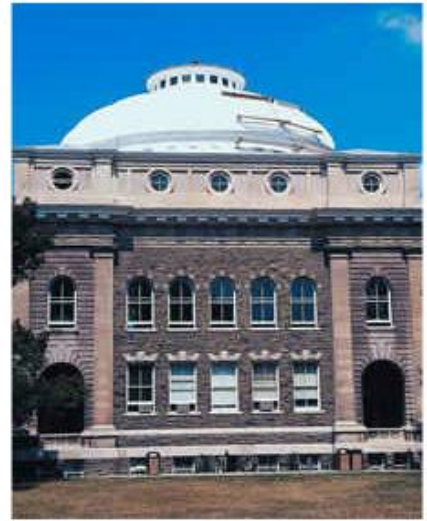




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Vocabulary Questions





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Vocabulary Questions

Vocabulary questions ask you to decide the meaning of a highlighted word or phrase as it is used in the passage. You have four possibilities to choose from. There are usually two to four vocabulary questions for each passage.

Other words in the passage often help you decide the best answer. Such nearby words provide **context**, which give clues to the word's meaning. These sorts of clues include:

- **Example**

Satellites allow us to collect data about **inaccessible** parts of Earth's surface, such as ice caps, mountains, tropical forests, and deserts.

A clue to the meaning of the highlighted word is that the examples of *inaccessible* areas (*ice caps, mountains, tropical forests, and deserts*) are all places that are "hard to get to."

- **Contrast**

Despite the increasing concentration of the media, a contrary trend--an **atomization** of the media--has also developed in recent decades.

The words *despite* and *contrary* tell you that what follows presents a contrast with *concentration* ("gathering together")--a clue to the actual meaning of *atomization*, "breaking into smaller pieces."

- **Synonyms**

This raises the issue of the multiethnic or pluralistic society in which two or more **ethnic groups** or nationalities are politically organized into one territorial state but maintain their cultural differences.

Here the terms *ethnic groups* and *nationalities* both refer to political/territorial/cultural entities and thus are synonyms of each other. The word *ethnic group* refers specifically to "people who have the same cultural or racial background."

- **General Context**

Molten rock and associated gases from deep beneath Earth move slowly toward the surface and suddenly **trigger** massive eruptions that literally blow apart volcanic mountains.

The first part of the sentence talks about geological processes. The last part of the sentence describes the results of these processes ("massive eruptions"), so here the word *trigger* means "cause," "start," or "produce."

- **Word Analysis**

Hugo Gernsback and Hiram Percy Maxim headed organizations whose members fought against this **centralization** of control of early radio, and the story of what became of their model might serve as a warning for what could happen to the Internet as well.

You can recognize *center* as the root of the word *centralization*, which has three suffixes: *-al*, meaning "relating to," *-ize*, meaning "to cause," and *-ation*, referring to an action or process. Centralization thus means "to cause something to become central or centered," "to consolidate."

Answering vocabulary questions involves the following steps:

1. If the highlighted word is familiar, look at the four possible answers and guess the best answer. But before you click your answer choice, check it by replacing the highlighted word in the sentence with your choice. Does the sentence still make sense?
2. Read the entire sentence that contains the highlighted word. Are there context clues around it that help you choose the best answer?
3. If context clues are not helpful, analyze the word. Can it be broken into parts--prefix, root, and suffix--that help you figure out the meaning?
4. If word analysis does not help, read the sentence again, and replace the highlighted word with each possible answer. Does one work better than the others in the context of the sentence? If any choices do not make sense, you may rule them out as possibilities.
5. If none of these strategies has worked, guess the most appropriate answer and continue with the test. You can return to this question later if time allows.

Sample Reading Passage

Audience members attend theatrical performances for a variety of reasons, which in turn exert an influence on the theater. Theatergoers who seek diversion from daily cares, for example, prefer entertainment to the portrayal of current social problems. They may not be willing to make the effort to understand complex, troubling, or unfamiliar themes. Others expect to see **groundbreaking** material that challenges traditional ideas. With the cost of Broadway tickets in the hundred-dollar range, theatergoers have become discriminating in their choice of performances, and as a result, producers try to anticipate audience expectations in order to recover ever-rising production expenses.

The word **groundbreaking** in the passage is closest in meaning to

- ☐ conventional
- ☒ innovative
- ☐ earthly
- ☐ difficult

The passage gives you clues to the meaning of *groundbreaking*. Theatergoers described in the highlighted sentence are contrasted with those who are unlikely to enjoy *complex, troubling, or unfamiliar themes*, so you can guess that the second group may prefer these kinds of themes. The sentence containing the highlighted text says that *groundbreaking* theater questions *traditional ideas*. *Conventional* is similar in meaning to *traditional* and so can be eliminated as a possible answer. *Earthly* can also be ruled out, because it means "related to everyday concerns on Earth" and does not make sense in this sentence. Of the two remaining choices, *difficult* does not describe a contrast with *traditional*. *Innovative*, then, is the correct answer.