not consider more text from the passage than is necessary to answer the specific question. If the question is about vocabulary in context, you should not need to look much further than the sentence in which the word appears, and possibly the preceding sentence, to arrive at the answer.

► STEP 4

Make a prediction.

Many of the questions will, by design, test your comprehension of what you have read and not just your ability to go into the passage and mine for the correct details. As such, you will often have the opportunity to formulate a prediction as to the answers of many questions that deal with the main idea, conclusions, arguments, author’s meaning, tone, and implications of the information provided. Before moving on to the provided answer choices, try to either form a response in your own mind or, alternatively, target a section in the passage that you think will be most likely to contain the answer.

There will be occasions when you will have to infer an answer based on clues provided in the text that come in the form of details or the author’s tone. In these cases, if the question prompts you to consider a particular facet of the passage, you should first create your own hypothesis regarding that facet before moving on to the answers. The relevant sections of the passage for Step 3 are those that provide evidence or details to support (or refute) your conclusion. One note of caution: Making a specific prediction is sometimes not possible for Inference questions. Instead, refer to the passage or your passage map as necessary as you evaluate the answer choices.

► STEP 5

Evaluate the answer choices.

Even if there is an answer that clearly matches the prediction you have made, or an answer that jumps out at you as resoundingly correct, it is important to read and consider each answer choice. Eliminating incorrect answers not only helps narrow down options for questions that are hard to answer, it also validates the selection you are considering.

If you are absolutely uncertain, you should begin by identifying answers that are demonstrably incorrect. Eliminating answers can be done using the same steps described above for finding the right answer: by weighing them against the criteria set forth by your own reading and interpretation, the wording of the question stem, the relevant portions of the text, and your predicted response. After eliminating incorrect answers, you can weigh the remaining choices against your criteria and select the best match.

HOW TO APPLY THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR READING COMPREHENSION

Now let's apply the Kaplan Method to a Reading Comprehension passage and questions.

Many baseball enthusiasts are aware of the story of how Abner Doubleday invented the game of baseball with some friends in 1839 and introduced it to a nation during the Civil War. However, most baseball historians now agree that this story is a convenient fiction, propagated by Albert Spalding, a player, manager, owner, and one of the first manufacturers of sporting equipment. Spalding's desire to distinguish baseball, which so keenly mirrored American interests and pursuits, from similar games played in England, such as cricket and rounders, led Spalding to seek out a purely colonial origin of the sport. Spalding's entire basis for the foundation of baseball history lay in a handwritten letter from 1907 that he said came from a man who claimed to have gone to school with Doubleday and attributed the invention to him. Despite the speculative and dubious claims of the letter, Spalding and other members of his commission were quick to adopt the narrative as gospel and began to market their sport to the masses as a truly American pursuit.

1. Which of the following statements is suggested by the passage? 
 - (A) Abner Doubleday did invent the game of baseball.
 - (B) Claiming baseball to be invented by an American would help Spalding sell more sporting equipment.
 - (C) Baseball is not truly an American sport.
 - (D) Some people in Spalding's day wanted to believe baseball was invented by an American.
 - (E) The other members of Spalding's commission knew that the letter about Abner Doubleday was probably fraudulent.

STEP 1

Read the passage strategically.

If you were only to skim the beginning and ending sentences of the passage, you would surmise that the topic is baseball but could get tricked early on into thinking that the passage is about Abner Doubleday in scope. The key word “However” in the second sentence is indicative that it is the following sentence that is of greater importance. Indeed, the sentence does introduce the true point of focus: Albert Spalding and his impact on baseball. You might also note that while there are some judgmental terms (*speculative, dubious*) in the passage, the text’s tone is that of an informative passage.

STEP 2

Analyze the question stem.

The key phrase is “suggested by,” which tells us that the answer is not explicitly stated in the text but can be discerned by an accurate reading of the text. Each possible answer will have to be considered on its own merits. Remember that the answer has to be evaluated based on the information in the text alone, which must be assumed to be true for the purpose of answering the question, regardless of any outside knowledge.

STEP 3

Research the relevant text in the passage.

In this case, the relevant portions of the text will not become clear until after the answer choices are read, because the question stem does not give us a point of focus. Here we see that the Kaplan Method sometimes requires cycling through the steps in order to arrive at the right answer.

STEP 4

Make a prediction.

Although the question stem does not initially seem to provide enough information about its intent to allow you to make a prediction without seeing the answer choices, if you have been actively reading, it is likely that you have made some conclusions of your own regarding the text, such as to the veracity of the Abner Doubleday story and Albert Spalding’s motivations—the unsaid implications of the text. These can serve you well in analyzing the answer choices.

STEP 5

Evaluate the answer choices.

Each given answer reflects a portion of the passage. With each, you should return to Step 3 and target the appropriate sections of the passage that support or refute an answer. Choice **(A)** can immediately be eliminated because it is in direct opposition to the main idea of the piece, stated within the first two sentences. Similarly, choice **(C)** can be eliminated as being in disagreement with the passage. Even if the sport of baseball had its origins in other sports and other countries, the author states that baseball “mirrored American interests and pursuits” and implies that it is firmly embraced by American culture. Remember that you must decide based only on the passage, and even if another author might make the claim of answer choice **(C)**, the author of the passage doesn’t. Choices **(B)** and **(E)** can both be eliminated because there is no evidence to support these claims within the text. The speed and willingness of Spalding and his commission to adopt the Doubleday story does provide evidence, however, for the correct answer, **(D)**.

HOW TO APPLY THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR READING COMPREHENSION

Now let's apply the Kaplan Method to a second Reading Comprehension question (based on the previous passage).

Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

2. Which of the following statements is true based on the passage?

- A Abner Doubleday was not a real person.
- B Albert Spalding influenced the way baseball was perceived.
- C Baseball has a lot in common with the game of cricket.



STEP 1

Read the passage strategically.

One of the first steps in strategic reading is to determine the tone of the passage. In this case, it is informative. You are allowed the use of scratch paper, and creating a passage map is encouraged. With an informative piece, you should be identifying the main ideas and facts of the issue. Doing this will help you to answer a multiple-selection question such as this one.

STEP 2

Analyze the question stem.

The directions for the question remind us that there may be more than one answer. The question stem also mentions “based on the passage,” but for the purposes of the test, you are looking for a statement that must be true, even when not explicitly stated. You should eliminate any answer choices that are not clearly confirmed by the text.

STEP 3

Research the relevant text in the passage.

Again, each answer will have to be considered on its own merits, but your outline will tell you where to search for the answer. As you determined from analyzing the question stem, the passage must contain the evidence you need to select each choice, or that choice is not a valid answer.

STEP 4

Make a prediction.

In a way, you have done this with your passage map. In order to answer this question, you must be able to distill the facts from the passage. Your predictions can start with the most important information revealed in the passage and work down in importance. With these facts in mind, you will probably have a gut reaction to the veracity of each possible answer, and you certainly will know where to look in the text to find out.

STEP 5**Evaluate the answer choices.**

Since each answer choice must be considered independently of the others, let's go in order. Choice **(A)** can quickly be dismissed because the passage concerns itself with Doubleday only as far as his involvement in inventing baseball. The text never disputes his existence. Choice **(A)** is not a correct answer. Choice **(B)** concerns itself with Spalding, the primary figure in the piece. The passage states that he was a player, a manager, an owner, and a sporting goods manufacturer. It says that he appointed a commission. And, above all, the passage states that Spalding was responsible for a pervasive myth. All of these defend choice **(B)** as a valid answer. Choice **(C)** can quickly be confirmed because the author states outright that baseball is similar to cricket. The correct answers are **(B)** and **(C)**.

HOW TO APPLY THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR READING COMPREHENSION

Now let's apply the Kaplan Method to the third example question (based on the previous passage):

3. Select the sentence in the passage in which the author states that there was only one piece of evidence supporting the Abner Doubleday origin of baseball.

STEP 1**Read the passage strategically.**

Again, making a passage map, or at least a mental one, is critical. Each sentence of the passage has at least some purpose in the text, and your outline and identification of main ideas and supporting details will give you a road map to find the sentence you need for this type of question.

STEP 2**Analyze the question stem.**

There are several key terms here that will guide your search. The term “states” tells you that the information is clearly given, not implied or suggested, making it easier to find. Because the question, like the passage, must be accepted as true, the phrase “only one piece” means that you only need to find one sentence with such evidence.

STEP 3**Research the relevant text in the passage.**

With the idea in mind that there is only one piece of evidence to find, and using the passage map created through your critical reading, you should have no trouble finding the section near the end of the passage that begins, “Spalding’s entire basis for the foundation of baseball history lay....”

► STEP 4**Make a prediction.**

For this question, the ability to make a prediction is easier than for the other two questions on this passage, because by using active reading, you would almost certainly recall the letter mentioned in the text and know where to look for it.

► STEP 5**Evaluate the answer choices.**

For a question of this sort, there are no answer choices per se, but each sentence of the passage is a potential option, so if there is any uncertainty in answering the question, each sentence may have to be considered as a choice. However, if you have been following the previous steps, you will probably not have to evaluate each sentence. Instead, you should be able to quickly find and click on “Spalding’s entire basis for the foundation of baseball history lay in a handwritten letter from 1907 that he said came from a man who claimed to have gone to school with Doubleday and attributed the invention to him.”

KAPLAN’S ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Express the main idea in your own words.

Summarizing the main idea of the passage for yourself will not only form the foundation of your comprehension of the passage, it will also be the starting point of all your text evaluation for the questions. While not every passage has a specific main idea, each passage does have a topic and scope, both of which you should discern by the end of the first paragraph. If you are halfway through a passage and still have not identified these elements, you may be reading too fast and not outlining or identifying key words and phrases in the text.

Focus on retaining ideas, not facts.

Unlike in your coursework, you do not have to memorize or retain any of the dates, details, or minutiae of each passage. If you are asked a question about a specific term or detail within the text, such as a date or place, you have the text there to refer back to. In that sense, Reading Comprehension questions are like an open-book test. It is your job to concern yourself with the ideas, arguments, and conclusions the author presents so as to assess the questions accurately and examine them within the context of the passage.

Concentrate on using only what the passage gives you.

In some sense, a passage about a completely foreign topic can serve as a benefit to a smart test taker. Whatever the information is about, it is still presented using familiar systems of information presentation or persuasive writing. This is your guide to Reading Comprehension passages.

A danger occurs when you have pre-existing knowledge of a topic. This knowledge can confuse or muddle your ability to answer a question by clouding or expanding the scope of your reading of the piece beyond what is written. To best handle the questions, you must be concerned only with what can be gleaned from the text itself and not be influenced by outside knowledge that can put you at odds with the correct answer as defined by the passage and the question stem.

Also, during the test, you should surrender the skeptical reading style you would use to evaluate, say, a magazine article or an op-ed piece in a newspaper and, instead, accept the information given in informative passages as true in order to answer the questions. Even with persuasive passages, regardless of your opinion in relation to the author's, you must use only the evidence and arguments given as the groundwork for answering the questions.

Do not approach Highlighted Sentence questions differently.

In Highlighted Sentence questions, two sentences in the passage are highlighted, and you are asked to determine the function of both. Some of the functions a sentence might serve are these:

- Development of an argument
- Conclusion of an argument
- Evidence supporting a conclusion
- Evidence supporting part of a conclusion
- Evidence supporting an objection to the conclusion
- A secondary argument or support for a secondary argument

Your natural instinct may be to focus primarily or only on the highlighted sentences. However, the entire passage should be handled with the same strategy as any other question. As you read the passage, read strategically to determine the position taken by the author. Identify the argument and its conclusion and note how they are supported or refuted. While the highlighted lines are most relevant to answering the question, the surrounding material still provides key context.

Remember to make a prediction before evaluating the answer choices and then move on to evaluating and eliminating obviously incorrect answers. Each answer has two parts, one for each highlighted sentence; both must be correct in order for the answer to be correct. If you are unable to predict an answer, or if your prediction is not among the answer choices, you should be able to eliminate most of the wrong answer choices by looking carefully at the two parts. You may find a mischaracterization of the role of a sentence, a reversal of the sentences' roles, a reference to a sentence not highlighted, or a description of something that does not appear in the passage. Once you have eliminated the obviously incorrect answers, you should more easily be able to identify the answer that best describes the roles of the sentences.

Do not get misled by variations on standard question stems.

While most questions concern themselves with what is true about the passage, some questions will ask you to find the item that is *not* supported by the passage. A question that states that all of the answers EXCEPT one apply may have several “right” answers—choices supported by the text—but if you forget to look for the erroneous answer, you may pick a “right” answer that is, in fact, incorrect for the purposes of the question.

Also, while the passage must be assumed to be true and the question must be assumed to be true, all answer choices are initially to be regarded with suspicion. Any new information that is given only in the context of an answer choice cannot be given the benefit of being true. Answer choices that attempt to insert additional information are almost certainly wrong.

For multiple-choice questions involving highlighted sentences, the standard approach is to ascertain the relationship between the two sentences, but some questions simply ask for the purpose of each sentence within the passage. You must, through your own active reading, be able to discern the purpose of highlighted sentences independently of the question in order to deal most effectively with a Highlighted Sentence question.

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE SET

Try the following Reading Comprehension questions using the Kaplan Method for Reading Comprehension. If you’re up to the challenge, time yourself; on Test Day, you’ll want to spend only 1–3 minutes reading each passage and 1 minute on each question.

Questions 1 and 2 are based on the passage below.

The idea of medical nanotechnology often conjures up the potentially troubling image of tiny machines and devices that both exist and operate far outside the scope of unmagnified human vision. Yet much of what constitutes nanotechnology is purely biological in form and function. For example, strands of DNA and the proteins that make up its structure are mere nanometers thick. Many of the basic functions of life occur on the nanoscale level. Efforts to understand or affect these functions are among the primary fields of nanotechnology. Gene study and gene therapy, two byproducts of medical nanotechnology, have already proven useful for identifying and treating a number of different diseases, sometimes even before symptoms of those diseases present themselves. Even so, genetic nanotechnology and treatments can give as much cause for concern as the idea of microscopic machines at work in the body. The possibility of altering an organism’s genetic structure has been a subject of much debate as to what extent such an alteration would be both safe and ethical.

1. In the passage above, what roles do the highlighted sentences serve?



- (A) The first sentence is the main idea, and the second sentence restates the main idea.
- (B) The first sentence makes the central argument of the passage, and the second sentence supports the argument.
- (C) The first sentence provides the primary argument, and the second sentence is the secondary argument.
- (D) The first sentence is a secondary argument, and the second sentence is evidence against that argument.
- (E) The first sentence introduces the topic, and the second sentence is the conclusion.

2. According to the passage, all of the following statements are true EXCEPT:

- (A) Medical nanotechnology is a field of nanotechnology that is entirely biological in practice.
- (B) Nanotechnology has already led to medical practices that are currently in use.
- (C) There are valid concerns regarding the use of nanotechnology.
- (D) Some of what happens on the nanoscale is naturally occurring.
- (E) Gene therapy is a result of medical nanotechnology.

Questions 3–5 are based on the passage below.

Although it is an imperfect model for describing a complex market, the theory of supply and demand is a reasonably accurate method of explaining, describing, and predicting how the quantity and price of goods fluctuate within a market. Economists define supply as the amount of a particular good that producers are willing to sell at a certain price. For example, a manufacturer might be willing to sell 7,000 sprockets if each one sells for \$0.45 but would be willing to sell substantially more sprockets, perhaps 12,000, for a higher price of \$0.82. Conversely, demand represents the quantity of a given item that consumers will purchase at a set price; in the most efficient market, all buyers pay the lowest price available, and all sellers charge the highest price they are able. The intersection of these occurrences is graphically represented in supply and demand curves that show the prices at which a product becomes too expensive or too readily available.

3. Which one of the following best expresses the main idea of the passage?

- (A) explaining why buyers in a given market tend to seek the lowest price on available goods
- (B) offering a dissenting perspective on an obsolete economic model
- (C) persuading readers that the model of supply and demand is the best method for understanding market forces
- (D) providing an explanation of the two primary elements of an economic model and how they intersect
- (E) analyzing the fluctuation of supply and demand within a market

Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

4. If the producer of sprockets nearly doubles its prices as described in the passage, it follows that

- [A] buyers in the market will be likely to purchase more of the sprockets being sold.
- [B] the price of sprockets will continue to increase.
- [C] buyers in the market will be likely to purchase fewer of the sprockets being sold.

5. Select the sentence in the passage that illustrates an abstract concept presented by the author.

READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE SET ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. E

Choice **(E)** is the correct answer. One can arrive at this conclusion not only by the process of elimination but also by understanding that the piece is not truly a persuasive piece. The arguments presented are mainly those of others, not the author. Because this is an informative piece, any answers indicating the existence of arguments are suspect. Only in the second highlighted sentence does the author draw a conclusion or give a slight acknowledgment of people's concerns over medical nanotechnology. **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)** can be passed over quickly because the first sentence is not the main idea and its contents are contradicted by the following sentence, which is directed more at the central focus. Choice **(D)** can be dismissed in that the second highlighted sentence to some degree supports people's concerns about nanotechnology and does not refute it, as the choice suggests.

2. A

A careless test taker might be tripped up here because this question is reversed from the standard form. In the answer choices, there are four true statements and one false statement. It is the false one that must be found, so each of the true ones should be evaluated and confirmed in the text. Choice **(A)** is the early favorite for the right answer because the second sentence mentions that much of nanotechnology is biological, but not all, and nothing else in the text gives any indication that this does not apply to medical nanotechnology as well. Choice **(A)** is too extreme, and it is therefore the correct answer. All other choices can be confirmed within the text through explicitly stated or easily inferred information.

3. D

The passage as a whole discusses the basic elements of the model of supply and demand, defining the two terms and describing how they work. That's choice **(D)**. Choice **(A)** is too narrow, focusing on only one of the two forces described. Choice **(B)** is out of scope because there's no mention of the model being obsolete; also, the author simply describes the model—she doesn't dissent from its contentions. Although the passage asserts that the supply and demand model is "reasonably accurate," the passage is primarily concerned with explaining the model, not with persuading readers that it is the "best" model. Therefore, you can rule out **(C)**. Although the theory of supply and demand does allow for the analysis of market forces, **(E)**, the passage itself provides only description, not analysis.

4. C

You are told that producers want to charge as much as possible and buyers want to pay as little as possible, so it makes sense that as prices rise, demand falls, choice **(C)**. Choice **(A)** is the opposite of what the passage implies, which is that demand decreases as prices rise. There's no evidence presented that this change in price will lead to further price increases, so you can rule out **(B)**.

5. For example, a manufacturer might be willing to sell 7,000 sprockets if each one sells for \$0.45 but would be willing to sell substantially more sprockets, perhaps 12,000, for a higher price of \$0.82.

The abstract concepts addressed in the passage are those of supply and demand, and the only example that illustrates supply and demand occurs in sentence 3. Sentence 1 introduces the supply and demand model. Sentence 2 defines the term *supply*. Sentence 4 explains demand, and sentence 5 describes a graphical representation of the two forces.

CHAPTER 8

Verbal Reasoning Practice Sets

In this section, you will take three practice sections consisting of 20 questions each. This section has been divided into two parts to allow you to check your answers at the halfway mark. You will use a diagnostic tool at that point to help you learn from your mistakes and continue on to the second set with more awareness of the traps you may encounter.

REVIEW OF THE KAPLAN METHODS FOR VERBAL REASONING QUESTION TYPES

Review the steps and strategies you have studied for answering each type of question quickly, efficiently, and correctly before starting your Practice Sets.

THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR TEXT COMPLETION (ONE-BLANK)

- STEP 1** Read the sentence, looking for clues.
- STEP 2** Predict an answer.
- STEP 3** Select the choice that most closely matches your prediction.
- STEP 4** Check your answer.

THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR TEXT COMPLETION (TWO-BLANK AND THREE-BLANK)

- STEP 1** Read the sentence, looking for clues.
- STEP 2** Predict an answer for the easier/easiest blank.
- STEP 3** Select the choice that most closely matches your prediction.
- STEP 4** Predict and select for the remaining blanks.
- STEP 5** Check your answers.

THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR SENTENCE EQUIVALENCE

- STEP 1** Read the sentence, looking for clues.
- STEP 2** Predict an answer.
- STEP 3** Select the two choices that most closely match your prediction.
- STEP 4** Check your answers to see if the sentence retains the same meaning.

THE KAPLAN METHOD FOR READING COMPREHENSION

- STEP 1** Read the passage strategically.
- STEP 2** Analyze the question stem.
- STEP 3** Research the relevant text in the passage.
- STEP 4** Make a prediction.
- STEP 5** Evaluate the answer choices.

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 or sets of 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. 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

2. 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)	Blank (ii)
A	controversial	assuaging
B	celebrated	augmenting
C	histrionic	debating

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



	Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
A	ignominious	obscurity	fraudulent
B	inconspicuous	indifference	apocryphal
C	famous	mystique	verified

4. Although Thomas Paine was most (i) _____ his political pamphlets, he was in fact (ii) _____ writer on many different subjects.



<u>Blank (i)</u>	<u>Blank (ii)</u>
A inimical to	D an abstruse
B condemned for	E a prolific
C famous for	F a terrible

5. Because he was convinced of his own _____, Adam never acknowledged his mistakes.



- (A) genius
- (B) acclamation
- (C) shrewdness
- (D) infallibility
- (E) popularity

6. St. Elmo's fire is a weather phenomenon that, (i) _____ it has been documented since ancient times, was not (ii) _____ until recently.



<u>Blank (i)</u>	<u>Blank (ii)</u>
A because	D incinerated
B since	E reported
C although	F understood

Questions 7–10 are based on the passage below.

It has been commonly accepted for some time now that certain scenes in Shakespeare's *Macbeth* are interpolations from the writing of another author; act III, scene 5, and parts of act IV, scene 1, have been determined to be the writing of one of his contemporaries, Thomas Middleton. This can be regarded as both illuminating and problematic, depending upon how the play is being studied. It allows us to infer a great deal about the conventions and practices of writing for the stage at the time. For example, playwriting may have been more collaborative than previously thought, or perhaps Elizabethan notions of plagiarism were different from ours. While historically significant, this does complicate our interpretation of the characters in the play. It is more difficult to assess authorial intention with regard to a character's motives if the text has been redacted by multiple authors.

7. Select the statement or statements that are correct according to the passage.

- A The author feels that Shakespeare is guilty of plagiarism.
- B The interpolations found in plays such as *Macbeth* make the assessment of authorial intention more straightforward.
- C Our current understanding of plagiarism may have arisen after Shakespeare's time.



8. Consider the following choices and select all that apply. Which of the following could aid in the further study of the interpolations discussed in the above passage?

- A an investigation into the existence and prevalence of collaborative writing partnerships during Shakespeare's time
- B an examination of the themes and techniques of other writers contemporary with Shakespeare
- C a search through legal documents of Shakespeare's time for references to plagiarism or intellectual property rights



9. Consider the following choices and select all that apply. Which CANNOT be inferred from the passage?



- [A] The example of interpolation discussed in the passage would be illegal today.
- [B] Authors and playwrights in Shakespeare's time might have recruited assistance when composing their works.
- [C] Shakespeare used Middleton's writing without his consent.

10. In the passage, the two highlighted statements play which of the following roles?



- (A) The first explains a concept, and the second presents an example of that concept.
- (B) The first presents an example of the main subject of the passage, and the second is a conclusion based on that example.
- (C) The first states the conclusion of the argument as a whole, and the second provides support for that conclusion.
- (D) The first provides evidence for a conclusion that the passage as a whole opposes, and the second presents the objection to that conclusion.
- (E) The first states the primary conclusion of the passage, and the second states the secondary conclusion.

Directions: For the following questions, select the **two** answer choices that, when inserted into the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole **and** yield complete sentences that are similar in meaning.

11. Known to all as having a silver tongue, the orator easily distracts audiences from the meaning of his words with his _____ speech.



- A mellifluous
- B concise
- C stumbling
- D laconic
- E euphonic
- F strident

12. When the underdogs so soundly beat the team favored to win, their victory _____ the entire sports world.



- A horrified
- B estranged
- C shook
- D bored
- E alienated
- F stunned

13. Despite the efforts made by the municipal government to increase public transportation usage, many people of the city continued to drive their own vehicles, complaining that the bus schedules were too _____ to be relied upon.



- A irregular
- B exacting
- C circuitous
- D rigid
- E isolated
- F erratic

14. Word painting is a musical technique in which the progression of the notes _____ the meaning of the lyrics; a famous example of this can be found in Handel's *Messiah*, in which the notes rise with the mention of "mountains" and fall with the mention of "low."



- [A] affects
- [B] mimics
- [C] contrasts
- [D] reflects
- [E] opposes
- [F] renounces

Directions: Each passage in this group is followed by questions based on its content. After reading a passage, choose the best answer to each question. Answer all questions following a passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage.

Questions 15 and 16 are based on the passage below.

In the decades leading up to the 1970s, the primarily French-speaking Canadian province of Québec saw its proportion of native French speakers diminish from year to year. The attrition of French was attributed to the preeminence of English in the workplace, particularly in affluent, “white-collar” jobs. The French-speaking majority was economically marginalized within its own province, as it was left with the choice of either working in lower-paying jobs or teaching its children English as a first language. The latter option would further erase Québec’s cultural autonomy and singularity within a country that primarily spoke English. Facing the risk of linguistic extinction, the province passed *Loi 101* (Law 101): The Charter of the French Language. It established French as the only official language of the province, established the primacy of French in the workplace, and led to more economic equity. Since its passage in 1977, the percentage of people in Québec who speak French as a first language has begun to rise.

15. Which of the following is suggested in the passage as a reason for the decline of French in Québec?
- (A) the disparity of economic opportunities available to French and English speakers
(B) an influx of English-speaking immigrants
(C) efforts of French Canadians to further integrate themselves with Canadian culture
(D) the emigration of French Canadians
(E) the outlawing of French in the other provinces
16. According to the passage, *Loi 101* was significant in that it
- (A) was a final, unsuccessful attempt at enforcing the usage of French in Québec
(B) curtailed the economic supremacy of English
(C) restricted the teaching of English in schools
(D) highlighted the distinctiveness of the cultural identity of Québec from that of the rest of Canada
(E) provided for bilingual education

Questions 17–19 are based on the paragraph below.

The advent of online education in the first decade of the 21st century was the result of and a response to a number of factors that were both internal and external to the field of higher education. Traditional tertiary institutions, especially those that were privately endowed, raised tuition rates far in excess of the rate of inflation. This, in concert with a larger demand for postsecondary education for working adults, helped facilitate the introduction of online learning. However, it should be acknowledged that the relative simplicity of using the Internet as a platform, as well as its cost-effectiveness, was seized upon by entrepreneurs in the private sector. Online education is largely in the hands of for-profit companies. The question now becomes whether the democratization of higher education is worth the price of removing it from nonprofit, research-based universities.

17. The passage is concerned primarily with



- (A) the advent of online education
- (B) adult-oriented educational systems
- (C) the usefulness of the Internet in postsecondary education
- (D) economic and technological factors that influenced the development and current state of online education
- (E) the advantages and disadvantages of online education

18. The author's use of the term "seized upon" evokes an image of _____ on the part of the entrepreneurs.



- (A) accidental realization
- (B) opportunistic tactics
- (C) violent appropriation
- (D) collusive behavior
- (E) market manipulation

19. The highlighted section refers to



- (A) the cost of online education
- (B) the popularity of online courses
- (C) making education available to a wider range of students
- (D) the role of voting in class selection
- (E) whether or not a democratic society should have online education

Question 20 is based on the passage below.

Thermodynamics is concerned with changes in the properties of matter when we alter the external conditions. An example of this is a gas being compressed by the motion of a piston. The final outcome depends on how the change is made—if the piston is moved in slowly, we say that the compression is “reversible.” This means that if we pull the piston back out, we retrace the same sequence of properties but in the reverse order; hence, the temperature of the gas will be the same when the piston has been pulled out as it was before the piston was pushed in. However, if the piston is moved in and out quickly, then the initial state (and temperature) will not be recovered—the gas will always be hotter than it was at the beginning. This is a manifestation, although not a statement, of the second law of thermodynamics. It also makes a difference whether there is a transfer of heat between the cylinder of gas and the external surroundings. If the cylinder is insulated, then the gas will heat on compression and cool on expansion (refrigeration uses this principle). On the other hand, if the cylinder can exchange heat with the surroundings, it will remain at the same temperature if the compression is slow enough.

20. This passage is primarily concerned with

- (A) describing the motion of a piston to demonstrate the laws of thermodynamics
- (B) explaining the conservation of heat during the motion of a piston
- (C) demonstrating how the second law of thermodynamics applies to pistons
- (D) explaining how thermodynamics function
- (E) discussing reversible compression

VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 1 ANSWER KEY

1. B
2. A, F
3. C, F, H
4. C, E
5. D
6. C, F
7. C
8. A, B, C
9. A, C
10. B
11. A, E
12. C, F
13. A, F
14. B, D
15. A
16. B
17. D
18. B
19. C
20. A

DIAGNOSE YOUR RESULTS

Diagnostic Tool

Tally up your score and write your results below.

Total

Total Correct: _____ out of 20 correct

By Question Type

Text Completions (questions 1–6) _____ out of 6 correct

Sentence Equivalence (questions 11–14) _____ out of 4 correct

Reading Comprehension (questions 7–10, 15–20) _____ out of 10 correct

Look back at the questions you got wrong and think about your experience answering them.

► STEP 1

Find the roadblocks.

If you struggled to answer some questions, then to improve your score, you need to pinpoint exactly what “roadblocks” tripped you up. To do that, ask yourself the following two questions.

Am I weak in the skills being tested?

The easiest way to determine this is to think in terms of what skills are required for each question type. If you’re having trouble with Sentence Equivalence or Text Completion, you probably need to review your vocabulary word lists. Maybe you need to brush up on using word etymology to your advantage. If Reading Comprehension questions are bothersome, you need to work on your critical reading skills. If you know you need to brush up on your verbal skills, try the *Kaplan GRE Verbal Workbook*, which contains a focused review of all the verbal reasoning concepts tested on the GRE, as well as practice exercises to build speed and accuracy.

Did the question types throw me off?

Then you need to become more comfortable with them! Sentence Equivalence questions have a unique format, and Reading Comprehension can be daunting with its dense, complex passages. If you struggled, go back to the beginning of this chapter and review the Kaplan principles and methods for the question types you found challenging. Make sure you understand the principles and how to apply the methods. These strategies will help you improve your speed and efficiency on Test Day. Remember, it’s not a reading or vocabulary test; it’s a critical-reasoning test (even though your reading habits and command of vocabulary are indispensable tools that will help you earn a high score).

Also, get as much practice as you can so that you grow more at ease with the question type formats. For even more practice, try the *Kaplan GRE Verbal Workbook*, which includes practice sets for each question type.

► STEP 2

Find the blind spots.

Did you answer some questions quickly and confidently but get them wrong anyway?

When you come across wrong answers like these, you need to figure out what you thought you were doing right, what it turns out you were doing wrong, and why that happened. The best way to do that is to **read the answer explanations!**

The explanations give you a detailed breakdown of why the correct answer is correct and why all the other answer choices are incorrect. This helps to reinforce the Kaplan principles and methods for each question type and helps you figure out what blindsided you so it doesn’t happen again. Also, just as with your “roadblocks,” try to get in as much practice as you can.

STEP 3

Reinforce your strengths.

Now read through all the answer explanations for the ones you got right. You should check every answer because if you guessed correctly without actually knowing how to get the right answer, reading the explanations will make sure that whatever needs fixing gets fixed. Work through them one more time. Again, this helps to reinforce the Kaplan principles and methods for each question type, which in turn helps you work more efficiently so you can get the score you want. Keep your skills sharp with more practice.

As soon as you are comfortable with all the GRE question types and Kaplan methods, complete a full-length practice test under timed conditions. In this way, practice tests serve as milestones; they help you to chart your progress. So don't save them all for the final weeks! For even more practice, you can also try the Kaplan GRE Quiz Bank. You get more than 2,500 questions that you can access 24/7 from any Internet browser, each with comprehensive explanations. You can even customize your quizzes based on question type, content, and difficulty level. Take quizzes in Timed Mode to test your stamina or in Tutor Mode to see explanations as you work. Best of all, you also get detailed reports to track your progress.

Visit <http://kaptest.com/GRE> for more details on our Quiz Bank and for more information on our other online and classroom-based options.

VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 1

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. B

The road sign here is “but,” which is a detour. The key words “can be decoded” indicate that the contrasting word in the blank means something like “mysterious” or “hard to understand.” With that prediction in mind, look for an answer that suggests something incomprehensible, which rules out choices (C) *harmonious*, (D) *shocking*, and (E) *lucid*. Choice (A) *unwelcoming* is a possibility, but it refers more to a sense of unpleasantness than to perplexity. Answer choice (B) *arcane* is a perfect fit for the sense of something that cannot be easily understood.

2. A, F

Begin by taking note of the phrase “in spite of,” which suggests that there will be an opposing idea in the sentence. The sentence describes the play as popular, so you can rule out choices (B) *celebrated* and (C) *histrionic* for the first blank because you are looking for a word contrasting with popularity. Based on the remaining option, (A) *controversial*, you are looking for a solution to the second blank that connotes uncertainty. Choices (D) *assuaging* and (E) *augmenting* are not possible, since neither means uncertainty. It is therefore answer choice (F) *debating* for the second blank. Read the sentence with the blanks filled in: if the play is controversial, it is not universally popular, and it makes sense that critics would debate some aspect of it.

3. C, F, H

When there are so many missing parts, it is often best to begin with whatever complete clause you can find, in this case the final one. This will allow you to fill in the third blank. You are told that we do not know the truth, which allows you to eliminate both choices (G) *fraudulent* and (I) *verified*, because both indicate that concrete knowledge exists on the matter. Answer choice (H) *apocryphal* is the only possible answer. If you know that many apocryphal stories arose surrounding the work, you can make headway into both of the other blanks.

For the first blank, assume that if many stories are made up about something, it is widely talked about—this eliminates choice (B) *inconspicuous* without a doubt, and between choices (A) *ignominious* and (C) *famous*, the choice is fairly straightforward. When you know something is much talked about because it is “incomplete,” you can suppose that a neutral synonym of “well-known” is going to be much more likely than a negative synonym of “shameful.”

Finally, for the second blank, you can reject choices (D) *obscurity* and (E) *indifference* because you know the composition is well-known, so answer choice (F) *mystique* is the only logical choice (and is supported by the mention of *apocryphal* stories). Let’s check our answer: “Considered one of his most *famous* works, Mozart’s *Requiem in D Minor* has a certain *mystique* in Western culture, and many *apocryphal* stories

have arisen surrounding it; unfortunately, the truth is lost to us.” Everything fits in perfectly when you read back the sentence with the correct words filled in.

4. C, E

“Although”, a detour road sign, starts off the sentence, indicating that the ideas of the first and second clause will be opposites. While external knowledge might tell you that Paine was, in fact, a famous writer, it is important to remember that the correct answer will be derived from clues in the sentence alone. Also, the key words “political pamphlets” and “many different subjects” tell us what is being contrasted here: one subject (politics) versus many subjects. You might predict that Paine was well-known for his political writing but was actually a good writer on many subjects.

For the first blank, **(C)** *famous for* is a perfect match for your prediction. Choices **(A)** *inimical to* and **(B)** *condemned for* are both negative and, therefore, incorrect. Then for the second blank, neither **(D)** *abstruse* nor **(F)** *terrible* indicate that Paine wrote well. However, **(E)** *prolific* author writes a lot, and it can be presumed that writing comes easily to him. Therefore, **(E)** is the correct answer for the second blank.

Choices **(D)** *abstruse* and **(E)** *terrible* could work in a different sentence, but there is no choice for the first blank that will allow the resulting sentence to make sense. The answer will always be clear and definite—choices **(C)** *famous for* and **(E)** *prolific* create a sentence that makes sense without requiring any other knowledge or qualifications.

5. D

Since Adam “never acknowledged his mistakes,” you can assume that Adam does not want to admit to being wrong. Choices **(B)** *acclamation* and **(E)** *popularity* can be immediately discounted because they have nothing to do with being right or wrong. Choices **(A)** *genius* and **(C)** *shrewdness* might work in this sentence (they are both related to mental quickness, and someone convinced of his own intelligence might not want to admit to being wrong). However, answer choice **(D)** *infallibility* directly opposes the notion of being wrong and is, therefore, the correct answer.

6. C, F

Based on the choices, you know that there will be a conjunction between the clauses of the first and second blanks. The contrast of “ancient times” and “recently” tells you to predict a word for the first blank that suggests contrast, which eliminates choices **(A)** *because* and **(B)** *since*, leaving you with answer choice **(C)** *although*.

You know St. Elmo’s fire has been documented for a long time, so discount choice **(E)** *reported* for the second blank. Choice **(D)** may be tempting, because *incineration* is related to fire, but it does not make sense in this sentence. That leaves **(F)** *understood*, which does make sense as a contrast with the phenomenon’s having been documented.

7. C

This type of question gives you three statements and asks you to select which ones are true. Break it down statement by statement. Statement **(A)** is untrue because the term “plagiarism” is used in the passage in the phrase “perhaps Elizabethan

notions of plagiarism were different from ours”—which indicates that one cannot be certain of what might have constituted plagiarism at the time. Statement **(B)** is a 180: the passage does refer to the assessment of authorial intention if the text has been redacted by several authors, but the passage states the exact opposite of statement **(B)**. Statement **(C)** is correct because you are told that our current notion of plagiarism might be different from the notion of plagiarism in Shakespeare’s time.

8. A, B, C

This question asks us about where you might direct further study about the interpolations referenced in the passage. This asks us to consider possibilities *based* on what is in the text but not necessarily stated *within* it. **(A)** The passage raises the question of how collaborative writing for the stage may have been during Shakespeare’s time. Conducting an investigation into the existence of collaborative writing partnerships would be a good way to determine an answer for this question. **(B)** Familiarizing yourself with the style of other writers who might have helped write or had their work used in the writing of Shakespeare’s plays would help in the determination of the actual authorship of passages in *Macbeth* (and other plays), as well as provide insight into authorial intention. Finally, **(C)** is an interesting alternative to a strictly literary study and would help to solve the question posed in the text of what constituted plagiarism in the Elizabethan era. All three are good choices for further study.

9. A, C

This is an exclusion question, so you must select the answers you *cannot* infer from the passage. **(A)**, that this example of interpolation would be illegal today, is impossible to tell, and this is specified by the author’s questioning of the difference in notions of plagiarism between now and then; furthermore, it is not specified whether or not Middleton was consciously assisting the composition. **(B)** is suggested within the passage in the supposition that writing such as *Macbeth* might have, in fact, been collaborative—this allows you to eliminate choice **(B)**. **(C)** you know to be also a correct response for the same reason you specified for **(A)**—you do not know precisely Middleton’s role in the composition. Answer choices **(A)** and **(C)** are both correct.

10. B

In this question, you are asked to determine the rhetorical roles of the two highlighted statements. The first highlighted statement is used as an example of the interpolations that the first clause in the sentence mentions. The highlighted portion states that parts of Shakespeare’s work were in fact written by his peer Middleton. So the first highlighted portion appears to be an example.

The second highlighted statement presents an opinion regarding the impact of interpolations on literary analysis. According to this statement, because others wrote certain parts of Shakespeare’s work, it is more difficult to determine a character’s motives. Your prediction should be that the first statement is an example, and the second is an opinion or conclusion (remember that in arguments, the words “opinion” and “conclusion” will often be used interchangeably). Answer choice **(B)** matches this prediction perfectly.

The other choices miss the mark completely. For instance, choice **(A)** incorrectly states that the second highlighted portion is the example. Similarly, choice **(C)** indicates that the first statement is the opinion and the second is the evidence, the exact opposite of our prediction. **(D)** states that the passage opposes an argument, but there is no conflict addressed in the passage. Finally, choice **(E)** identifies both statements as conclusions, which is not correct.

11. A, E

The key here is that the sentence tells us that his “silver tongue” makes it hard to concentrate on the meaning of his words. To have a silver tongue is to be noted for the pleasantness of one’s speech, so you are looking for a pair of answers that mean “pleasing.” **(C) stumbling**, **(D) laconic**, and **(F) strident** all are unrelated to the pleasantness of his tone, and while **(B) concise** language may be an attribute of a skilled orator, it will not create a similar sentence to one created by either of the other two possible answers. **(A) mellifluous** and **(E) euphonic** both mean “to be sweet or pleasing,” and both are often used in reference to speech.

12. C, F

For the favorite to lose is a surprise, so you are looking for choices that are synonyms of “surprised.” Choice **(A) horrified** has a negative connotation not implied in the sentence. Likewise, the emotions conveyed in choices **(B) estranged** and **(E) alienated** would require more information than you are given to be considered as possible answers. **(D) bored** is the opposite of what you are looking for; something surprising is not boring. Answer choice **(C) shook** is often used in a metaphorical sense when a surprising event occurs, as is answer choice **(F) stunned**, and the two are synonyms of each other and of “surprised.”

13. A, F

This is a good example of a sentence in which you are given more information than you need. In fact, the only clue you need lies in the final phrase “to be relied upon.” Your answers will be antonyms of “reliable,” which eliminates choices **(B) exacting**, **(C) circuitous** (a tempting choice because of the relationship between bus routes and the root word “circuit,” but the meaning is not related to the sentence), **(D) rigid**, and **(E) isolated**. **(A) irregular** and **(F) erratic** both suggest that the buses are unreliable and, as is often (but not necessarily) the case with these questions, they are synonyms of each other.

14. B, D

While you might have no background in musical techniques, you never need information from outside the sentence to deduce the correct answer. The example given tells you that the progression of notes in the music seems to imitate the words of the lyrics. So, you need a word that gives the meaning “the progression of the notes mirrors the meaning of the lyrics.” Choices **(C) contrasts**, **(E) opposes**, and **(F) renounces** are antonyms of the desired answer. While **(A) affects** could work in the sentence, it lacks a synonym and does not properly refer to the desired meaning of

“mirrors.” Answer choices **(B)** *mimics* and **(D)** *reflects* do, however, and thus you know that they are your desired choices.

15. A

You are asked why the use of the French language declined in Québec. Researching the passage, you see this mentioned in the first few lines. Specifically, you are told that the “preeminence” of the English language in the best jobs forced people to switch. This indicates that in order to take advantage of the best economic opportunities, one had to speak English. The passage suggests that French became an economically unviable language, stating that “the French-speaking majority was economically marginalized.” Thus, the two groups had access to significantly different economic and professional opportunities. This is reflected in answer choice **(A)**.

Choices **(B)** and **(D)** are out of scope, as immigrant and emigrant populations are not mentioned. Furthermore, choice **(E)** is also beyond the scope of the passage, as the outlawing of languages is not relevant to the discussion. Finally, choice **(C)** is a 180, as the passage states the French sought to maintain their autonomy, not integrate themselves into other cultures.

16. B

This question asks you to summarize the significance of the law mentioned in the latter part of the passage. Based on the final sentence of the passage (which mentions the rise in French as the primary language), **(A)** is untrue—it was not an unsuccessful attempt. **(B)** is true because the passage specifies that the law “established the primacy of French in the workplace.” No mention is made of language in schools, so you can dismiss options **(C)** and **(E)**. Finally, while the cultural identity of Québec is mentioned in the passage, the only results of *Loi 101* specified are the economic equity of the languages and the rise in the usage of French, so you can also reject **(D)** as a possible answer. Answer choice **(B)** is the only option that is based on the information in the passage.

17. D

You must be careful here. Just because **(A)** is a direct quotation of the opening of the passage does not make it the correct answer, and, indeed, the passage moves away from the origins of online education and into other facets of its expansion. **(B)** is not discussed in the passage, even though the author makes note that the demand for adult-oriented education was one of the contributing factors to the rise of online learning. Neither **(C)** nor **(E)** properly describes the entire scope of the passage. Only answer choice **(D)** can be said to encompass the entirety of the passage.

18. B

Here you are called to define a phrase based on its context. What you are looking for is an answer that accurately reflects what is described in the passage: the entrepreneurs saw an untapped potential for profit in the unanswered demand for online learning and “seized upon” it. **(A)** is a poor choice because it implies that

their success in capitalizing on the demand was unintentional. **(B)** is a much better solution because it evokes the image of the entrepreneurs taking the opportunity available. **(C)** is highly unlikely because no mention of violence is made in the passage (and, indeed, in reference to online education this would be an unlikely choice to begin with). **(D)** can be eliminated as there is no mention of collusion on the part of for-profit education companies; similarly, **(E)** can be eliminated because those companies are never said to have manipulated the market in order to gain control of the online education market. Answer choice **(B)** is the only possible answer.

19. C

This type of question asks you to define the highlighted phrase based on the context. The key word here is “democratization.” While the cost-effectiveness of online education is mentioned earlier in the passage, it is unlikely that **(A) *the cost of online education*** is the correct answer because the sense of the final sentence is that “it remains to be seen whether *making higher education more widely available through online institutions* is worth the price of removing it from nonprofit, research-based universities.” Based on this, you can also discount **(B) *the popularity of online courses*** and **(D) *the role of voting in class selection*** because while they may be linked conceptually to the term “democracy,” the context tells us this is not what the phrase here concerns. Answer choice **(C) *making education available to a wider range of students*** matches our prediction and properly clarifies the usage of the highlighted phrase in the passage. You can discount **(E)** because it goes well beyond the scope of the passage.

20. A

In a Global question such as this one, the correct answer will reflect the scope and purpose you noted while reading the passage. While the broad topic of the passage is thermodynamics, the bulk of the passage describes the motion of a piston and how the effects of that motion demonstrate the laws of thermodynamics. **(A)** expresses this idea exactly. **(D)** may be tempting since “thermodynamics” is the first word of the passage, but **(D)** is too broad and leaves out any mention of the piston, which plays a key role in the passage as a whole. Choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(E)** refer to specific subjects mentioned in the passage but do not refer to the passage as a whole.

VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 2

1. Because she was so _____, Mary was uncomfortable speaking to large groups of people.

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



2. 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



3. 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	negligible
B	crucial
C	trivial

Blank (ii)

D	although
E	so
F	plus

4. 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

5. (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) _____.



<u>Blank (i)</u>	<u>Blank (ii)</u>	<u>Blank (iii)</u>
A Considering	D imprudent	G poisonous
B While	E cheaper	H bland
C Because	F ingenuous	I toothsome

6. 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.



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

Question 7 is based on the passage below.

Criticisms of the automaticity model of reading acquisition include a lack of focus on comprehension as the ultimate goal of reading. Too much focus on fluency to the neglect of comprehension is a correlative criticism. Miscue analysis, tracking students' errors or "miscues," has demonstrated that even early readers use prediction as well as translation into dialect as they read, thereby using tools outside of those described in the automaticity model. A third criticism is that dyslexic readers, because of the inherent decoding problems they face, necessarily have trouble following the model and sustaining the reading rates recommended for fluency.

7. The passage suggests that all the following are flaws in the automaticity model of reading acquisition EXCEPT



- (A) failure to consider all the methods commonly used by developing readers
- (B) measuring reading ability by fluency
- (C) prioritizing efficiency in reading over understanding
- (D) insufficient research
- (E) its application in groups of readers who have difficulties decoding reading material

Questions 8–10 are based on the passage below.

Toward the end of the 19th century, many scientists thought that all the great scientific discoveries had already been made and that there was not much left to do beyond some “tidying up.” Max Planck, born in 1858, turned this notion upside down with his study of black-body radiation. Even in a vacuum, a hot body will tend to come to thermal equilibrium with a colder body by radiative heat transfer. This is the principle by which we derive energy from the sun. However, measurement of black-body radiation frequencies across a range of temperatures resulted in a parabolic curve, which theory in Planck’s time could not explain. After many years of work devoted to this problem, Planck succeeded in quantitatively explaining the experimental data; his key insight was that energy comes in small, discrete packets, called quanta. His theory was the birth of what is called quantum mechanics, the revolutionary theory of matter that is fundamental to the modern understanding of physics, chemistry, and molecular biology.

8. Select the sentence that best describes the importance of Max Planck’s work to modern science, as described in the passage. 
9. Which of the following would best paraphrase the opening sentence?
 - (A) By the late 1800s, much of the scientific community felt it had completed the majority of its work and minor revisions were its only remaining task. 
 - (B) By 1900, few scientists were still making significant discoveries, and most projects were revising current theories.
 - (C) At the end of the 19th century, scientists were concerned that they had run out of discoveries to make and could only perfect already proven theories.
 - (D) By 1900, the scientific community had declared that it had come to understand the natural laws of the universe.
 - (E) At the end of the 19th century, scientists ceased trying to formulate new theories.
10. Which of the following best describes the relationship between the highlighted portions of the passage? 
 - (A) topic and scope
 - (B) theory and debunking
 - (C) problem and solution
 - (D) hypothesis and analysis
 - (E) thesis and synthesis

11. After naturally occurring smallpox was eradicated, the World Health Organization chose to _____ the remaining samples of the virus in hopes that they might be later used in developing the means to combat other viruses.
- [A] eliminate
[B] duplicate
[C] preserve
[D] retain
[E] extirpate
[F] cultivate
12. The *Magna Carta* was one of the most _____ political declarations of the Middle Ages because it declared the monarch's powers to be limited by the law; although its practical effects were not immediate, it is commonly seen as the genesis of constitutional law in England.
- [A] remarkable
[B] immense
[C] pivotal
[D] recondite
[E] ancient
[F] momentous
13. Though _____ filled the streets, people seemed unconcerned with the appearance of their city.
- [A] detritus
[B] refuge
[C] gaudiness
[D] bedlam
[E] refuse
[F] barrenness
14. G. K. Chesterton's sense of humor is exemplified in his often _____ responses to his friend and rival George Bernard Shaw.
- [A] punctilious
[B] vociferous
[C] waggish
[D] vicious
[E] scathing
[F] witty

Directions: Each passage in this group is followed by questions based on its content. After reading a passage, choose the best answer(s) to each question. Answer all questions following a passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage.

Questions 15–18 are based on the passage below.

There is an anthropological theory that states that societies may be divided into one of two broad categories by their cultural motivators: shame or guilt. In a shame-based society, the ethical motivations are primarily external; one's behavior is governed based on potential effects on the social group (such as dishonoring one's family). By contrast, guilt-based societies rely more heavily on internal motivations; one's behavior is governed based on a set of internal guidelines. There is no society where one or the other is entirely absent, but the distinction lies in that, based on the accepted values of the society, one will come to be dominant over the other. It would seem that early Medieval Europe was primarily a shame-based society; indeed, the forms of shame-based motivators in courtly society were extremely highly developed, with express social laws governing various behaviors. This sort of shame may be seen to be divided into many forms, such as positive and negative shame; that is, prospective and retrospective (knowledge of the honor one will accrue or the shame one will avoid through future actions, and humiliation or other punishment after something harmful has been done, respectively), ethical and nonethical (dealing with higher, such as theological and abstract, concepts, and quotidian matters, respectively), and so on. These social structures may also be found in the contemporary tales of the chivalric world. An example of such may be seen in the frequent plot device of the knight committing adultery with the wife of his lord. Adultery with the wife of one's lord is a matter of treason and an explicit moral wrong, and yet the condemnation in these stories seems to focus on the perpetrator's violation of social norms (treason) rather than moral standards (adultery).

15. Read the following statements and select all that apply. Which of the following CANNOT be inferred from the passage?
- 
- [A] Early Medieval Europe was unconcerned with moral codes.
 - [B] Some cultures are neither shame-based nor guilt-based.
 - [C] Guilt-based societies have few laws.

16. Select the sentence that describes the scope of the passage. 
17. Consider the following choices and select all that apply. What can we infer about a society that focuses primarily upon a moral code of right and wrong?
- [A] It would be guilt-based. 
[B] It would tolerate adultery.
[C] It would not have laws governing behavior.
18. Based on the passage, a society that prizes the harmony of the social group would most likely be 
- (A) guilt-based
(B) shame-based
(C) extremely permissive
(D) governed by a chivalric order
(E) bereft of citizens with an internal code of moral right and wrong

Questions 19 and 20 are based on the passage below.

At the atomic scale, all matter exhibits properties commonly associated with both waves and particles. The classic experiment that demonstrates wavelike properties is the double-slit experiment, first performed by Thomas Young at the beginning of the 19th century. If a beam of light passes through two narrow slits and is projected onto a screen behind the slits, a pattern of light and dark fringes can be observed. The explanation for this is based on an analogy with ripples in water. If we drop two stones some distance apart, the ripples start to interfere with each other, sometimes amplifying when two crests or troughs meet, sometimes canceling when a crest meets a trough. A similar explanation holds for interference effects with visible light; the two slits act as independent sources in the same way as do the stones in water. This experiment provided convincing evidence in support of Christian Huygen's wave theory of light, which eventually supplanted the older particle theory of Isaac Newton. However, in the 20th century, Einstein showed that Newton was not entirely wrong. His analysis of the photoelectric effect showed that light could behave as a particle as well as a wave. Surprisingly, electrons, which we tend to think of as particles, also demonstrate interference effects, showing that they too are waves as well as particles.

19. Which of the following best summarizes the findings of Young's experiment, as described in the passage?



- (A) The waves from independent light sources interact with one another in predictable patterns.
- (B) Two light sources can cancel each other out, creating the observed dark fringes.
- (C) Light exhibits properties of both particles and waves.
- (D) Newton's theory was permanently debunked.
- (E) Newton's theory was correct all along.

20. Based on the passage, what would we expect the light fringes in Young's experiment to represent?



- (A) the light particles from both slits landing on the screen
- (B) the amplification created by the combination of both sets of waves of light
- (C) the projection onto the screen where the light is not blocked out by the object with the slits
- (D) the amplification created by light particles
- (E) the projection onto the screen where the light is blocked by the object with the slits

VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 2 ANSWER KEY

1. A
2. D
3. B, D
4. B
5. B, D, G
6. A, F
7. D
8. His theory was the birth of what is called...
9. A
10. C
11. C, D
12. C, F
13. A, E
14. C, F
15. A, B, C
16. It would seem that early Medieval Europe was primarily a shame-based society...
17. A
18. B
19. A
20. B

DIAGNOSE YOUR RESULTS

Diagnostic Tool

Tally up your score and write your results below.

Total

Total Correct: _____ out of 20 correct

By Question Type

Text Completions (questions 1–6) _____ out of 6 correct

Sentence Equivalence (questions 11–14) _____ out of 4 correct

Reading Comprehension (questions 7–10, 15–20) _____ out of 10 correct

Repeat the steps outlined on the Diagnose Your Results page that follows the Verbal Reasoning Practice Set 1 answer key.

VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 2

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. A

Mary is quiet when in groups, so you should look to find a related word. You can thus quickly rule out choices (B) *congenial* and (D) *gregarious*. Answer choice (A) *reticent* properly matches the sense of the second clause, whereas choices (C) *brusque* and (E) *scurrilous* would require information beyond her being quiet in groups to be good choices.

2. D

The critics do not approve of the band's change, and the word "with" is a straight-ahead road sign here, so look for something that suggests criticism or rejection. This eliminates choices (A) *lauding* and (C) *tolerating*; furthermore, you know that the reception was strongly negative based on the phrase "universally panned," so you can eliminate choices (B) *ignorant of* and (E) *apathetic to* because both of these indicate a general lack of interest. This leaves answer choice (D) *deriding*, which provides the sense of a strong, negative reaction.

3. B, D

Looking at the sentence and choices, you know that the second word will be some kind of conjunction that connects the two parts of the sentence. You can see from the second part that there were negative effects, while in the first part of the sentence you see mention of industrial advances, suggesting that a contrasting conjunction is likely.

Thus, for the second blank, answer choice (D) *although* is an appropriate contrasting conjunction. Choices (E) and (F) are poor choices because they are contingent on the second clause either being a result of the first or building on the first, rather than contrasting with the first clause.

For the first blank, you can safely rule out choices (A) *negligible* and (C) *trivial* because we know from the second part of the sentence that the cotton gin had some notable effects. Choice (B) *crucial* is the only positive option for the first blank.

4. B

With the road sign "Although," you are given a contrast in this sentence about the way Johnny Cash presented himself—"an image of anti-authoritarianism" versus being closely connected with various U.S. presidents. Judging by the sentence, you would expect a term akin to "promoted," so you can remove (E) *snubbed* from the list; furthermore, you know it refers to his own image, not the image of others. Choices (A) *advocated*, (C) *patronized*, and (D) *supported* all imply outward action—to encourage an image of someone or something else. Answer choice (B) *cultivated* is the correct choice because it most clearly refers to developing his own image.

5. B, D, G

Three-blank sentences take a little longer to work out. Looking at the choices for the first blank, you can see that it is a conjunction, but you cannot be sure of which until you solve the rest of the sentence. The best place to begin in this sentence is actually at the end—you are given a very useful hint with the detour road sign “but,” telling you that blank three will be an antonym to “edible.” Looking through the choices, you can see that the correct answer is answer choice (G) *poisonous*. While you might not want to eat something (H) *bland*, this is not a direct antonym to “edible.” Choice (I) *toothsome* means “palatable” or “desirable” and is the opposite of what the blank needs.

From here, work backwards to the second blank. Since you now know that you are talking about eating possibly poisonous mushrooms, you can predict that blank two will say that it is “unwise” to do so. Choice (E) *cheaper* is irrelevant to the context (and no mention of money is made elsewhere), and choice (F) *ingenuous*, meaning “innocent” or “sincere,” is unrelated to the sentence. Answer choice (D) *imprudent* is a synonym of “unwise” and is therefore the answer you need.

Return to the first blank in the sentence. You are told that mushrooms are popular in many cuisines, and you are looking for an answer that connects the two ideas. Predict roughly “*although* mushrooms are popular in many cuisines, it is imprudent...”; what you are looking for is a conjunction marking this contradicting idea. Answer choice (B) *While* is the correct choice. For sentences with three blanks, especially, it is important to reread the sentence with all the blanks filled in: “*While* mushrooms are popular in many cuisines, it is *imprudent* to eat those found in the wild, as many frequently found mushrooms resemble edible mushrooms but are, in fact, *poisonous*.” The sentence makes perfect sense.

6. A, F

Within the first half of the sentence, you are given the detour road sign “though” to contrast the high praise with the sales. Thus, choices (B) *robust* and (C) *singular* cannot be correct because they are too positive. Answer choice (A) *scanty*, on the other hand, contrasts appropriately with high praise, and it fits perfectly with “poor sales” later in the sentence.

The second half of the sentence offers a possible explanation for why the sales were poor, suggesting that it was too hard to understand the poet’s language, which immediately removes choice (D) *lucid*. Choice (E) *prosaic* might trip you up; however, answer choice (F) *abstruse* is clearly the better choice for the second blank—it is an adjective indicating that the prose is difficult to understand.

7. D

Reading through the passage, you can determine answer choice **(D)** to be the correct answer, because there is no mention of the amount of research done or needed concerning the automaticity model. Research is out of scope. Choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)** are explicitly stated in the passage: **(A)** may be found in the description of early readers, and **(B)** and **(C)** may be found in the criticism of focusing on fluency over understanding. Choice **(E)** can be derived from the third criticism about dyslexia, which is that the automaticity model does not account for differences in decoding ability.

8. His theory was the birth of what is called...

This sentence provides a summary of the importance of his work.

9. A

While reading the paragraph, paraphrase the text in your head to make sure you understand it. The key aspect of this sentence is that, at the time, there were a number of scientists who believed that the major discoveries had been made and the remaining scientific work was to tweak and perfect current theories. With that in mind, you can look through the options to see which best fits this idea. Answer choice **(A)** is an excellent paraphrase of the sentence. **(B)** is problematic because there is a fundamental difference between scientists believing all the great discoveries to have been made and scientists making few new significant discoveries. You can also reject choices **(C)**, **(D)**, and **(E)** because their description of “scientists” and the “scientific community” as a whole is too broad. The original sentence only states “many scientists,” suggesting that there were dissenters, such as Planck.

10. C

What you must keep in mind here is that you are asked for the relationship between the two highlighted phrases, not their relationship to the passage as a whole. A good way to attack this sort of question is to paraphrase each of the phrases and identify what it is saying on its own. The first phrase states an issue: that the current theory could not explain the parabolic curve scientists observed. The second phrase tells us of Planck’s breakthrough discovery of quanta. Thus, you can predict that the answer will tell us the relationship is between the limitations of the current theory and Planck’s solution. **(A)** is a trap because it uses words you frequently see elsewhere and are admonished to remember when considering any Reading Comprehension passage. However, *topic and scope* are irrelevant to this question, and choice **(A)** can be dismissed. **(B)** may be tempting because the first highlighted portion does contain the word “theory.” However, based on the wording of the first phrase, it is clear that the issue with the current theory was recognized by the scientific community; thus, Planck’s solution was not a challenge to a widely accepted belief, and “debunking” is not appropriate. In answer choice **(C)**, you are given *problem and solution*, which matches your prediction and is the correct answer. **(D)** is out of scope; a *hypothesis* is not brought up here, nor is that hypothesis being explained further. **(E)** is incorrect since the first highlighted sentence is not a *thesis*, or summary, of the paragraph, but rather an issue that needs to be addressed.

11. C, D

While you might be tempted to stray toward the answers meaning “destroy” due to the previous mention of eradication and due to the danger of the material (smallpox), you must carefully read through the sentence. It informs us that there is hope that the samples may have further uses, so you know they must be preserved. You can thus reject (A) *eliminate* and (E) *extirpate*. You are left with two pairs of synonyms, choices (B) *duplicate* and (F) *cultivate* as well as (C) *preserve* and (D) *retain*, so you must choose one of the sets. You are able to do this by focusing on what is in the sentence alone—the word “later” suggests saving the samples, not working with them immediately, so answer choices (C) and (D) are correct.

12. C, F

With strong words like “most,” “declarations,” and “genesis,” the answer will be likewise a word of emphatic meaning. Furthermore, the sentence tells us of the importance of the *Magna Carta*, so you can predict synonyms of “significant” or “revolutionary.” Choices (D) *recondite* and (E) *ancient* are both meaningless in the sentence, and you can eliminate them. Choice (B) *immense* can likewise be dismissed because nowhere is the size of the *Magna Carta* described, nor are there any synonyms among the other options. While choice (A) *remarkable* may be tempting, both answer choices (C) *pivotal* and (F) *momentous* connote a significant turning point, which (A) does not.

13. A, E

The key here is that the appearance of the city seems to be lacking, so you are looking for words that imply a deficiency in charm or physical beauty. Choice (D) *bedlam* could only make sense without the second clause, and choice (F) *barrenness* is a lack of something, so it could not fill the streets; furthermore, both are lacking synonyms in the other options. Choice (C) *gaudiness* does imply a lack of taste, but it is without a synonym as well. (A) *detritus* means “waste” or “debris,” which is an excellent option for the blank, and with further investigation you can see it has a synonym in (E) *refuse*. (B) *refuge* is a trap for the careless, resembling *refuse* and being right below a synonym of *refuse*—be careful when you read the answers!

14. C, F

The words in the blank will describe Chesterton’s particular style of humor. You are given a further clue to the answer in the description of Shaw as his “friend and rival.” With this description in mind, you can dismiss choices (B) *vociferous*, (D) *vicious*, and (E) *scathing* as behavior unlikely to be shown toward a friend—remember, if the solution would demand further qualification such as “Chesterton was known to be as harsh to his friends as to his critics,” then it is highly unlikely to be the correct answer. (A) *punctilious* is not a synonym of the remaining two answer choices, (C) *waggish* and (F) *witty*.

15. A, B, C

You are looking for statements that go beyond what can reasonably be inferred in the passage. **(A)** is a good choice, because while the passage mentions that it was “primarily a shame-based society,” there is no mention of a lack of concern with moral codes; further, the passage notes that neither classification of societies is without some influence of the other. **(B)** also cannot be inferred; in fact, it is contradicted in the fourth sentence. As for **(C)**, while the passage mentions the complexity of the social guidelines of shame-based societies, there is no way you can infer that guilt-based societies have few laws. All three of the answers are correct.

16. It would seem that early Medieval Europe was primarily a shame-based society...

This sentence provides us with the particular focus of the passage on Medieval Europe, narrowed down from the topic of shame- and guilt-based societies in general.

17. A

The difference between the two kinds of societies, according to the author, is a matter of internal (guilt) and external (shame) motivators. What you must consider, then, is where a moral code might be placed. You are given one particularly useful clue in the phrase “internal guidelines” in sentence 3, which, even if it lacks the strength of a sense of moral right and wrong, still allows us to classify the society in the question as guilt based. Furthermore, in the example at the end of the passage, it is suggested that “moral standards” are an example of a trait of a guilt based society. The answer is **(A)**. Choice **(B)** is incorrect; don’t be distracted by the description at the end of the passage that describes how medieval Europe, a shame-based society, dealt with adultery. Choice **(C)** is beyond the scope of the passage.

18. B

For this question, you must consider the description of the society in the question compared to what you are given in the passage. Early in the passage, you see mention of dishonoring one’s family as an example of a damaging effect on the social group. This indicates that the society in the question would be a shame-based society as in the example, and the correct answer is **(B)**. Choice **(C)** is incorrect because there are certainly rules in a shame-based society. Similarly, you can reject **(E)**; it goes beyond the scope of the passage, which does not offer any evidence to suggest that individuals within a society that emphasizes social cohesion do not have an internally regulated morality. **(D)** is incorrect because there is insufficient information to support such an assertion.

19. A

The key to this question lies in the analogy of the ripples in the water, where two troughs or crests amplify each other but one trough and one crest negate each other. Likewise, with the light waves, the two separate light sources produce waves that interact with one another and, like the crests and troughs of the water, have predictable results: the light and dark fringes. Choice **(B)** describes a part of Young's findings, but you must reject it because it does not adequately describe the whole of his findings. Choice **(C)** cannot be the correct answer either, because the passage notes that it was not until Einstein that particle theory was returned to the theory of light. And likewise for choice **(D)**; you are told Einstein proved that Newton's theory was not entirely accurate and so it was not permanently debunked. Similarly, you cannot claim he was entirely correct, so **(E)** is out as well. This leaves choice **(A)**, which matches your prediction.

20. B

The answer, again, comes from the ripple analogy, where two meeting crests are amplified. Thus, choice **(B)** is likely to be the correct answer. You can dismiss **(A)** since Young's experiment is concerned solely with light as a wave, not as a particle, and answer choice **(C)** fails to take into account the purpose of his experiment: separating a single light source into two streams and recombining them on the screen. As for choice **(D)**, amplification of light particles is mentioned as a possibility, but this is out of the scope of the question. Choice **(E)** refers to Huygen's wave theory of light but not Young's experiment. You have a clear answer in choice **(B)**.

VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 3

1. Veteran technical support staff members feel that their services are _____ by the use of computer programs to do the same work; they claim that technical support can't be provided procedurally 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)

A	vast
B	meager
C	unique

Blank (ii)

D	color
E	hardiness
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)

A	ignoring
B	lacking
C	needing

Blank (ii)

D	anecdotal
E	imagined
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) brazen
(D) orotund
(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.



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

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



<u>Blank (i)</u>	<u>Blank (ii)</u>	<u>Blank (iii)</u>
A arid	D waiting	G inundated
B calm	E unprepared	H soaked
C humid	F anxious	I sprayed

Questions 7–10 are based on the passage below.

The origins of the English language can be traced back to the Saxon and other Germanic settlers in Britain beginning in the 5th century CE. The English language's unusual nature can be attributed to the diverse linguistic origins of the groups that contributed to its development and their role in English society. Although English belongs to the Germanic language family and its grammatical and syntactical rules reflect this, English vocabulary can be seen to be from multiple origins. In fact, a large part of the vocabulary was not derived from the Germanic languages at all but is rather of Latin origin. This can be explained by the influence on Old English of Old French and Latin during the Norman Invasion in the 11th century. By the time of the Norman Invasion, Old English was already a language, with both its grammar and vocabulary based in the Germanic language family. However, the establishment of a ruling class who spoke a Romance language caused significant changes in the indigenous tongue. It is also interesting to note that there is a distinct correlation between the length of a word and its origin—most of the shorter words in the English language are derived from the Germanic languages, whereas the longer words are from a Latin background. One theory to explain this is that these more elaborate and complex words were primarily used by the elite after the Norman Invasion—who would have favored a Latin-based (or Romance) vocabulary—whereas words with the same meaning in the Old English were used primarily by the lower classes and thus fell into disuse. Modern English words, then, concerning more complex and theoretical rather than utilitarian ideas (astronomy, poetry, and epistemology), can generally be found to be of Romance origin, whereas more mundane words, such as pronouns and auxiliary verbs, can be traced back to a Germanic origin.

7. Which of the following is implied by the passage?



- (A) English was more heavily influenced by Germanic languages than by Romance languages.
- (B) In the 11th century, English speakers of the lower classes did not discuss abstract, theoretical topics.
- (C) No auxiliary verbs in English can be traced back to a Latin-based origin.
- (D) English owes some of its abnormality to the Norman Invasion.
- (E) Fewer words in English are derived from Latin than from the Germanic languages.

8. Read the following answer choices and select all that apply. The passage suggests that the word “they,” a pronoun, would most likely have which of the following origins?



- A Germanic
- B Romance
- C Norse

9. Based on the passage, what is a likely reason why English has not been reclassified as a Romance language?



- A It developed as a Germanic language in its first incarnation, Old English.
- B The core of the language, its grammar and syntax, is still Germanic.
- C A larger portion of the English vocabulary is Germanic rather than Romance.
- D The Normans felt an affinity for the local tongue, which was Germanic.
- E Neither linguistic heritage has a claim to preeminence.

10. Read the following choices and select all that apply. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?



- A Searching for meaning based on the Latin root of a word is less likely to be useful in shorter words.
- B The language spoken by the Saxon and Germanic settlers entirely supplanted the indigenous tongue of 5th-century Britain.
- C The discussion of complex ideas during the Norman era in England was primarily the domain of the ruling class.

11. As modern scholarship continues to dim the possibility that Homer was a single historic figure, the question of authorship of his works has been raised; although we might never know who wrote them, scholars still need some way to refer to the author or authors of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, so the term “Homeric tradition” has been _____ as a possible new terminology.

- A selected
- B established
- C appropriated
- D bestowed
- E suggested
- F proposed



12. _____ commercial arsenic usage has diminished, its ongoing presence in water and soil continues to be a major public health concern, given the extremely high toxicity of the substance.



- [A] After
- [B] Although
- [C] Inasmuch as
- [D] Considering
- [E] While
- [F] Because

13. Early sewing machines were poorly received by textile workers, who feared the technology would _____ the demand for their skills; despite their protests, the sewing machine became popular both in the factory and in the home.



- [A] overwhelm
- [B] diminish
- [C] obviate
- [D] mitigate
- [E] eliminate
- [F] belittle

14. The protest march quickly turned into a riot, and in the response by police, several people on either side were killed and dozens more wounded; it would later be _____ remembered by both sides as a tragic accident, and no blame would be assigned.



- [A] indignantly
- [B] mournfully
- [C] spitefully
- [D] bitterly
- [E] soberly
- [F] melancholically

Questions 15–17 are based on the passage below.

The term *teleology* refers to the doctrine that things in nature have a final purpose. Thus, an eye is for seeing, a walk for health, a house for shelter, and a book for reading. Little *t* teleology so conceived, though, mustn’t be confused with big *T* Teleology, according to which the whole of nature is either progressing, by virtue of some world-historical or cosmic force, toward some overarching purpose or is already the embodiment of some divine plan.

That teleology needn’t entail Teleology is a cornerstone of evolutionary theory. From the moment that organic life first appeared on Earth some 4.5 billion years ago, natural selection has been an inexorable, unceasing, and entirely mindless process of winnowing and sifting through a set of design plans. The geological record is littered with plant and animal species falling extinct under the pressures of climatic and geographical changes.

Only those designs that natural selection has blindly hit upon and that have worked, designs that are well adapted to the specific environment and that therefore confer upon certain organisms or certain species some ostensible advantage, will be inheritable by their progeny. This implies that there is no Higher End, no Higher Purpose that governs the actions of intelligent and unintelligent life, only local purposes fitting into the materialist picture of “selfish genes” seeking to pass on genetic information to their descendants *ad infinitum*. There is therefore no Teleology from on high, only teleology all the way down.

15. According to the passage, the principal difference between teleology and Teleology could be understood in terms of the difference between

- (A) quality and quantity
- (B) example and concept
- (C) property and object
- (D) cause and effect
- (E) part and whole



16. The primary purpose of the passage is to show how



- (A) new species come into being through a process called natural selection
- (B) evolution represents a change in our comprehension of all forms of life
- (C) evolution through a set of randomly generated, rather than intentional, procedures is possible
- (D) intelligent and sentient creatures are the inevitable results of natural selection
- (E) absolute ignorance works to create living beings much in the same way that absolute wisdom does

17. Read the following choices and select all that apply. Which of the following does the passage cite as a component of evolutionary theory?



- [A] the fact that Teleology is not necessary for teleology
- [B] the extinctions of many species
- [C] the lack of a Higher Purpose for living organisms' behavior

Questions 18–20 are based on the passage below.

John Finnis developed his theory of natural law based on the structure that Thomas Aquinas provided, filling in areas where he felt that Aquinas's theory was lacking; he also amended other aspects of the theory to respond to a world much more culturally diverse than the one in which Aquinas lived. Unlike Aquinas, who gives only a vague account of the first precepts of the natural law, Finnis locates a specific number of basic human goods. Finnis avoids the charge that his theory falls into the “naturalistic fallacy” by asserting that these goods are not moral in themselves but become moral through human participation in them. In addition, these goods are not hierarchical, which allows a much greater range of freedom in choosing actions. Finally, Finnis's theory does not require the presence of God. Though curiosity about the nature of the universe is one of his basic human goods, the actual existence of God is not required by his theory.

Finnis's theory raises as many questions as it answers. While formulating an interesting answer to the “is/ought” problem and giving a much more robust definition of human volition than Aquinas, his solutions create their own problems. His account of the goods is stripped of any method for evaluation. The boundaries of each good are difficult to discern. Further, by asserting that each good is self-evident and equal to all the others, Finnis makes any action taken in furtherance of any of them equivalent morally. Finally, by removing the precepts of natural law from our natural habits and inclinations, placing them instead in self-evident goods, Finnis seems not to be describing our nature at all.

18. Based on the passage, what is the most likely meaning of “good” according to Finnis?

- (A) a physical object, such as foodstuffs or textiles
- (B) morally correct action as determined by God
- (C) an action that helps us achieve a desirable, material end
- (D) something self-evident that we ought to strive to embrace
- (E) something that is naturally occurring

19. Based on the passage, the existence of which of the following would most likely undermine Finnis's definition of "goods"?



- (A) proof of the existence of God
- (B) goods that demand opposing actions
- (C) the demands of our natural desires
- (D) the definition of additional goods
- (E) a method for evaluating goods

20. Read the following answer choices carefully and select all that apply.

According to the passage, which of the following is NOT an improvement of Finnis's theory of natural law over Aquinas's?



- [A] avoiding the "naturalistic fallacy"
- [B] removing the necessity of God in his definition of "good"
- [C] curtailing freedom in human actions

VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 3 ANSWER KEY

1. A
2. A, F
3. B, D
4. E
5. C, D
6. A, E, G
7. D
8. A
9. B
10. A
11. E, F
12. B, E
13. C, E
14. B, F
15. C
16. C
17. A, B, C
18. D
19. B
20. C

DIAGNOSE YOUR RESULTS

Diagnostic Tool

Tally up your score and write your results below.

Total

Total Correct: _____ out of 20 correct

By Question Type

Text Completions (questions 1–6) _____ out of 6 correct

Sentence Equivalence (questions 11–14) _____ out of 4 correct

Reading Comprehension (questions 7–10, 15–20) _____ out of 10 correct

Repeat the steps outlined on the Diagnose Your Results page that follows the Verbal Reasoning Practice Set 1 answer key.

VERBAL REASONING PRACTICE SET 3

ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. A

The increase in automated support suggests a decline in demand for technical support workers, and the second half of the sentence tells you that you are looking for an answer that indicates that their services are being undervalued. (B) *tarnished*, (C) *ridiculed*, and (D) *vituperated* all suggest, beyond a negative image, a directly hostile one, which is not indicated by the sentence. (E) *impaired* might be acceptable from the first part of the sentence alone, but the value of their services implied by the second half can only support (A) *devalued*.

2. A, F

The first half of the sentence is just background, so it is from the second half that you must take your clues. It tells us that producing saffron is very costly, so you can anticipate that the number of blossoms required is a large rather than small number. Based on this, you can reject (C) *unique* and (B) *meager* for the first blank, leaving (A) *vast*.

The second blank implies a quality of the flower that makes it rare. The correct choice for the second blank is (F) *delicacy*. (D) *color* is irrelevant, and (E) *hardiness* is the opposite of your prediction.

3. B, D

The hint you are given is that cryptozoology lacks “scientific attestation”; that is, it has no scientific reason to be supported. So for the first blank, you are looking for a word that means “without.” (A) *ignoring* would mean an intentional rejection of scientific evidence, rather than an absence thereof. (C) *needing* would work, but there is no choice for blank (ii) that has to do with physical evidence. Furthermore, “relies upon” points us to a limitation of their evidence. Therefore, (B) *lacking* makes the most sense for the first blank.

With regard, again, to scientific attestation, you can infer that the second blank implies that the sightings are not backed by scientific data, so you are looking for a solution that means “unscientific” or “unreliable.” (E) *imagined* makes little sense, because it implies the sightings are not just inadequate but fictitious. (D) *anecdotal* provides us with the sense of unverifiable sightings and completes the first blank with “lacking” for the sense of being without. (F) *nominal* does not fit at all, as it means negligible, or in name only.

4. E

Based on the semicolon, you know that the second half of the sentence directly supports the statement made in the first, so you are looking for a word that implies the usage of few words and a dry delivery of his wit. (A) *ostentatious* and (D) *orotund* can be rejected on the grounds of the terseness and “deadpan delivery” of Wilde’s remarks, and the fact that the biting nature of his wit is not readily apparent can

allow us to discount **(B)** *pointed* and **(C)** *brusque*. Checking the remaining option, **(E)** *laconic*, you find that it fits the meaning of the sentence.

5. C, D

The key word here is “extreme,” which indicates that you are looking for a word with very strong meaning for the first blank. Furthermore, you know that the building is “no longer safe to enter,” so the second blank must refer to some sense of structural decay. Thus, you can expect the full sentence to be something like “The neglect of the old theater was apparent in the extreme deterioration of the building.” For the first blank, **(A)** *hinted at* and **(B)** *suggested* can both be eliminated because they are too weak in meaning for “extreme.” Furthermore, both words mean the same thing, so neither could be the single correct answer for the first blank. **(C)** *manifest* makes the most sense.

Out of the options for the second blank, **(D)** and **(E)** are very similar-looking words, but only **(D)** *dilapidation* refers to buildings—**(E)** *depilation* refers to hair removal. Always study the words carefully! **(F)** *radiance* is the opposite of what you need.

6. A, E, G

While you expect the final clause, which is preceded by a semicolon, to be related thematically to the rest of the sentence, grammatically it stands on its own. You can therefore figure out the third blank first without needing the other two. The key here is the word “deluge”—you know this is a major rainstorm. Hence, for the third blank, you can reject both **(H)** *soaked* and **(I)** *sprayed* because both are much weaker words than **(G)** *inundated*.

For the second blank, the key clue is “sudden.” If it was sudden, then you can assume people were not expecting it—you can thus predict a word synonymous with “not expecting.” **(D)** *waiting* and **(F)** *anxious* would both imply people were expecting the downpour; thus, **(E)** *unprepared* is clearly the correct choice.

Finally, for the first blank, this word will be the reason that people were not expecting a sudden storm. **(C)** *humid* doesn’t work here, but between **(A)** *arid* and **(B)** *calm*, you may need to pause for a moment. **(B)** *calm* might work—it certainly contrasts with the eventfulness of the weather that followed—but **(A)** *arid* is a better answer because it implies that the weather was specifically very dry—the antithesis of the wetness of the storm. Plugging it all in, “The countless *arid* days left everyone *unprepared* for the sudden downpour; the deluge brought traffic to a halt as it *inundated* the roads.” You can see that everything agrees.

7. D

This question is an Inference question. Therefore, we must eliminate the answer choices that don’t necessarily follow from the passage. **(A)** is incorrect because we can’t say with certainty that Germanic languages had a greater influence than Romance languages did. Yes, the Germanic influence came first and had a greater influence on grammar, but that does not mean its influence on English as a whole

is greater. **(B)** is out of scope and extreme. Nothing suggests that the lower classes could *never* discuss abstract theoretical topics. For **(C)**, although we are told most mundane words, like auxiliary verbs, are of Germanic origin, that doesn't mean that *all* auxiliary words must be of Germanic origin. **(E)** is also incorrect because we aren't given any clues as to how many words are derived from each language family. **(D)** is correct because it's directly implied in the passage. The second sentence says that English has an "unusual nature," and the passage goes on to state that this is due to its vocabulary stemming from multiple origins, such as what was brought over by the Norman Invasion.

8. A

The question states that 'they' is a pronoun, so look in the passage for clues as to where pronouns are likely to be derived. The final sentence explicitly states that English pronouns are of Germanic origin, so you can safely select **(A)** as your answer. Although Old English and Norse are related, this is not mentioned in the passage, and choice **(C)** is meant as a distracter.

9. B

To answer this question, you are required to make a small inference from the text. The third sentence begins with a detour road sign, "Although," which indicates that the immediately following clause is a fact—in this case that English is a part of the Germanic language family and that the rules governing its structure reflect this. From this you can infer that the structural rules of a language are significant in its classification, which tells you that answer choice **(B)** is correct. **(A)** is factually correct, but there is no indication that the language's first incarnation is related to its current classification, so you cannot accept that as an explanation based on the passage. **(C)** concerns the balance of vocabulary origins between Germanic and Romance, but while the passage does speak of this at length, no mention of number of words as related to the classification of the language is made. **(D)** is not an option, as the Normans regarded English as lower class. **(E)** is incorrect, as the core of the language is noted to be Germanic. **(B)** is the correct choice.

10. A

As always, you must be careful about what you infer from a passage. For answer choice **(A)**, you would need to find something in the text that would suggest that the shorter the word, the less likely it may be derived from Latin—which you can find in the final two sentences. There is no mention of the indigenous language before the arrival of the Germanic peoples, so you can dismiss **(B)**. **(C)** might seem tempting because the author notes that the words used for complex ideas today are primarily those that were used by the ruling class. However, while discussing complex ideas might seem more likely to be the habit of those with leisure time and education, the passage does not specify anything that would allow us to draw this conclusion, and **(C)** must be rejected.

11. E, F

From the sentence, you learn that scholars are in need of a new “way to refer to the author or authors”; furthermore, judging by the tone and topic of the sentence, you can safely assume that the answers you need will have a neutral tone. While it may seem possible for the solutions to render the phrase “the term *Homeric tradition* has been *rejected*,” the straight-ahead road sign “so” renders this unlikely. You can predict that the answers will mean “the term has been put forward.” The key to this question is the word “possible” near the end of the sentence. **(A) selected** and **(B) established** cannot be correct because that would mean the term has been decided upon. **(C) appropriated** and **(D) bestowed** likewise fail to match our prediction, leaving **(E) suggested** and **(F) proposed** as the choices that suggest that the term has been offered as an option but no decision has been made. That fits nicely with “possible.”

12. B, E

From the meaning of the sentence, you can see that the correct answer choices will render the meaning “commercial arsenic usage has diminished, but its ongoing presence is a major health concern.” Because the blank is placed at the start of the first clause, you need a sense of contradiction that gives the meaning “even though.” **(A) After**, **(C) Inasmuch as**, **(D) Considering**, and **(F) Because** all lack the contradiction you need, leaving only **(B) Although** and **(E) While**, which are synonyms of each other and match the prediction.

13. C, E

The key to this sentence is to note that the textile workers feared a negative effect on the demand for their skills as a result of the sewing machine. The answer, then, must be indicative of their displeasure with the technology; furthermore, words like “poorly” and “protests” suggest that they felt very strongly about their fear of a decline in their trade, so you must also find words that reflect the strength of their views. **(A) overwhelm** is the opposite of what you need and can be rejected. **(B) diminish**, **(D) mitigate**, and **(F) belittle** are all possible choices, but none of these words are strong enough to convey the meaning you are looking for. **(C) obviate** and **(E) eliminate** suggest an absolute removal of demand for the workers’ skills and match both the meaning and the strength of the prediction.

14. B, F

You are told in the final clause that it would be remembered as a “tragic accident” and that no blame was assigned. You are looking for adverbs that reflect this and can expect to find synonyms of “sadly,” but you must be careful not to choose answers that suggest vitriol or blame. Based on this, you can see that **(A) indignantly**, **(C) spitefully**, and **(D) bitterly** can all be eliminated. **(B) mournfully** is an excellent choice because you often hear about mourning of a tragic accident. **(E) soberly**, meaning in this context “clearly,” does not have any synonyms among the remaining answers. **(F) melancholically** is a direct synonym of **(B)** and matches your predicted answer.

15. C

The difference between teleology and Teleology is mentioned in the first paragraph. To paraphrase, Teleology is the idea that nature is progressing *toward* something, and teleology is the idea that nature progresses *by means of* something. From here you can begin to look at the options for answers. **(A)** *quality and quantity* do not make sense based on your predicted answer—there is no sense of amount in either concept. **(B)** *example and concept* and **(E)** *part and whole* are both inadequate—it may be tempting based on the phrase “teleology so conceived, though, mustn’t be confused with.” However, this does not suggest that teleology is a type of Teleology. **(C)** *property and object* is a good choice—teleology is something possessed within nature, and Teleology is its goal. **(D)** *cause and effect* also fails to properly describe the relation between the two, suggesting that teleology is a part of a larger Teleology. The passage describes the two as separate ideas, not one as a type of the other.

16. C

As always, begin by examining the passage’s topic and scope, the latter of which is the subject of this question. The passage discusses how evolutionary theory rejects the notion of Teleology, instead demonstrating the development of species through the process of natural selection. **(A)** and **(B)** both are part of the description of how evolutionary theory describes the biological history of the world, but neither is the overall scope of the passage. **(C)** states that natural selection, a key part of evolutionary theory, obviates the need for Teleology—which is the focus, that is, the scope, of the passage. **(D)** is an end result but not the overall main argument and thus is incorrect. **(E)** suggests that teleology and Teleology are nearly equivalent, which, according to the passage, is incorrect.

17. A, B, C

This is a Detail question, so each correct answer must be cited somewhere in the passage. Choices **(A)**, **(B)**, and **(C)** are mentioned in the first, fifth, and tenth lines of the second paragraph, respectively, so all three choices are correct.

18. D

Remember, even in weighty passages like these, all the information that you need is in the text. **(A)** *a physical object* is not the right answer because the passage is talking about natural law and human behavior. You can also eliminate **(B)** *morally correct action as determined by God* because the passage specifies that “Finnis’s theory does not require the presence of God.” **(C)** *action that helps us achieve a desirable, material end* can be rejected for the same reason as **(A)**. Furthermore, you are given an example of one basic human good, according to Finnis: curiosity about the nature of the universe. **(D)** *something self-evident that we ought to strive to embrace* is supported by the text both in the phrase “each good is self-evident” and Finnis’s example of how something is made good by human participation. **(E)** *what is naturally occurring* could only be a reasonable possibility based on the repeated usage of the term “natural”; however, “natural law” is a metaphysical concept, and **(E)** is also incorrect.

19. B

The key to answering this question is to bear in mind Finnis's definition of "goods" that you considered in the previous question. You can learn from the passage that they are self-evident and all equal, which points us towards **(B)** *goods that demand opposing actions*—if they are all equally important, then how can we choose between actions that would each further one good while distancing ourselves from the other? **(A)** *proof of the existence of God* is a poor choice, because while his argument does not rely on the existence of God as Aquinas's did, nowhere does the author imply that Finnis's theory hinged on the nonexistence of God. **(C)** *the demands of our natural desires* is likewise incorrect because of the emphasis on human volition and the notion that some actions are inherently "good" and others are not—to give in to your desires would not undermine his definition but simply fail to follow his admonition. **(D)** *the definition of additional goods* would not necessarily weaken his definition so long as the new goods were not in opposition to his already established goods. Similarly, **(E)** *a method for evaluating goods* could help fix a weakness in Finnis's theory rather than undermine it.

20. C

This is a fairly straightforward Reading Comprehension question. It does not require us to make any inferences from the text, just give the text a careful reading to determine whether each answer choice is referred to (and they all are). **(A)** and **(B)** are both listed explicitly under the adaptations Finnis made to strengthen Aquinas's argument, so you can dismiss them. **(C)**, our only remaining option, is correct, as its opposite is one of the adaptations.

VERBAL REASONING 1

30 Minutes – 20 Questions

Directions: For each item, select the best answer choice using the directions given.

If a question has answer choices with **ovals**, then the correct answer will be a single choice. If a question's answer choices have **squares**, the correct answer may have more than one choice. Be sure to read all directions carefully.

Select one answer choice for the blank. Fill in the blank in such a way that it best completes the text.

1. Known for their devotion to their masters, dogs were often used as symbols of _____ in Medieval and Renaissance paintings. 

- (A) treachery
- (B) opulence
- (C) fidelity
- (D) antiquity
- (E) valor

2. By nature _____, the poet Philip Larkin nonetheless maintained a spirited correspondence with a wide circle of friends. 

- (A) voluble
- (B) reclusive
- (C) prolific
- (D) gregarious
- (E) pensive

For each blank, select an answer choice from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in such a way that they best complete the text.

3. Because the decision-making process was entirely (i) _____, there was no way to predict its outcome. The process was (ii) _____ rolling dice, where there is a finite number of possibilities but no way to accurately predict which two numbers will come up. 

	Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
A	arbitrary	likened to
B	regimented	belittled by
C	unilateral	dissimilar to

For the following questions, select the **two** answer choices that, when inserted into the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole **and** yield complete sentences that are similar in meaning.

4. Although the heralded “variance in taxation bill” at first received much (i) _____, it has had a (ii) _____ impact on the majority of the middle-class population, who are burdened mainly by the relatively unvarying property tax.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
A commotion	D negligible
B acclaim	E necessary
C hullabaloo	F detrimental



5. Critics’ practice of making allusions to earlier work when reviewing a new piece is detrimental to the person reading the review prior to seeing the piece, as any (i) _____ viewpoint the reader already holds toward the referenced earlier piece will inevitably (ii) _____ the opinion of the unseen piece, potentially not allowing for (iii) _____ viewing of the new piece.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
A established	D rebuke	G biased
B culpable	E skew	H impartial
C thermic	F complete	I enjoyable



6. The shift away from fossil fuels as the world’s primary energy source will not be sufficient to stabilize or reduce carbon emissions, and therefore carbon (i) _____ technologies should be implemented to (ii) _____ and store carbon waste.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
A sequestration	D incarcerate
B reduction	E capture
C diminution	F liberate



7. W.C. Handy's self-conferred sobriquet, "The Father of the Blues," is widely _____; although he composed and published the first written blues song, other musicians had been playing the blues for several years.

- A professed
- B deconstructed
- C disputed
- D proven
- E contested
- F demonstrated



8. The expectation of instant gratification engendered by the ease and speed of modern communication can set one up for _____ in personal relationships if one's digital messages are not promptly returned.

- A chagrin
- B endearment
- C recompense
- D vexation
- E elation
- F pacifism



9. Anticipating the arrival of the baby panda, zookeepers _____ the panda exhibit to handle the influx of visitors, scientists, and veterinarians.



- A abridged
- B augmented
- C meliorated
- D maintained
- E truncated
- F neglected

10. Some scientists _____ that by sensing a change in barometric pressure or electricity, certain species of fish may be able to portend seismic events; just before a recent earthquake, several fish were observed leaping into the air from the ocean.



- A repudiate
- B authorize
- C foresee
- D hypothesize
- E question
- F contend

Questions 11 and 12 are based on the passage below.

Modern entomologists are primarily engaged in the research of insects that provide a direct benefit, or cause direct harm, to human interests. The benefits of researching and protecting insect life may be immediate, such as using an insect presence to control pests or diseases, or long-term, such as protecting native species from unnecessary human intercession in order to maintain a balanced ecosystem. Research on harmful insect life endeavors to produce methods of insect control that are reliable and effective, while minimizing the effect of the control on other species. Although most insect orders include both pests and beneficial species, a few orders, such as lice and fleas, provide no benefits to humans and are said to be entirely parasitic.

Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

11. Which of the following statements is supported by the passage? 
- [A] The majority of insect orders are capable of both advancing and inhibiting human interests.
 - [B] An effective insect control method will never cause side effects to insect or animal life outside the targeted order.
 - [C] Entomological research has facilitated the development of insect species that are considered parasitic.
12. In the context in which it appears, “intercession” most nearly means 
- [A] obliteration
 - [B] competition
 - [C] entreaty
 - [D] intrusion
 - [E] mediation

Question 13 is based on the passage below.

Instigated primarily by the Irish Republican Brotherhood, the Easter Rising of 1916 was a landmark event in the battle against English rule. Armed members of the Brotherhood, in concert with the Irish Volunteers, seized control of several government buildings in the capital city of Dublin and issued the Easter Proclamation, a proclamation of Irish independence. However, the rebels were outnumbered by British forces, which had greater access to weapons and ammunition.

The siege ended with the unconditional surrender of the militant forces, and sixteen of their leaders were subsequently executed for their roles in the uprising. Those who survived, however, went on with renewed fervor to lobby for Ireland’s independence, and the public nature of the uprising changed popular sentiment about British rule. While the Easter Rising was a failure by military and tactical standards, it is viewed as an important milestone in the 1919 establishment of the Republic of Ireland.

13. The two highlighted sentences play which of the following roles in the passage above?
- (A) The first provides support for the passage’s conclusion; the second is that conclusion.
(B) The first is a fact that would seem to contradict the passage’s conclusion; the second is that conclusion.
(C) The first states the main point of the passage; the second is a fact that seems at odds with that point.
(D) The first provides support for an intermediate conclusion that supports a further conclusion stated in the passage; the second states that intermediate conclusion.
(E) The first states an outside position that the passage as a whole supports; the second states the main point of the passage.

Questions 14–16 are based on the passage below.

Many Iranian Americans, whether they are immigrants or American born, identify themselves as being of Persian heritage. This descriptor is a frequent cause of confusion among non-Persians who know the country as Iran and understand Persia to be an antiquated name for the empire that encompassed part of Iran as well as parts of modern-day Pakistan and Afghanistan. Opponents of the term argue that because some Afghani and Pakistani groups refer to themselves as being of Persian heritage, the term loses meaning as a signifier of nationality. However, others argue that just as the English language recognizes *Spain* rather than *España*, English speakers should refer to the country as *Persia*, and not as *Iran*, which is the Persian translation of the country’s name.

14. The author is primarily concerned with



- (A) arguing that English usage of descriptors of nationality should reflect usage within the native languages of the countries in question
- (B) clarifying how the fall of the Persian Empire has influenced the terminology that modern citizens of Iran use to define their nationality
- (C) distinguishing among three groups that use the same term to describe their national identities
- (D) explaining two opposing positions in an argument about the use of a descriptor of national identity
- (E) persuading readers that in order for the term *Persian* to have a clear relationship to nationality, only Iranians, not Afghanis or Pakistanis, should use the term

Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

15. Based on the information in the passage, which of the following individuals might describe themselves as Persian?



- [A] an Afghani-born woman who is a naturalized citizen of Iran
- [B] an American man born in the United States to Iranian immigrant parents
- [C] an American woman of English descent who has worked in Pakistan for 15 years

16. The passage cites which one of the following as a source of confusion for some non-Persians?



- (A) the fact that some Afghani and Pakistani groups both refer to themselves as Persian
- (B) the use in English of *Spain* rather than *España*
- (C) the scope of the Persian Empire
- (D) the loss of meaning in a signifier of nationality
- (E) Iranian Americans' decision to self-identify as Persian

Questions 17–19 are based on the passage below.

In Greco-Roman societies, women applied white lead and chalk to their faces to attract attention. Ancient Egyptians wore light foundation to gild their skin, while their kohl eyeliner was only slightly heavier than the eye makeup popular in the mid-1960s. Persians believed that henna dyes, used to stain hair and faces dark, enabled them to summon the majesty of the earth. The European Middle Ages followed the Greco-Roman trend of pale faces. Those rich enough not to work outdoors and acquire a suntan wanted to flaunt their affluence by being pale. To look feminine, fashionable sixth-century women would achieve the same ideal by bleeding themselves. While pale of skin, regal 13th-century Italian women wore bright pink lipstick to show that they could afford makeup.

17. Which of the following statements presents a situation most analogous to that described in the highlighted sentence?
- (A) Contrary to common opinion, zebras are dark animals, with white stripes where the pigmentation is inhibited.
(B) The frog's brown and yellow coloring, as well as its rough texture, allows it to blend in with tree trunks.
(C) The short-tailed cricket is known to eat its own wings to survive.
(D) To look masculine, birds called budgerigars display naturally occurring yellow fluorescent plumage on their crowns.
(E) The male blue-tailed iguana will chew down some of its spines to appear more masculine.

Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

18. Which of the following statements is supported by this passage?
- [A] The lightening of women's skin has often, but not always, been preferred.
[B] A woman's social position could be revealed by her makeup.
[C] The practice of lightening the skin originated in Greco-Roman societies.

19. The passage cites each of the following reasons for some cultures' preferring artificially pale skin EXCEPT



- (A) to flaunt affluence
- (B) to look golden
- (C) to call forth the splendor of the earth
- (D) to attract attention
- (E) to look feminine

Question 20 is based on the passage below.

Solipsism is the belief that only oneself and one's own experiences are real, while anything else—a physical object or another person—is nothing more than an object of one's consciousness. Thus, in a sense, solipsism is the concept that nothing “exists” outside of one's own mind. As a philosophical position, solipsism is usually the unintended consequence of an overemphasis on the reliability of internal mental states, which provide no evidence for the existence of external referents.

20. In this passage, the author is primarily concerned with



- (A) discussing the importance of a phenomenon
- (B) refuting a hypothesis advanced by philosophers
- (C) contrasting two schools of thought
- (D) presenting the definition of a concept
- (E) comparing a physical object to a person

VERBAL REASONING 1 ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. C

This particular sentence has no detour road signs. Here the key phrase is “known for their devotion to their masters,” so you might predict that the missing word means something like “loyalty” or “devotedness.” The correct answer, **(C) fidelity**, is a close match for this prediction.

2. B

This sentence contains a detour road sign, “nonetheless,” so you can expect the first part of the sentence to contrast with the fact that Larkin “maintained a spirited correspondence with a wide circle of friends.” So you might predict that the missing word means something like “withdrawn” or “shy.” Choice **(B)** matches this prediction: “By nature *reclusive*, Philip Larkin nonetheless maintained a spirited correspondence with a wide circle of friends.” That makes perfect sense.

3. A, D

The road sign “because” in the first half of this sentence tells you that the second half will continue the thought of the first. The second half indicates that there was “no way to predict” the decision-making process’s outcome, so a description of the process as “random” makes sense. The prediction matches **(A) arbitrary**, meaning “determined by chance, whim, or impulse.” Choice **(B) regimented**, meaning “rigidly organized,” means the opposite of what the sentence requires. Choice **(C) unilateral**, meaning “relating to only one side,” is also incorrect—the fact that the decision-making process may have been entirely in the hands of one person does not logically lead to there being “no way to predict its outcome.” The sentence compares the decision-making process to throwing dice, so a good prediction would be, “making decisions was *similar to* throwing dice.” The best match is **(D) likened to**. Choice **(E) belittled by** doesn’t make sense in context, and **(F) dissimilar to** means the opposite of what the sentence requires.

4. B, D

Look at blank (ii) first. The tax burden of most of the citizens comes from an “unvarying” tax, so the legislation mentioned earlier in the sentence must have had a *minor* effect on the middle class. **(D) negligible** matches perfectly. The road sign “although” indicates contrast, so the bill that produced “negligible” results must have been expected not only to have a significant effect, but a positive one. A prediction is “optimism” or “praise.” **(B) acclaim** works best. **(C) hullabaloo** and **(A) commotion** are tempting choices, but they do not have sufficiently strong positive connotations, particularly as the bill is described as having been “heralded.”

5. A, E, H

The three blanks are related in this sentence: blank (i) causes blank (ii) and prevents blank (iii). In the first blank, only an (**A**) *established* viewpoint could potentially (**E**) *skew* the reader’s opinion, and an (**A**) *established* viewpoint would logically exclude an (**H**) *impartial* viewing. With the information given, only *established*, *skew*, and *impartial* logically follow each other.

6. A, E

This is a high-difficulty sentence, but elimination and prediction will help you out a great deal. The first clause and then the road sign “therefore” suggest that the clause with the blanks will provide an alternative to the fact that moving away from fossil fuels is insufficient to stabilize carbon emissions. Blank (ii) has a meaning similar to “store,” so eliminate (**F**) *liberate*. (**D**) *incarcerate* means to put in prison and refers to people, not substances, so it cannot be correct. (**E**) *capture* matches. For blank (i), notice that the technologies must also be for “storing” carbon waste. Choices (**B**) *reduction* and (**C**) *diminution* can be eliminated. Choice (**A**) *sequestration* matches the prediction of “storing” and is correct.

7. C, E

To figure out what fits in the blank, note the detour road sign “although” between the first and second halves of the sentence. This tells you that what came before will be contradicted by what comes after. The first clause tells you that Handy’s nickname is “self-conferred,” so you can speculate that not everyone shares Handy’s self-assessment. You could paraphrase the sentence this way to predict the blank: “Handy feels he’s the father of the blues, but other musicians ‘disagree.’” You’re looking for a synonym for “disagree.” You can eliminate choices (**A**), (**D**), and (**F**), which say that Handy’s moniker was *professed*, *proven*, or *demonstrated*—they mean the opposite of what you want. Choice (**B**), which states that Handy’s nickname was widely *deconstructed*, or “examined,” *could* be right since other musicians came up with a different opinion, so keep it as a possibility. Choice (**C**), *disputed*, has exactly the meaning you need, so keep this, too. That leaves choice (**E**) *contested*, which produces a sentence with the same meaning as choice (**C**), so (**C**) and (**E**) are the correct answers.

8. A, D

In this sentence, which has no road signs, read for key words and what’s implied (i.e., for logic). When an “expectation of instant gratification” isn’t fulfilled, a feeling of disappointment would ensue. So the answer choices have to mean “disappointment.” You can eliminate choices (**B**) and (**E**), *endearment* and *elation*, right away since they have the opposite meaning. Choice (**F**) *pacifism*, “an opposition to war of any kind,” isn’t right for this sentence—an unreturned message would cause *conflict* in a relationship, rather than promote peace. Choice (**C**) *recompense* means “compensation” and can also be eliminated. That leaves (**A**) and (**D**), *chagrin* and *vexation*, both of which match the prediction and have the right meaning for the sentence.

9. B, C

This is an intriguing sentence since the answer choices include two arcane words, *augmented* and *meliorated*. A good strategy for questions like this is to use the process of elimination on the answer choices. First, look at what the sentence implies, paraphrase it, and predict the answer: “The zookeepers are ‘changing’ the exhibit to handle more visitors.” All the answer choices except (D) and (F), *maintained* and *neglected*, express change, so eliminate those two. Of the remaining choices, (A) and (E), *abridged* and *truncated*, mean “to make shorter,” which, when applied to the sentence, wouldn’t help the exhibit accommodate more traffic. The final choices are (B) and (C), which are two high-level vocabulary words (meaning “added to” and “improved,” respectively) and the correct answers.

10. D, F

Without structural road signs, you need to see if paraphrasing or key words can help you find synonyms. Scientists have observed odd fish behavior that precedes seismic events—the fish jump out of the water. Your paraphrase and prediction might look something like this: “Scientists ‘theorize’ that fish respond to physical precursors of seismic events.” Both choices (D) and (F), *hypothesize* and *contend*, fit this definition, and are therefore the correct answers. Choice (A) *repudiate* means to reject an idea, not present one. Scientists don’t *authorize* information, so choice (B) is also incorrect. Choice (C) *foresee* does imply prediction, but one based on intuition, not on observed behavior. Finally, it wouldn’t make sense for scientists to (E) *question* their own prediction in this context.

11. A

You’re asked to find the statement or statements that have direct support in the passage. The last sentence in the passage states that most orders are not exclusively beneficial or exclusively parasitic, but include species with both characteristics. That’s choice (A). Choice (B) is too extreme, since the author speaks of minimizing harm to other species, not eliminating it. Choice (C) presents a scenario that’s the opposite of what the passage expresses: facilitating the development of parasitic insects isn’t in line with the goal of controlling pest species.

12. D

The key phrases “protecting native species” and “maintaining a balanced ecosystem” suggest that entomologists are trying to prevent humans from changing the existing environment. *Intrusion*, choice (D), is a good description of what they’re trying to avoid. (A) *obliteration* means extinction and is too extreme in this context. There’s no suggestion that humans are fighting against insects or asking insects for anything, so rule out (B) and (C), respectively. Choice (E) *mediation* has a meaning of “intercession,” but you are looking for a word with a negative charge.

13. C

In this Function question, you have to characterize the relationship between the two highlighted phrases. The conclusion of this passage is that the Easter Rising was a key turning point in the battle against English rule. Thus, the first phrase, which calls the Easter Rising a “landmark event,” is a paraphrase of the author’s main conclusion. The second highlighted phrase, which calls the battle a “failure,” would seem to contradict the conclusion that the battle was a positive turning point. The contrast key word “while,” which precedes the second highlighted phrase, emphasizes the contradictory nature of the Easter Rising. Choice **(C)** matches both halves of the prediction perfectly. Choice **(A)** calls the first phrase evidence, which is incorrect. Choice **(B)** flips the two phrases’ roles. Choice **(D)** refers to intermediate conclusions, which neither of the phrases is. Finally, choice **(E)** refers to an “outside position,” which the passage does not have.

14. D

This Global question asks you to sum up the passage’s purpose. The author’s tone is one of explanation rather than argument, so you can rule out **(A)** *arguing that . . .* and **(E)** *persuading readers . . .* right away. The passage explains how the terms *Persian* and *Iranian* intersect and provides two perspectives on why one term might be preferable to the other. That’s choice **(D)**. The author does not mention the fall of the Persian Empire, so choice **(B)** is incorrect. Although three groups are mentioned, the author doesn’t focus on differentiating among them, so **(C)** isn’t the best summary of the passage, either.

15. A, B

To select the correct choices, you must identify the groups to whom the term *Persian* applies according to the passage. Since both Iranian and Afghani people may use the descriptor, the woman in **(A)** could be described as Persian. The first sentence says that both Iranian immigrants and U.S.-born Iranian Americans identify as Persian, so the man in **(B)** also fits the criteria. However, it is clear that the term refers to heritage or citizenship or both, so it would not be accurate to describe someone of English descent who is an American citizen, choice **(C)**, as Persian.

16. E

The verb “cites” indicates that this is a Detail question, so look directly in the passage for the answer. The first two lines of the passage state that Iranian Americans call themselves Persian, and “this descriptor is a frequent cause of confusion among non-Persians.” Bingo. Choice **(E)** is a perfect match. Choice **(A)** is a misused detail. It’s a reason why some people oppose the use of the term *Persian*, not a reason why non-Persians are confused by the term. Similarly, choices **(B)**, **(C)**, and **(D)** all relate to arguments about whether the term *Persian* should be used; none of them have anything to do with the cause of some non-Persians’ confusion, which is what the question asks for.

17. E

The question asks which choice is most analogous in meaning to the highlighted sentence, “To look feminine, fashionable sixth-century women would achieve the same ideal by bleeding themselves.” All the choices are about animals, not people, but only **(E)** contains an analogous situation: self-destructive physical harm to (allegedly) produce an image befitting one’s gender. Choice **(A)** mentions light and dark coloring, which the passage does discuss, but it’s not analogous to the highlighted sentence in meaning. The second choice, **(B)**, concerns camouflage only. While **(C)** includes self-destructive physical harm, that harm is inflicted for survival purposes, not for the sake of appearing more masculine or feminine. The opening phrase of **(D)** sounds like the highlighted sentence, but the remainder of this answer choice discusses a naturally occurring trait, not a self-inflicted one.

18. A, B

The author describes several societies in which women lightened their skin as dictated by the fashion of the time, but she also cites a culture in which darker colors were preferred (Persians with henna dye). Hence, choice **(A)** is correct. The passage states that in 13th-century Italy, the use of makeup was a sign of social status, so choice **(B)** is correct. The passage begins with the Greco-Roman societies, but it doesn’t say whether the practice of lightening skin originated there, so **(C)** is incorrect.

19. C

For varied reasons—*to flaunt affluence* **(A)**, *to attract attention* **(D)**, and *to look feminine* **(E)**—most of the societies described in the passage preferred white color or paleness on women’s faces. These three choices are thus incorrect. The Egyptians preferred a light foundation also, but of a *golden* hue, so **(B)** is incorrect. In this passage, only the Persians went for a darker look with henna dye in their hair and on their skin to “summon the majesty” of the earth. Choice **(C)** is therefore a reason for preferring artificially darker rather than lighter skin, and it is the correct answer.

20. D

The passage discusses a particular “ism” (a theory or concept) called solipsism, which is the view that oneself is the only object of real knowledge or that nothing but the self exists. The best answer to the question, then, is **(D)**, *presenting the definition of a concept*. Choice **(A)** is close, except that solipsism is a belief, not a *phenomenon*, which is an observable fact or event that can be scientifically described. The author doesn’t “refute” anything, so **(B)** is incorrect. Also, there are no key words, such as “conversely” or “on the other hand,” to indicate “contrasting” schools of thought, so **(C)** is incorrect. The phrase “a physical object to a person” describes what the author means by “anything else” and is not the basis of any comparison, so **(E)** is incorrect.

VERBAL REASONING 2

30 Minutes — 20 Questions

Directions: For each item, select the best answer choice using the directions given.

If a question has answer choices with **ovals**, then the correct answer will be a single choice. If a question's answer choices have **squares**, the correct answer may be more than one choice. Be sure to read all directions carefully.

Select one answer choice for the blank. Fill in the blank in such a way that it best completes the text.

1. The current need for diversification does not mean the organization should be diverted from its earlier and historical purpose; instead, this diversification should be construed as a means of _____ that purpose.

- (A) undermining
- (B) furthering
- (C) retracting
- (D) classifying
- (E) deterring



For each blank, select an answer choice from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in such a way that they best complete the text.

2. Animals rely on a combination of internal traits and external behaviors to survive. Bees, for example, have a keen sense of smell that enables them to (i) _____ kin from foe. Their ability to resist (ii) _____, by contrast, is deficient, making them vulnerable to disease. Scientists speculate that the observed extensive grooming among hive mates (iii) _____ various diseases, thus protecting the colony.



Blank (i)

- | | |
|---|------------|
| A | promulgate |
| B | discern |
| C | arbitrate |

Blank (ii)

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| D | pathogens |
| E | cold |
| F | poison |

Blank (iii)

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| G | minimizes incursions by |
| H | implicates replication of |
| I | simulates action by |

3. A United Nations working group issued a report describing (i) _____ need to draw up valid plans for dealing with the global water crisis. The report emphasizes the critical necessity of galvanizing political efforts to (ii) _____ resources and (iii) _____ international attention on both water and sanitation.



Blank (i)

A	an exigent
B	a cretaceous
C	a specious

Blank (ii)

D	produce ineffable
E	retain abundant
F	mobilize limited

Blank (iii)

G	foment
H	focus
I	ferment

Select one answer choice for the blank. Fill in the blank in such a way that it best completes the text.

4. Although the French general Henri Philippe Pétain was greatly honored for his role as military leader of France during World War I, he incurred _____ for his collaboration during the German occupation of France during World War II.



- (A) status
- (B) reputation
- (C) kudos
- (D) recompense
- (E) obloquy

For each blank, select an answer choice from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in such a way that they best complete the text.

5. Cellophane—the transparent, plasticky film used everywhere to wrap food—is actually a paper product. Implausibly, this (i) _____ material is made from the same components as the opaque brown paper bag. Its inventor, Jacques E. Brandenberger, originally conceived of cellophane as a means to prevent stains, but after the wider utility of the product became (ii) _____ to him, he patented cellophane and it became (iii) _____.



Blank (i)

A	diaphanous
B	standardized
C	opaque

Blank (ii)

D	marketable
E	apparent
F	fashionable

Blank (iii)

G	amorphous
H	ingenuous
I	ubiquitous

Select one answer choice for the blank. Fill in the blank in such a way that it best completes the text.

6. Unlike most other philosophers, who try to determine whether an objective reality exists, David Hume felt that the issue was _____. 

- (A) pragmatic
- (B) challenging
- (C) theoretical
- (D) insoluble
- (E) esoteric

For the following questions, select the two answer choices that, when inserted into the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and yield complete sentences that are similar in meaning.

7. A portion of the population still disregards warnings about the _____ effects of nicotine and continues to smoke, believing no harm is done to their health, even though a plethora of evidence exists to the contrary.

- (A) deleterious
 - (B) addictive
 - (C) anemic
 - (D) antagonistic
 - (E) benign
 - (F) pernicious
- 

8. To the public's great shock, the group recently voted into power on a platform of peaceable reform conducted _____ acts against existing branches of government as soon as the election was over.

- (A) contumacious
 - (B) endemic
 - (C) erratic
 - (D) estimable
 - (E) irresolute
 - (F) seditious
- 

9. Photo retouching and inflated claims are so well concealed in most advertising campaigns that consumers are unaware of the _____ being employed.

- A cabal
- B artifice
- C hegemony
- D chicanery
- E dominance
- F imprecation



10. The performers agreed that the topic of marriage was an excellent theme for their upcoming performance at a conservative organization's charity event; however, the audience was unreceptive to the _____ jokes made during the show.

- A plucky
- B ribald
- C coarse
- D traitorous
- E politic
- F treacherous



Question 11 is based on the passage below.

Although sharks are classified as fish, they differ significantly in several respects from other freshwater and saltwater fish. Most significantly, a shark's skeleton is composed of lightweight, flexible cartilage, providing an advantage in hunting other marine life; other superclasses of fish have stable calcified skeletons. Additionally, sharks possess no swim bladder, the small organ that allows most fish to control their buoyancy; instead, a substantial liver filled with oil works to keep the sharks afloat.

11. In the argument given, the two highlighted sentences play which of the following roles?



- (A) The first supports the conclusion of the argument; the second summarizes a position that is in opposition to that conclusion.
- (B) The first provides support for the conclusion of the argument; the second provides that conclusion.
- (C) The first states the main point of the argument; the second states an opposing point.
- (D) The first serves as an intermediate conclusion; the second states the ultimate conclusion.
- (E) The first states the conclusion of the argument; the second provides support for that conclusion.

Question 12 is based on the passage below.

The Dewey decimal system provided the first standardized, easily understood method of classifying the items in a library's collection. Classification, in combination with the process of cataloging, meant that patrons could easily identify and locate for themselves items that had a certain title, were written by a certain author, or related to a given subject. Because the system was adopted at most libraries, patrons who learned the system could use it at any library.

12. Based on the information in the passage, it can be inferred that, prior to the implementation of the Dewey decimal system,



- (A) libraries were generally small enough that no classification system was needed.
- (B) libraries refused to make public the systems they used to classify books.
- (C) patrons may have relied heavily on library staff to identify and locate the materials they sought.
- (D) more people worked as librarians than after its use became widespread.
- (E) library patrons were never able to understand the order in which books were shelved.

Questions 13 and 14 are based on the passage below.

The first smallpox prevention methods were inoculations, intentional infections with active diseased matter that typically caused a mild illness and would later result in immunity. Modern epidemiologists believe that inoculated patients were less likely to contract a fatal case of smallpox because they contracted the disease through skin contact, not inhalation. However, due to extreme disparities in the type and amount of virus used, health practitioners could offer no real prediction of how severe a case a given patient might contract after being inoculated. Inoculation differs from vaccination, which uses a standard dose of dead or weakened virus culture and therefore poses a much lower risk of fatal infection. After a smallpox vaccine was developed in the 1790s, inoculation gradually fell from favor and was eventually banned in numerous jurisdictions.

Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

13. Which of the following statements is supported by the passage? 

- [A] Vaccination replaced inoculation because it was a safer method of protecting against disease.
- [B] Two random doses of a vaccine are likely to be more similar than two random doses of an inoculum.
- [C] Prior to the 1790s, live virus cultures were often used in tuberculosis inoculations.

14. In the context in which it appears, “contracted” most nearly means which of the following? 

- (A) agreed
- (B) shrunk
- (C) acquired
- (D) shortened
- (E) hired

Questions 15–20 are based on the passage below.

Surveying paradigmatic works of tragic literature from antiquity to the present alongside the immense and ever-growing body of secondary literature on the subject, the literary critic Terry Eagleton arrived at the pat judgment that not only had no satisfactory definition of tragedy been offered to date, but also that none besides the admittedly vacuous “very sad” could ever be offered. Overly broad definitions, which for all intents and purposes equate the tragic with seriousness, lead invariably to Scylla; overly narrow ones, such as the Renaissance-inspired struggle theory, to Charybdis. Notwithstanding this definitional dilemma, Eagleton’s conclusion, as clear a case of defeatism as any heretofore advanced, leaves much to be desired.

In *A Definition of Tragedy*, Oscar Mandel, who is decidedly more sanguine than Eagleton on this score, discerns in Aristotle’s *De Poetica* the rudiments of a substantive definition of the tragic. Following the spirit, albeit not the letter, of Aristotle’s text, Mandel sets forth three requirements for any work to be counted as tragic, the third weighing most heavily in his account. First, it must have a protagonist whom we highly (or at least moderately) esteem. Second, it must show how the protagonist comes to

suffer greatly. And, third, it must reveal how the protagonist's downfall was inevitably but unwittingly brought about by his or her own action. It is plain to see that, of the three requirements, the third (call this the *inevitability requirement*) is beyond question the most contentious as well as the most dubious. The truth is that the inevitability requirement is entirely too stringent. While it may be a sufficient condition, it is not, Mandel's assertions notwithstanding, the *sine qua non* of tragic literature.

One need look no further than Anton Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, a quintessential work of modern tragedy, to see why this is so. In a provincial capital quite remote from cosmopolitan Moscow, the well-educated, tireless, but spiritually drained sisters are ground down by the inexorable forces of time and fortune. Their failure to leave for Moscow, the childhood home they yearn for, can be understood as their failure to extricate themselves from the tedious and insufferable life brought on by their workaday habits. This suggests a certain acknowledgment on their part of their powerlessness to defy the hands of fate. In the final analysis, the question of whether the protagonist's fate is sealed in consequence of tragic action, as in Greek and Renaissance tragic dramas, or of inaction, as with modern tragedies, has very little to do with one of the absolutely essential ingredients of tragic literature. That ingredient, of course, is the profound sense of insurmountable powerlessness that yields an unnameable, implacable feeling expressing alienation from life itself.

15. While discussing Terry Eagleton's work, the author alludes to Scylla and Charybdis in order to



- (A) point out the principal faults with Eagleton's ideas about tragedy
- (B) argue for the importance of understanding myths in our investigation into the nature of tragedy
- (C) establish that a dilemma pertaining to the essence of tragedy has its origin in myth
- (D) illustrate how a dilemma common to other intellectual inquiries also applies to our understanding of tragedy
- (E) delineate the potential problems that lie in wait for anyone who wishes to define tragedy

16. The primary purpose of the passage is to



- (A) criticize Eagleton’s view that the most adequate definition of tragedy is “very sad”
- (B) cast doubt on Eagleton’s and Mandel’s views of tragic literature for failing to enumerate all the necessary conditions for tragedy
- (C) conclude, after analyzing the views of two literary theorists, that tragedy cannot be defined adequately
- (D) criticize Eagleton’s view that tragedy cannot be adequately defined and Mandel’s view that tragedy requires tragic action and to offer up another condition indispensable for tragedy
- (E) find fault with Eagleton’s view that tragedy amounts to what is “very sad” and Mandel’s view that tragedy requires great suffering in order to advance a new definition of tragedy in their place

17. The author’s attitude toward *Three Sisters* can best be characterized as



- (A) laudatory
- (B) conciliatory
- (C) despondent
- (D) myopic
- (E) diffident

18. It can reasonably be inferred from the author’s assessments of Eagleton’s and Mandel’s views of tragedy that



- (A) Mandel’s and Eagleton’s conceptions of tragedy can ultimately be dismissed
- (B) both theorists fall short of the mark of what constitutes tragedy, but for different reasons
- (C) the tragic has as much to do with what is very sad as it has to do with the inevitability requirement
- (D) the fact that tragic heroes undergo great suffering is at the center of both accounts
- (E) tragic literature is most fully understood when it combines the insights of many different thinkers

19. The author voices dissatisfaction with Mandel's conception of tragedy by
- (A) describing in some detail how a particular genre influences the way we think about tragic literature more generally
 - (B) analyzing a work of literature in order to help us appreciate its supreme aesthetic value
 - (C) raising a pointed objection and supporting the objection with a counterexample
 - (D) quibbling with the main criteria, none of which are applicable to a particular work of literature
 - (E) cogently defending conclusions about works of tragedy that, on pain of contradiction, Mandel cannot accept
20. Regarding the passage as a whole, the author's opinion of the first and second requirements spelled out in Mandel's definition of tragedy is most likely that
- (A) neither the first nor the second requirement fits very easily with the condition of powerlessness that the author defends in the final paragraph
 - (B) the first, but not the second, requirement is essentially at odds with the author's claim that Chekhov's *Three Sisters* is a work that exemplifies the condition of powerlessness
 - (C) the second, but not the first, requirement would have to be rejected on the grounds that it is ostensibly the case that the sisters in *Three Sisters* do not undergo great suffering
 - (D) in light of the condition of powerlessness that the author endorses, it can be concluded that both requirements should not figure prominently in any account of tragedy
 - (E) neither the first nor the second requirement should be necessarily ruled out in our attempt to grasp the essence of tragedy, provided that neither is antithetical to the condition of powerlessness

VERBAL REASONING 2 ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS

1. B

“Instead” is a detour road sign that tells you that the second half of the sentence will say the opposite of the first half. That means diversification shouldn’t “divert” the organization, so you’re looking for a word that means the opposite of “divert”. The answer is (B) *furthering*, which means “advancing or promoting.” (A) *undermining*, (C) *retracting*, and (E) *deterring* are all the opposite of what you need—they say that diversification will negatively affect the historical purpose. Choice (D) *classifying* doesn’t make sense in context.

2. B, D, G

The best way to approach the first blank is to consider the logic of this sentence and predict an answer. A “keen” sense of smell is a positive attribute. What should a bee with a keen sense of smell be able to do with regard to kin and foe? To (A) *promulgate* is to make known, in the sense of “to announce.” (B) *discern* means “to perceive or recognize.” And (C) *arbitrate* means “to decide between disputants.” A bee would want to “recognize” friend from foe, whether or not it did either of the other two things, so (B) *discern* is the correct choice.

The road sign “by contrast” tells you that some other ability is not as good. Indeed, the bees have a “deficiency” of some kind, specifically one that makes them unable to protect themselves from disease. Which phrase most closely describes the desired response? Any of the three answer choices could work, but, as we said in the strategies section, the question gives you clues. Read the third sentence to see if the answer becomes clear. When you do, you’ll note the key words “various diseases” matches one of the second blank’s answer choices, *pathogens*. Let’s hold on to (D) for now.

The third sentence is a bit convoluted, and some of the answer choices are uncommon words, so paraphrase it to put it into simpler terms and predict the answer: “Bees ‘protect’ their colony through grooming behavior.” Only one of the answer choices, (G) *minimizes incursions by*, fits our prediction. If you substitute the other terms into the blank and reread the sentence, you can confirm (G) as the correct choice; neither (H) *implicates replication of* or (I) *simulates action by* makes sense in context.

Now that we have two of the blanks filled, we can return to blank (ii). When we read (D) *pathogens* into the sentence, the three sentences make sense together, and (D) is correct.

3. A, F, H

The key word in this sentence is “crisis.” You need adjectives and verbs that play well off of it. If you don’t know the meaning of *exigent*, you can use the process

of elimination to identify the right answer. (B) *cretaceous* means “chalky,” and one wouldn’t describe a need as chalky.

You can eliminate (C) *specious*—it means “false” and is the opposite of what you’re looking for. That leaves (A) *exigent*, which means “immediate.” It is the correct answer.

Which of the actions would be required in a situation of “critical necessity”? Recall that there is a water crisis, so the resource involved is water. The word *ineffable* means “unable to be expressed,” so it makes no sense in this context. However, if you didn’t know that word, you could use the process of elimination to narrow your choices. If there were a water crisis, water would not be *abundant*, so you can eliminate (E). That leaves (F) *mobilize limited resources*. “Limited” makes sense in the context of a crisis, so it is the correct choice and a solid guess if you weren’t certain of the meaning of choice (D).

If you’re galvanizing political efforts to stave off a crisis, it’s likely you would want to (H) *focus*, or concentrate, international attention on water use. (G) *foment*, “to incite,” and (I) *ferment*, “to brew,” both have connotations about creating; neither makes sense in context, so both are incorrect.

4. E

The detour road sign “although” contrasts the honor Pétain received for World War I with what he “incurred” during World War II. The sentence’s structure implies that the word in the blank will have a negative charge, so you can rule out the positive answer choices (A) *status* (“relative rank in a hierarchy”) and (C) *kudos* (“congratulations”). Choice (B) *reputation* doesn’t make sense—one earns a reputation; it is not “incurred”. Choice (D) *recompense* doesn’t make sense either, since the French wouldn’t compensate someone for a dishonorable action. That leaves you with the correct answer, (E) *obloquy*, “disgrace or public censure.” One would heap *obloquy* on a person who’s done something hateful, like collaborating with the enemy.

5. A, E, I

This is a long set of sentences, so you should paraphrase them to make the topic easier to get a handle on: “Although people don’t think of cellophane as paper, this _____ material is made from the same stuff as paper bags. It was invented to prevent stains, but its usefulness became _____ and resulted in a _____ product.”

For the first blank, you’re looking for a term that describes cellophane. Even if you don’t know what cellophane is, the key words “transparent, plasticky film” provide a great prediction for the blank. The correct answer is (A) *diaphanous*, which means “see-through.” Choice (B) *standardized* has nothing to do with translucency. Choice (C) *opaque* means the opposite of what you need.

After Jacques saw how useful cellophane was, he decided to patent it. For the second blank, therefore, predict a word like “visible” or “evident.” Choice (E) *apparent* is a great match. Choices (D) *marketable* and (F) *fashionable* may be true of cellophane, but the second blank describes the utility of cellophane, not cellophane itself. It wouldn’t make sense to say that cellophane’s utility became “marketable to” or “fashionable to” the very person who invented it.

Having filled in the first and second blanks, you quickly test the third. Nothing in the sentences describes cellophane as (G) *amorphous*, “shapeless,” so eliminate it. Choice (H) is a trap—don’t confuse *ingenuous*, or “innocent,” with “ingenious,” or “brilliant.” You would expect a product with “overwhelming usefulness” to be (I) *ubiquitous*, “available everywhere,” and that’s the correct answer.

6. D

From the detour road sign “unlike,” you can tell that Hume isn’t trying to determine whether an objective reality exists. Why wouldn’t he do so? Following this logic reveals the right word for the sentence. Hume disregarded objective reality not because he thought the issue was (A) *pragmatic*, “practical,” or (B) *challenging*. That would have made him want to investigate it. He probably didn’t try because he felt that the issue was either unverifiable or uninteresting. Choice (D) *insoluble*, “not capable of being solved,” fits the blank best. It’s unclear that Hume would be “unlike most other philosophers” if he thought the issue was (C) *theoretical* or (E) *esoteric* (“understood only by a select few”), so both are incorrect.

7. A, F

This is a long sentence and the blank occurs in the middle, so paraphrase it. As you do so note that the phrase “even though” is a detour road sign that indicates a contrast. A good paraphrase is, “People smoke, even though nicotine has a _____ effect on their health.” You are looking for a pair of synonyms that have a negative tone and mean something like “bad” or “harmful.” Choices (A) *deleterious* and (F) *pernicious* both mean “harmful,” so that’s the correct pair. Choice (B) *addictive* is a property of nicotine, but the sentence deals with nicotine’s harmfulness, not its addictiveness. Choices (C) *anemic*, meaning “weak,” and (E) *benign*, meaning “harmless,” are contrary to the prediction. Finally, choice (D) *antagonistic*, meaning “hostile,” is a tempting trap. While “hostile” is a negatively charged word, being hostile is not the same as causing harm.

8. A, F

The phrase “to the public’s great shock” is a key phrase—it tells you there’s a contrast between what was expected (“peaceable reform”) and what really happened. The correct answers must mean something like “violent rebellion.” *Contumacious* is a difficult vocabulary word, so we’ll use the process of elimination to go through all the answer choices. Choice (B) *endemic* means “inherent,” which doesn’t fit the context of the sentence. Choices (C) and (E), *erratic* and *irresolute*, both mean

“unpredictable” or “uncertain.” If you weren’t sure of *irresolute*, consider its root, *resolute*, and think of a similar word, *resolution* in this case. A resolution is something you commit to doing, and *irresolute* is its opposite, “unsure” or “unable to make a decision.” These two words are plausible choices because they imply that the group didn’t fulfill its promises, but they don’t work in context. You need a contrast with “peaceable reform,” something that would result in people’s shock—unpredictability and uncertainty aren’t shocking.

Choice (D) *estimable*, “worthy,” means the opposite of what you want. If you didn’t know the meaning of this word, you could consider its root, *esti*. Think of words with a similar root that you *can* define, such as *esteem*. Knowing that *esteem* has a positive tone, you could deduce that *estimable* does as well, making it incorrect. That leaves you with choices (A) and (F)—*contumacious* and *seditious*—both of which mean “rebellious” and are the correct choices.

9. B, D

Some of the answer choices are fairly difficult words, but you can tell from the key word “concealed” that you want a word negative in tone. Based on that, two words pop out from the answer choices, (B) *artifice* and (D) *chicanery*, both of which are negative and both of which mean “deception.” But you should go through the answer choices one at a time to confirm your selections.

Choice (A) *cabal* means “a secret group,” and it doesn’t work in context.

Choice (B) *artifice* sounds a lot like a word you’re probably familiar with—“artificial,” which means looking like one thing while actually being another. *Artifice* means “trickery.” “Photo retouching and inflated claims” are forms of trickery, so this is one of the correct answers.

If you don’t know the meaning of the word *hegemony* (C), put it aside until you go through the other answer choices. Choice (E) *dominance* means “supremacy” or “domination,” and it doesn’t make sense in context. Eliminate it. Choice (D) *chicanery* also means “deception and trickery,” so it’s also correct. To determine the meaning of *imprecation*, choice (F), think of a word with a similar root. One is “precarious,” which means “dangerous.” Are advertising ploys dangerous? No. This word is too extreme to work in context. That leaves you with only *hegemony* outstanding. Even if its meaning is unclear, you have, through the process of elimination, two synonymous answer choices that fit well in context, and you should go with them. *Hegemony* means “influence” or “dominance.” If you knew this definition, you’d know that *hegemony* is a synonym for another answer choice, *dominance*, and this is another example of a question with two sets of synonyms in the answer choices.

10. B, C

While this sentence includes a classic detour road sign, “however,” its structure is such that you can’t identify what “however” is contradicting. As you’ve learned from

Kaplan’s strategies, key words can help you figure out the missing word in a sentence. The key words in this sentence are “conservative” and “unreceptive.” You need to predict the kind of joke a conservative audience at a charity event would receive poorly. Choice (A) *plucky* means “brave,” so eliminate it. Choices (B) and (C)—*ribald* and *coarse*—both mean “vulgar.” These are likely correct, but continue to test the other choices before answering definitively. Choices (D) and (F)—*traitorous* and *treacherous*—are synonyms that mean “disloyal.” Although the performers betrayed the spirit of the event, this is not the meaning of the words needed to describe the jokes. Choice (E) *politic* means “diplomatic.” This has the opposite meaning of the word you’re looking for, so eliminate it. The correct answers are *ribald* and *coarse*.

11. E

The first highlighted sentence expresses the passage’s main idea (sharks are different from other fish), and the second highlighted sentence explains one of the ways in which this is true (they have livers, not swim bladders). That’s choice (E). Since no opposing perspective is included, you can rule out (A). Choice (B) reverses the roles of the two sentences; the second sentence supports the first, not vice versa. No opposing argument is addressed, and the author forms no intermediate conclusion, so (C) and (D) are incorrect.

12. C

This Inference question asks you to consider the information in the passage and speculate about the events that may have preceded those described. The phrase “for themselves” implies the patrons’ ability to locate their own books, so it follows that they would previously have needed assistance from librarians, choice (C). The passage says that Dewey was the first standardized method, but you have no basis to assume that no classification method existed before, (A). Similarly, nothing suggests that libraries kept their methods confidential, (B). Although Dewey helped patrons find materials themselves, no information in the passage implies that this change affected librarians’ jobs directly, so you can eliminate (D). As for choice (E), the passage implies that patrons may have had difficulty locating items, but to say that they were never able to understand any given library’s system is too extreme.

13. A, B

A lower risk of fatal disease meant that vaccination was safer than inoculation, so (A) is correct. Since the passage mentions “enormous variations” between batches of inoculum, the “standard dose” used in vaccines would be more likely to be consistent, so (B) is also correct. Choice (C) is incorrect because it deals with tuberculosis inoculations, which are beyond the scope of the passage.

14. C

This question refers to the second half of the second sentence, which begins, “Modern epidemiologists believe . . .” This sentence uses both the word “contract” and

“contracted,” and the meaning in context is the same for both. The passage discusses the process of inoculation: patients are given a mild case of the illness against which they wish to develop immunity. The sentence referred to by the question describes the effectiveness of the procedure in further detail: because the patients got the disease through their skin instead of through inhalation, it was less likely to be fatal. To form a prediction for the answer, you could read the sentence, substituting the simple words “got,” “received,” or “caught” for the word “contracted.” The answer choices all represent possible meanings of the word “contracted,” but only choice **(C)** *acquired* matches your prediction for a word that could substitute logically into the sentence as written.

15. E

The passage as a whole is concerned with how to come up with a good definition of tragedy. The author leads into Scylla and Charybdis by mentioning “overly broad definitions” and “overly narrow ones,” respectively. Just afterward, she calls this situation a “definitional dilemma.” From these clues, you’re thus led to infer that Scylla and Charybdis are names for the dangers that may befall anyone who tries to come up with a good definition of tragedy. **(E)** is in line with this inference and is correct. **(A)** cannot be correct because Terry Eagleton begs off providing a good definition in the first place. He seems to think that the task is simply impossible. So broad and narrow definitions, represented by Scylla and Charybdis, respectively, are not signs of Eagleton’s principal faults. **(B)** is outside the scope of the passage. The author is making no larger claim about the significance of myth. Similarly, **(C)** is outside the scope. While Scylla and Charybdis are drawn from myth, they in no way establish that Eagleton’s dilemma has its origins in myth. Like **(B)** and **(C)**, **(D)** is also outside the scope. Because the author makes no reference to other intellectual inquiries, you have no reason for believing that they are applicable to the case at hand.

16. D

What is the main point of the passage? It is to criticize two authors’ views of tragedy (paragraphs 1–2) and to generate a new necessary condition for tragedy (paragraph 3). The answer that most closely matches this understanding is **(D)**. Consider that **(A)** is too narrow: Mandel isn’t even mentioned by this choice, despite the fact that he is the “main character” in the passage. The problem with **(B)** is that it includes Eagleton in the author’s criticism of Mandel. In other words, the author *does* criticize Mandel for not providing all the necessary conditions for tragedy. But she *does not* have anything explicit to say about whether Eagleton falls prey to the same problem. Consequently, **(B)** is a distortion. Choice **(C)** is the opposite of what the author says. The author implies throughout the passage that tragedy is definable. Though she pokes holes in both theorists’ accounts, the author seems, if anything, more sympathetic to Mandel, who thinks that tragedy is definable, than she is to Eagleton, who does not. **(E)**, finally, is too strong because of the bit that follows “in order to.” In the final paragraph, the author doesn’t provide you with a new definition of tragedy; she simply tells you that there’s at least one necessary ingredient in

tragedy that Mandel fails to pick up on. Think about the point about necessary and sufficient conditions this way: To make a quiche, it's necessary to use eggs. But eggs aren't enough for something to be a quiche. After all, eggs can be used in a lot of other things—cake and omelets, just to name a few. The author is making the same point about powerlessness in the realm of tragedy: it's necessary (or “absolutely essential”) but not sufficient for something to be tragic.

17. A

This question tests your ability to identify GRE vocabulary words within the Reading Comprehension portion of the exam. At the very least, you should be thinking that the author *liked*, *esteemed*, and *pitied* these characters. She says as much when she describes them as being “well-educated, tireless, but spiritually drained” (lines 44–45). The only answer that comes close is (A) *laudatory*, meaning “worthy of praise.” Choice (B), *conciliatory*, means “intending to placate,” so this does not work. Choice (C), *despondent*, means “very sad.” You could infer that the characters themselves are despondent, but “the author’s attitude” is surely not despondent. Therefore, (C) is incorrect. Choice (D) *myopic* means “shortsighted,” and that has nothing to do with the passage before you, let alone the author’s attitude toward the protagonists in this work, so it can be eliminated. And (E) *diffident* means “modest” or “timid,” and that’s not on target. In sum, none but (A) rings true.

18. B

This Inference question is essentially asking you to consider not only what Eagleton and Mandel have in common, but also what they do not. What do they have in common? According to the author, they don’t give us an adequate conception of tragedy. And now what are the main differences between them? They take different approaches to the task, with Eagleton throwing his hands up and saying, in effect, that tragedy can’t be defined and Mandel digging his heels in and saying that it can. (B) captures what they share (that is, failure) and what they differ on (that is, the reasons for their respective failures). Regarding (A), the author does not think that their ideas should be dismissed. Why would she have bothered methodically working through their ideas in the first place if this was her attitude toward their ideas? No, clearly she thinks that much can be learned from them. Thus, (A) is the opposite of what the passage says. As for choice (C), the author’s ultimate assessment is that neither Eagleton’s nor Mandel’s view will do. What’s more, the passage never states whether the first thing about sadness should be weighed as *heavily* as the second thing about inevitability. For both of these reasons, (C) can’t be inferred. (D) is incorrect because you can’t validly infer from the fact that a work is very sad that the heroes have necessarily suffered greatly. In Eagleton’s view, the fact of great suffering is, at best, probable and not certain. The key word in (E) is *combines*. The author does examine different thinkers’ ideas, but her strategy is not to combine those ideas; her strategy is to criticize these ideas. Consequently, (E) can’t be inferred.

19. C

In this question, you should *only* look at paragraph 3. Make sure that “present conception of tragedy” refers to Mandel’s view. Think about what the opening sentence is doing: it’s making clear to you the author’s chief complaint with Mandel. And then consider that the rest of the paragraph is trying to provide evidence for the complaint already mentioned.

Thus, **(C)** is correct. No such luck with **(A)**. Don’t be fooled: all talk of genre and influence goes beyond the bounds of the passage. You run into a similar problem with **(B)**. The author has nothing to say about aesthetic value, supreme or otherwise. In sum, **(A)** and **(B)** are outside the scope. On the face of it, **(D)** looks pretty good. True, the author is worrying about something in Mandel’s definition. However, she is not taking issue with all three criteria—only with one criterion (the inevitability requirement). Consequently, **(D)** is incorrect. Turning to **(E)**, we don’t see much to recommend it. For one thing, the author is not defending conclusions (she is, as the question tells you, simply voicing dissatisfaction). For another, she is not pointing out a trap that Mandel is falling into.

20. E

To begin with, understand the scope of the question squarely before you. The question has to do with the whole passage, not with one of its parts. Now think about the first two requirements. The first is that the protagonist is worthy of esteem; the second that he or she suffers greatly. Ask yourself: What do you think the author’s opinion about these two requirements is? Does she like them? Dislike them? It’s the first: she most likely thinks that they are good things. Evidence for the first part of this conclusion can be found in paragraph 3 where the author seems to look favorably on the characters in the modern tragedy *Three Sisters*. **(E)** puts this point even more delicately by making us see that both requirements are OK so long as they don’t contradict the condition of powerlessness. Therefore, **(E)** is the correct answer.

(A) is the opposite of the correct answer. The author provides no reason to believe that these requirements would not fit with the condition of powerlessness. With respect to **(B)**, the first condition isn’t at all at odds with the condition of powerlessness. The author implies as much in paragraph 3 when she shows that good characters in works of tragedy necessarily feel powerless. **(C)** is also incorrect. From all that you read in paragraph 3, you can reasonably conclude that the sisters do suffer a good deal. That leaves you with **(D)** to consider. **(D)** is without question quite tempting. Yet it goes outside the scope of the passage to say that both requirements should not figure prominently. You have reason to believe that they should figure *in some way*, but we can’t know for sure *how* prominently they should figure. The answer is **(E)**.

PART SEVEN

GRE Resources

APPENDIX A

Kaplan's Word Groups

The following lists contain a lot of common GRE words grouped together by meaning. Make flashcards from these lists and look over your cards a few times a week from now until the day of the test. Look over the word group lists once or twice a week every week until the test. If you don't have much time until the exam date, look over your lists more frequently. Then, by the day of the test, you should have a rough idea of what most of the words on your lists mean.

Note: Words in each group are various parts of speech and not necessarily synonyms of one another. The categories in which these words are listed are *general* and should not be interpreted as the exact definitions of the words.

A

Abbreviated Communication

abridge
compendium
cursory
curtail
syllabus
synopsis
terse

Act Quickly

abrupt
apace
headlong
impetuous
precipitate

Assist

abet
advocate
ancillary
bolster
corroborate
countenance
espouse
mainstay
munificent
proponent
stalwart
sustenance

B

Bad Mood

bilious
dudgeon
irascible

pettish

petulant
pique

querulous

umbrage

waspish

Beginner/Amateur

dilettante
fledgling
neophyte
novitiate
proselyte
tyro

Beginning/Young

burgeoning
callow
engender
inchoate

incipient
nascent

Biting (as in wit or temperament)

acerbic
acidulous
acrimonious
asperity
caustic
mordacious
mordant
trenchant

Bold

audacious
courageous
dauntless
intrepid

Boring	denounce deride/derisive diatribe disparage excoriate gainsay harangue impugn inveigh lambaste objurgate obloquy opprobrium pillory rebuke remonstrate reprehend reprove revile tirade vituperate	peremptory tyrannical	contrition diffidence expiate foible gaucherie rue
C		Difficult to Understand	
Carousal	bacchanalian debauchery depraved dissipated iniquity libertine libidinous licentious reprobate ribald salacious sordid turpitude	abstruse ambiguous arcane bemusing cryptic enigmatic esoteric inscrutable obscure opaque paradoxical perplexing recondite turbid	Equal
			equitable equity tantamount
D		Disgusting/Offensive	
Death/Mourning	bereave cadaver defunct demise dolorous elegy knell lament macabre moribund obsequies sepulchral wraith	defile fetid invidious noisome odious putrid rebarbative malodorous	F
E			
Easy to Understand	articulate cogent eloquent evident limpid lucid pellucid	Falsehood	
		apocryphal canard chicanery dissemble duplicity equivocate erroneous ersatz fallacious feigned guile mendacious/ mendacity perfidy prevaricate specious spurious	
Copy	counterpart emulate facsimile factitious paradigm precursor quintessence simulate vicarious	Family	
		conjugal consanguine distaff endogamous filial fratricide progenitor scion	
Denying of Self	abnegate abstain ascetic spartan stoic temperate	Eccentric/Dissimilar	
		aberrant anachronism anomalous discrete eclectic esoteric iconoclast	
Dictatorial	authoritarian despotic dogmatic hegemonic/ hegemony imperious	Favoring/Not Impartial	
		ardent/ardor doctrinaire fervid partisan tendentious zealot	
Criticize/Criticism	aspersion belittle berate calumny castigate decry defame/defamation	Embarrass	
		abash chagrin compunction	

Forgive/Make Amends	penurious rapacious venal	Hesitate	quiescent slothful torpid
absolve acquit ameliorate exculpate exonerate expiate palliate redress vindicate		dither oscillate teeter vacillate waver	
Funny		Hostile	Luck
chortle droll facetious flippant gibe jocular levity ludicrous raillery riposte	asperity baleful dour fell malevolent mordant sardonic scathing truculent vitriolic vituperation	antithetic churlish curmudgeon irascible malevolent misanthropic truculent vindictive	adventitious amulet auspicious fortuitous kismet portentous propitiate propitious providential serendipity talisman
G		I	N
Gaps/Openings		Innocent/Inexperienced	Nag
abatement aperture fissure hiatus interregnum interstice lull orifice rent respite rift	baleful baneful deleterious inimical injurious insidious minatory perfidious pernicious	credulous gullible ingenuous naïve novitiate tyro	admonish belabor cavil enjoin exhort harangue hector martinet remonstrate reproof
Generous/Kind		Harsh-Sounding	Nasty
altruistic beneficent clement largess magnanimous munificent philanthropic unstinting	cacophony din dissonant raucus strident	disingenuous dissemble fulsome ostensible unctuous	fetid noisome noxious
Greedy		Hatred	Not a Straight Line
avaricious covetous mercenary miserly	abhorrence anathema antagonism antipathy detestation enmity loathing malice odium rancor	appraise ascertain assay descry peruse	askance awry careen carom circuitous circumvent gyrate labyrinth meander oblique serrated sidle sinuous undulating vortex
Healthy		L	
	beneficial salubrious salutary	Lazy/Sluggish	
		indolent inert lackadaisical languid lassitude lethargic phlegmatic	

O**Overblown/Wordy**

bombastic
circumlocution
garrulous
grandiloquent
loquacious
periphrastic
prolix
rhetoric
turgid
verbose

P**Pacify/Satisfy**

ameliorate
appease
assuage
defer
mitigate
mollify
placate
propitiate
satiate
slake
soothe

Pleasant-Sounding

euphonious
harmonious
melodious
sonorous

Poor

destitute
impecunious
indigent

Praise

acclaim
accolade
aggrandize
encomium
eulogize
extol
fawn
laud/laudatory
venerate/
veneration

Predict

augur
auspice
fey
harbinger
portentous
presage
prescient
prognosticate

Prevent/Obstruct

discomfit
encumber
fetter
forfend
hinder
impede
inhibit
occlude
thwart

S**Smart/Learned**

astute
canny
erudite
perspicacious

Sorrow

disconsolate
doleful
dolor
elegiac
forlorn
lament
lugubrious
melancholy
morose
plaintive
threnody

Stubborn

implacable
inexorable
intractable
intransigent
obdurate
obstinate
recalcitrant
refractory
renitant
untoward
vexing

T**Terse**

compendious
curt
laconic
pithy
succinct
taciturn

Time/Order/Duration

anachronism
anteceде
antedate
anterior
archaic
diurnal
eon
ephemeral
epoch
fortnight
millennium
penultimate
synchronous
temporal

Timid/Timidity

craven
diffident
pusillanimous
recreant
timorous
trepidation

Truth

candor/candid
fealty
frankness
indisputable
indubitable
legitimate
probity
sincere
veracious
verity

U**Unusual**

aberration
anomaly
iconoclast
idiosyncrasy

W**Wandering**

ambulatory
discursive
expatriate
forage
itinerant
meander
peregrination
peripatetic
sojourn

Weaken

adulterate
enervate
exacerbate
inhibit
obviate
stultify
undermine
vitiate

Wisdom

adage
aphorism
apothegm
axiom
bromide
dictum
epigram
platitude
sententious
truism

Withdrawal/Retreat

abeyance
abjure
abnegation
abortive
abrogate
decamp
demur
recant
recidivism
remission
renege
rescind
retrograde

APPENDIX C

Top GRE Words in Context

The GRE tests the same kinds of words over and over again. Here you will find the most popular GRE words with their definitions in context to help you to remember them. If you see a word that's unfamiliar to you, take a moment to study the definition and, most importantly, reread the sentence with the word's definition in mind.

Remember: Learning vocabulary words in context is one of the best ways for your brain to retain the words' meanings. A broader vocabulary will serve you well on all four GRE Verbal question types and will also be extremely helpful in the Analytical Writing section.

A**ABATE: to reduce in amount, degree, or severity**

As the hurricane's force ABATED, the winds dropped and the sea became calm.

ABSCOND: to leave secretly

The patron ABSCONDED from the restaurant by sneaking out the back door without paying his bill.

ABSTAIN: to choose not to do something

She ABSTAINED from choosing a mouthwatering dessert from the tray.

ABYSS: an extremely deep hole

The submarine dove into the ABYSS to chart the previously unseen depths.

ADULTERATE: to make impure

The chef made his ketchup last longer by ADULTERATING it with water.

ADVOCATE: to speak in favor of

The vegetarian ADVOCATED a diet containing no meat.

AESTHETIC: concerning the appreciation of beauty

Followers of the AESTHETIC Movement regarded the pursuit of beauty as the only true purpose of art.

AGGRANDIZE: to increase in power, influence, and reputation

The supervisor sought to AGGRANDIZE herself by claiming that the achievements of her staff were actually her own.

ALLEVIATE: to make more bearable

Taking aspirin helps to ALLEVIATE a headache.

AMALGAMATE: to combine; to mix together

Giant Industries AMALGAMATED with Mega Products to form Giant-Mega Products Incorporated.

AMBIGUOUS: doubtful or uncertain; able to be interpreted several ways

The directions she gave were so AMBIGUOUS that we disagreed on which way to turn.

AMELIORATE: to make better; to improve

The doctor was able to AMELIORATE the patient's suffering using painkillers.

ANACHRONISM: something out of place in time

The aged hippie used ANACHRONISTIC phrases like *groovy* and *far out* that had not been popular for years.

ANALOGOUS: similar or alike in some way; equivalent to

In the Newtonian construct for explaining the existence of God, the universe is ANALOGOUS to a mechanical timepiece, the creation of a divinely intelligent "clockmaker."

ANOMALY: deviation from what is normal

Albino animals may display too great an ANOMALY in their coloring to attract normally colored mates.

ANTAGONIZE: to annoy or provoke to anger

The child discovered that he could ANTAGONIZE the cat by pulling its tail.

ANTIPATHY: extreme dislike

The ANTIPATHY between the French and the English regularly erupted into open warfare.

APATHY: lack of interest or emotion

The APATHY of voters is so great that less than half the people who are eligible to vote actually bother to do so.

ARBITRATE: to judge a dispute between two opposing parties

Since the couple could not come to an agreement, a judge was forced to ARBITRATE their divorce proceedings.

ARCHAIC: ancient; old-fashioned

Her ARCHAIC Commodore computer could not run the latest software.

ARDOR: intense and passionate feeling

Bishop's ARDOR for the landscape was evident when he passionately described the beauty of the scenic Hudson Valley.

ARTICULATE: able to speak clearly and expressively

She is such an ARTICULATE defender of labor that unions are among her strongest supporters.

ASSUAGE: to make something unpleasant less severe

Serena used aspirin to ASSUAGE her pounding headache.

ATTENUATE: to reduce in force or degree; to weaken

The Bill of Rights ATTENUATED the traditional power of governments to change laws at will.

AUDACIOUS: fearless and daring

Her AUDACIOUS nature allowed her to fulfill her dream of skydiving.

AUSTERE: severe or stern in appearance; undecorated

The lack of decoration makes military barracks seem AUSTERE to the civilian eye.

B**BANAL:** predictable; clichéd; boring

He used BANAL phrases like *Have a nice day*, or *Another day, another dollar*.

BOLSTER: to support; to prop up

The presence of giant footprints BOLSTERED the argument that Sasquatch was in the area.

BOMBASTIC: pompous in speech and manner

The ranting of the radio talk-show host was mostly BOMBASTIC; his boasting and outrageous claims had no basis in fact.

C**CACOPHONY:** harsh, jarring noise

The junior-high orchestra created an almost unbearable CACOPHONY as they tried to tune their instruments.

CANDID: impartial and honest in speech

The observations of a child can be charming since they are CANDID and unpretentious.

CAPRICIOUS: changing one's mind quickly and often

Queen Elizabeth I was quite CAPRICIOUS; her courtiers could never be sure which of their number would catch her fancy.

CASTIGATE: to punish or criticize harshly

Many Americans are amazed at how harshly the authorities in Singapore CASTIGATE perpetrators of what would be considered minor crimes in the United States.

CATALYST: something that brings about a change in something else

The imposition of harsh taxes was the CATALYST that finally brought on the revolution.

CAUSTIC: biting in wit

Dorothy Parker gained her reputation for CAUSTIC wit from her cutting, yet clever, insults.

CHAOS: great disorder or confusion

In many religious traditions, God created an ordered universe from CHAOS.

CHAUVINIST: someone prejudiced in favor of a group to which one belongs

The attitude that men are inherently superior to women and therefore must be obeyed is common among male CHAUVINISTS.

CHICANERY: deception by means of craft or guile

Dishonest used car salespeople often use CHICANERY to sell their beat-up old cars.

COGENT: convincing and well reasoned

Swayed by the COGENT argument of the defense, the jury had no choice but to acquit the defendant.

CONDONE: to overlook, pardon, or disregard

Some theorists believe that failing to prosecute minor crimes is the same as CONDONING an air of lawlessness.

CONVOLUTED: intricate and complicated

Many people bought *A Brief History of Time* because it took CONVOLUTED scientific theories and made them easier to understand.

CORROBORATE: to provide supporting evidence

Fingerprints CORROBORATED the witness's testimony that he saw the defendant in the victim's apartment.

CREDULOUS: too trusting; gullible

Although some four-year-olds believe in the Easter Bunny, only the most CREDULOUS nine-year-olds also believe in him.

CRESCENDO: steadily increasing volume or force

The CRESCENDO of tension became unbearable as Evel Knievel prepared to jump his motorcycle over the school buses.

D**DECORUM:** appropriateness of behavior or conduct; propriety

The countess complained that the vulgar peasants lacked the DECORUM appropriate for a visit to the palace.

DEFERENCE: respect; courtesy

The respectful young law clerk treated the Supreme Court justice with the utmost DEFERENCE.

DERIDE: to speak of or treat with contempt; to mock

The awkward child was often DERIDED by his classmates.

DESICCATE: to dry out thoroughly

After a few weeks of lying on the desert's baking sands, the cow's carcass became completely DESICCATED.

DESULTORY: jumping from one thing to another; disconnected

Diane had a DESULTORY academic record; she had changed majors 12 times in three years.

DIATRIBE: an abusive, condemnatory speech

The trucker bellowed a DIATRIBE at the driver who had cut him off.

DIFFIDENT: lacking self-confidence

Steve's DIFFIDENT manner during the job interview stemmed from his nervous nature and lack of experience in the field.

DILATE: to make larger; to expand

When you enter a darkened room, the pupils of your eyes DILATE to let in more light.

DILATORY: intended to delay

The congressman used DILATORY measures to delay the passage of the bill.

DILETTANTE: someone with an amateurish and superficial interest in a topic

Jerry's friends were such DILETTANTES that they seemed to have new jobs and hobbies every week.

DIRGE: a funeral hymn or mournful speech

Melville wrote the poem "A DIRGE for James McPherson" for the funeral of a Union general who was killed in 1864.

DISABUSE: to set right; to free from error

Galileo's observations DISABUSED scholars of the notion that the sun revolved around the Earth.

DISCERN: to perceive; to recognize

It is easy to DISCERN the difference between butter and butter-flavored topping.

DISPARATE: fundamentally different; entirely unlike

Although the twins appear to be identical physically, their personalities are quite DISPARATE.

DISSEMBLE: to present a false appearance; to disguise one's real intentions or character

The villain could DISSEMBLE to the police no longer—he admitted the deed and tore up the floor to reveal the body of the old man.

DISSONANCE: a harsh and disagreeable combination, often of sounds

Cognitive DISSONANCE is the inner conflict produced when long-standing beliefs are contradicted by new evidence.

DOGMA: a firmly held opinion, often a religious belief

Linus's central DOGMA was that children who believed in the Great Pumpkin would be rewarded.

DOGOMATIC: dictatorial in one's opinions

The dictator was DOGMATIC—he, and only he, was right.

DUPE: to deceive; a person who is easily deceived

Bugs Bunny was able to DUPE Elmer Fudd by dressing up as a lady rabbit.

E**ECLECTIC: selecting from or made up from a variety of sources**

Budapest's architecture is an ECLECTIC mix of Eastern and Western styles.

EFFICACY: effectiveness

The EFFICACY of penicillin was unsurpassed when it was first introduced; the drug completely eliminated almost all bacterial infections for which it was administered.

ELEGY: a sorrowful poem or speech

Although Thomas Gray's "ELEGY Written in a Country Churchyard" is about death and loss, it urges its readers to endure this life and to trust in spirituality.

ELOQUENT: persuasive and moving, especially in speech

The Gettysburg Address is moving not only because of its lofty sentiments but also for its ELOQUENCE.

EMULATE: to copy; to try to equal or excel

The graduate student sought to EMULATE his professor in every way, copying not only how she taught but also how she conducted herself outside of class.

ENERVATE: to reduce in strength

The guerrillas hoped that a series of surprise attacks would ENERVATE the regular army.

ENGENDER: to produce, cause, or bring about

His fear and hatred of clowns was ENGENDERED when he witnessed the death of his father at the hands of a clown.

ENIGMA: a puzzle; a mystery

Speaking in riddles and dressed in old robes, the artist gained a reputation as something of an ENIGMA.

ENUMERATE: to count, list, or itemize

Moses returned from the mountain with tablets on which the commandments were ENUMERATED.

EPHEMERAL: lasting a short time

The lives of mayflies seem EPHEMERAL to us, since the flies' average life span is a matter of hours.

EQUIVOCATE: to use expressions of double meaning in order to mislead

When faced with criticism of her policies, the politician EQUIVOCATED and left all parties thinking she agreed with them.

ERRATIC: wandering and unpredictable

The plot seemed predictable until it suddenly took a series of ERRATIC turns that surprised the audience.

ERUDITE: learned; scholarly; bookish

The annual meeting of philosophy professors was a gathering of the most ERUDITE, well-published individuals in the field.

ESOTERIC: known or understood by only a few

Only a handful of experts are knowledgeable about the ESOTERIC world of particle physics.

ESTIMABLE: admirable

Most people consider it ESTIMABLE that Mother Teresa spent her life helping the poor of India.

EULOGY: speech in praise of someone

His best friend gave the EULOGY, outlining his many achievements and talents.

EUPHEMISM: use of an inoffensive word or phrase in place of a more distasteful one

The funeral director preferred to use the EUPHEMISM *resting* instead of the word *dead*.

EXACERBATE: to make worse

It is unwise to take aspirin to try to relieve heartburn; instead of providing relief, the drug will only EXACERBATE the problem.

EXCULPATE: to clear from blame; prove innocent

The adversarial legal system is intended to convict those who are guilty and to EXCULPATE those who are innocent.

EXIGENT: urgent; requiring immediate action

The patient was losing blood so rapidly that it was EXIGENT to stop the source of the bleeding.

EXONERATE: to clear of blame

The fugitive was EXONERATED when another criminal confessed to committing the crime.

EXPLICIT: clearly stated or shown; forthright in expression

The owners of the house left a list of EXPLICIT instructions detailing their house sitter's duties, including a schedule for watering the houseplants.

F**FANATICAL: acting excessively enthusiastic; filled with extreme, unquestioned devotion**

The storm troopers were FANATICAL in their devotion to the emperor, readily sacrificing their lives for him.

FAWN: to grovel

The understudy FAWNED over the director in the hopes of being cast in the part on a permanent basis.

FERVID: intensely emotional; feverish

The fans of Maria Callas were unusually FERVID, doing anything to catch a glimpse of the great opera singer.

FLORID: excessively decorated or embellished

The palace had been decorated in a FLORID style; every surface had been carved and gilded.

FOMENT: to arouse or incite

The protesters tried to FOMENT feeling against the war through their speeches and demonstrations.

FRUGALITY: a tendency to be thrifty or cheap

Scrooge McDuck's FRUGALITY was so great that he accumulated enough wealth to fill a giant storehouse with money.

G**GARRULOUS: tending to talk a lot**

The GARRULOUS parakeet distracted its owner with its continuous talking.

GREGARIOUS: outgoing; sociable

She was so GREGARIOUS that when she found herself alone, she felt quite sad.

GUILE: deceit or trickery

Since he was not fast enough to catch the road-runner on foot, the coyote resorted to GUILE in an effort to trap his enemy.

GULLIBLE: easily deceived

The con man pretended to be a bank officer so as to fool GULLIBLE bank customers into giving him their account information.

H**HOMOGENOUS:** of a similar kind

The class was fairly HOMOGENOUS, since almost all of the students were senior journalism majors.

I**ICONOCLAST:** one who opposes established beliefs, customs, and institutions

His lack of regard for traditional beliefs soon established him as an ICONOCLAST.

IMPERTURBABLE: not capable of being disturbed

The counselor had so much experience dealing with distraught children that she seemed IMPERTURBABLE, even when faced with the wildest tantrums.

IMPERVIOUS: impossible to penetrate; incapable of being affected

A good raincoat will be IMPERVIOUS to moisture.

IMPETUOUS: quick to act without thinking

It is not good for an investment broker to be IMPETUOUS, since much thought should be given to all the possible options.

IMPLACABLE: unable to be calmed down or made peaceful

His rage at the betrayal was so great that he remained IMPLACABLE for weeks.

INCHOATE: not fully formed; disorganized

The ideas expressed in Nietzsche's mature work also appear in an INCHOATE form in his earliest writing.

INGENUOUS: showing innocence or childlike simplicity

She was so INGENUOUS that her friends feared her innocence and trustfulness would be exploited when she visited the big city.

INIMICAL: hostile, unfriendly

Even though the children had grown up together, they were INIMICAL to each other at school.

INNOCUOUS: harmless

Some snakes are poisonous, but most species are INNOCUOUS and pose no danger to humans.

INSIPID: lacking interest or flavor

The critic claimed that the painting was INSIPID, containing no interesting qualities at all.

INTRASIGENT: uncompromising; refusing to be reconciled

The professor was INTRANSIGENT on the deadline, insisting that everyone turn the assignment in at the same time.

INUNDATE: to overwhelm; to cover with water

The tidal wave INUNDATED Atlantis, which was lost beneath the water.

IRASCIBLE: easily made angry

Attila the Hun's IRASCIBLE and violent nature made all who dealt with him fear for their lives.

L**LACONIC:** using few words

She was a LACONIC poet who built her reputation on using words as sparingly as possible.

LAMENT: to express sorrow; to grieve

The children continued to LAMENT the death of the goldfish weeks after its demise.

LAUD: to give praise; to glorify

Parades and fireworks were staged to LAUD the success of the rebels.

LAVISH: to give unsparingly (v.); extremely generous or extravagant (adj.)

She LAVISHED the puppy with so many treats that it soon became overweight and spoiled.

LETHARGIC: acting in an indifferent or slow, sluggish manner

The clerk was so LETHARGIC that, even when the store was slow, he always had a long line in front of him.

LOQUACIOUS: talkative

She was naturally LOQUACIOUS, which was a problem in situations in which listening was more important than talking.

LUCID: clear and easily understood

The explanations were written in a simple and LUCID manner so that students were immediately able to apply what they learned.

LUMINOUS: bright; brilliant; glowing

The park was bathed in LUMINOUS sunshine, which warmed the bodies and the souls of the visitors.

M

MALINGER: to evade responsibility by pretending to be ill

A common way to avoid the draft was by MALINGERING—pretending to be mentally or physically ill so as to avoid being taken by the Army.

MALLEABLE: capable of being shaped

Gold is the most MALLEABLE of precious metals; it can easily be formed into almost any shape.

METAPHOR: a figure of speech comparing two different things; a symbol

The METAPHOR “a sea of troubles” suggests a lot of troubles by comparing their number to the vastness of the sea.

METICULOUS: extremely careful about details

To find all the clues at the crime scene, the investigators METICULOUSLY examined every inch of the area.

MISANTHROPE: a person who dislikes others

The character Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* is such a MISANTHROPE that even the sight of children singing makes him angry.

MITIGATE: to soften; to lessen

A judge may MITIGATE a sentence if she decides that a person committed a crime out of need.

MOLLIFY: to calm or make less severe

Their argument was so intense that it was difficult to believe any compromise would MOLLIFY them.

MONOTONY: lack of variation

The MONOTONY of the sound of the dripping faucet almost drove the research assistant crazy.

N

NAIVE: lacking sophistication or experience

Having never traveled before, the elementary-school students were more NAIVE than their high-school counterparts on the field trip.

O

OBDURATE: hardened in feeling; resistant to persuasion

The president was completely OBDURATE on the issue, and no amount of persuasion would change his mind.

OBSEQUIOUS: overly submissive and eager to please

The OBSEQUIOUS new associate made sure to compliment her supervisor’s tie and agree with him on every issue.

OBSTINATE: stubborn; unyielding

The OBSTINATE child could not be made to eat any food that he disliked.

OBVIATE: to prevent; to make unnecessary

The river was shallow enough to wade across at many points, which OBVIATED the need for a bridge.

OCCLUDE: to stop up; to prevent the passage of

A shadow is thrown across the Earth’s surface during a solar eclipse, when the light from the sun is OCCLUDED by the moon.

ONEROUS: troublesome and oppressive; burdensome

The assignment was so extensive and difficult to manage that it proved ONEROUS to the team in charge of it.

OPAQUE: impossible to see through; preventing the passage of light

The heavy buildup of dirt and grime on the windows almost made them OPAQUE.

OPPROBRIUM: public disgrace

After the scheme to embezzle the elderly was made public, the treasurer resigned in utter OPPROBRIUM.

OSTENTATION: excessive showiness

The OSTENTATION of the Sun King’s court is evident in the lavish decoration and luxuriousness of his palace at Versailles.

P

PARADOX: a contradiction or dilemma

It is a PARADOX that those most in need of medical attention are often those least able to obtain it.

PARAGON: model of excellence or perfection

She is the PARAGON of what a judge should be: honest, intelligent, hardworking, and just.

PEDANT: someone who shows off learning

The graduate instructor’s tedious and excessive commentary on the subject soon gained her a reputation as a PEDANT.

PERFIDIOUS: willing to betray one’s trust

The actress’s PERFIDIOUS companion revealed all of her intimate secrets to the gossip columnist.

PERFUNCTORY: done in a routine way; indifferent

The machine-like bank teller processed the transaction and gave the waiting customer a PERFUNCTORY smile.

PERMEATE: to penetrate

This miraculous new cleaning fluid is able to PERMEATE stains and dissolve them in minutes!

PHILANTHROPY: charity; a desire or effort to promote goodness

New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art owes much of its collection to the PHILANTHROPY of private collectors who willed their estates to the museum.

PLACATE: to soothe or pacify

The burglar tried to PLACATE the snarling dog by saying, "Nice doggy," and offering it a treat.

PLASTIC: able to be molded, altered, or bent

The new material was very PLASTIC and could be formed into products of vastly different shapes.

PLETHORA: excess

Assuming that more was better, the defendant offered the judge a PLETHORA of excuses.

PRAGMATIC: practical, as opposed to idealistic

While daydreaming gamblers think they can get rich by frequenting casinos, PRAGMATIC gamblers realize that the odds are heavily stacked against them.

PRECIPITATE: to throw violently or bring about abruptly; lacking deliberation

Upon learning that the couple married after knowing each other only two months, friends and family members expected such a PRECIPITATE marriage to end in divorce.

PREVARICATE: to lie or deviate from the truth

Rather than admit that he had overslept again, the employee PREVARICATED and claimed that heavy traffic had prevented him from arriving at work on time.

PRISTINE: fresh and clean; uncorrupted

Since concerted measures had been taken to prevent looting, the archeological site was still PRISTINE when researchers arrived.

PRODIGAL: lavish; wasteful

The PRODIGAL son quickly wasted all of his inheritance on a lavish lifestyle devoted to pleasure.

PROLIFERATE: to increase in number quickly

Although she only kept two guinea pigs initially, they PROLIFERATED to such an extent that she soon had dozens.

PROPITIATE: to conciliate; to appease

The management PROPITIATED the irate union by agreeing to raise wages for its members.

PROPERTY: correct behavior; obedience to rules and customs

The aristocracy maintained a high level of PROPERTY, adhering to even the most minor social rules.

PRUDENCE: wisdom, caution, or restraint

The college student exhibited PRUDENCE by obtaining practical experience along with her studies, which greatly strengthened her resume.

PUNGENT: sharp and irritating to the senses

The smoke from the burning tires was extremely PUNGENT.

Q**QUIESCENT:** motionless

Many animals are QUIESCENT over the winter months, minimizing activity in order to conserve energy.

R**RAREFY:** to make thinner or sparser

Since the atmosphere RAREFIES as altitudes increase, the air at the top of very tall mountains is too thin to breathe.

REPUDIATE: to reject the validity of

The old woman's claim that she was Russian royalty was REPUDIATED when DNA tests showed she was not related to them.

RETICENT: silent; reserved

Physically small and RETICENT in her speech, Joan Didion often went unnoticed by those upon whom she was reporting.

RHETORIC: effective writing or speaking

Lincoln's talent for RHETORIC was evident in his beautifully expressed Gettysburg Address.

S**SATIATE: to satisfy fully or overindulge**

His desire for power was so great that nothing less than complete control of the country could SATIATE it.

SOPORIFIC: causing sleep or lethargy

The movie proved to be so SOPORIFIC that soon loud snores were heard throughout the theater.

SPECIOUS: deceptively attractive; seemingly plausible but fallacious

The student's SPECIOUS excuse for being late sounded legitimate but was proved otherwise when her teacher called her home.

STIGMA: a mark of shame or discredit

In *The Scarlet Letter*, Hester Prynne was required to wear the letter A on her clothes as a public STIGMA for her adultery.

STOLID: unemotional; lacking sensitivity

The prisoner appeared STOLID and unaffected by the judge's harsh sentence.

SUBLIME: lofty or grand

The music was so SUBLIME that it transformed the rude surroundings into a special place.

T**TACIT: done without using words**

Although not a word had been said, everyone in the room knew that a TACIT agreement had been made about which course of action to take.

TACITURN: silent, not talkative

The clerk's TACITURN nature earned him the nickname "Silent Bob."

TIRADE: long, harsh speech or verbal attack

Observers were shocked at the manager's TIRADE over such a minor mistake.

TORPOR: extreme mental and physical sluggishness

After surgery, the patient experienced TORPOR until the anesthesia wore off.

TRANSITORY: temporary; lasting a brief time

The reporter lived a TRANSITORY life, staying in one place only long enough to cover the current story.

V**VACILLATE: to sway physically; to be indecisive**

The customer held up the line as he VACILLATED between ordering chocolate chip or rocky road ice cream.

VENERATE: to respect deeply

In a traditional Confucian society, the young VENERATE their elders, deferring to the elders' wisdom and experience.

VERACITY: filled with truth and accuracy

She had a reputation for VERACITY, so everyone trusted her description of events.

VERBOSE: wordy

The professor's answer was so VERBOSE that his student forgot what the original question had been.

VEX: to annoy

The old man who loved his peace and quiet was VEXED by his neighbor's loud music.

VOLATILE: easily aroused or changeable; lively or explosive

His VOLATILE personality made it difficult to predict his reaction to anything.

W**WAVER: to fluctuate between choices**

If you WAVER too long before making a decision about which testing site to register for, you may not get your first choice.

WHIMSICAL: acting in a fanciful or capricious manner; unpredictable

The ballet was WHIMSICAL, delighting the children with its imaginative characters and unpredictable sets.

Z**ZEAL: passion; excitement**

She brought her typical ZEAL to the project, sparking enthusiasm in the other team members.

COMMONLY CONFUSED WORDS

Already—by this or that time; previously

He already completed his work.

All ready—completely prepared

The students were all ready to take their exam.

Altogether—entirely; completely

I am altogether certain that I turned in my homework.

All together—in the same place

She kept the figurines all together on her mantle.

Capital—a city containing the seat of government; the wealth or funds owned by a business or individual; resources

Atlanta is the capital of Georgia.

The company's capital gains have diminished in recent years.

Capitol—the building in which a legislative body meets

Our trip included a visit to the Capitol building in Washington, D.C.

Coarse—rough, not smooth; lacking refinement

The truck's large wheels enabled it to navigate the coarse, rough terrain.

His coarse language prevented him from getting hired for the job.

Course—path; series of classes or studies

James's favorite course is biology.

The doctor suggested that Amy rest and let the disease run its course.

Here—in this location

George Washington used to live here.

Hear—to listen to or to perceive by the ear

Did you hear the question?

Its—a personal pronoun that shows possession

Please put the book back in its place.

It's—the contraction of “it is” or “it has”

It's snowing outside.

It's been too long.

Lead—to act as a leader, to go first, or to take a superior position

The guide will lead us through the forest.

Led—past tense of “lead”

The guide led us through the forest.

Lead—a metal

It is dangerous to inhale fumes from paint containing lead.

Loose—free; to set free; not tight

She always wears loose clothing when she does yoga.

Lose—to become without

Use a bookmark so you don't lose your place in your book.

Passed—the past tense of “pass”; a euphemism for someone dying

We passed by her house on Sunday.

Past—that which has gone by or elapsed in time

In the past, Abby never used to study.

We drove past her house.

Principal—the head of a school; main or important

The quarterback's injury is the principal reason the team lost.

The principal of the school meets with parents regularly.

Principle—a fundamental law or truth

The laws of motion are among the most important principles in physics.

Stationary—fixed, not moving

Thomas rode a stationary bicycle at the gym.

Stationery—paper used for letter writing

The principal's stationery has the school's logo on the top.

Their—possessive of “they”

Paul and Ben studied for their test together.

There—a place; in that matter or respect

There are several question types on the GRE.

Please hang up your jacket over there.

They're—contraction of “they are”

Be careful of the bushes as they're filled with thorns.

Your—possessive of “you”

With practice, your vocabulary will increase.

You're—contraction of “you” and “are”

You're likely to encounter new words in practice exams.