

Chapter 32

Verbal Practice Sections

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Verbal Mixed Mini Sets

Use these mini mixed sets to practice your timing and decision-making. Treat them like half sections, and complete each one in 15 minutes before reviewing your work. The sets are designed to contain a realistic mix of questions, spanning different topics, levels, and question types.

Verbal Set 1

For questions 1–4, select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blank in the way that best completes the text.

1. Commentators and comedians had a field day with the widespread corruption in politics, so much so that one _____ defined a “gaffe” as a politician accidentally telling the truth.

wag
apologist
diplomat
egoist
transgressor

2. Economists describe the low rate of growth in wages since the 2007 financial crisis as (i) _____. Many cite examples of (ii) _____, thus causing a corresponding decline in lifestyles. Unless this unfortunate trend is reversed, often blameless middle-class families will be (iii) _____ to years of poverty and deprivation.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
pathetic	real buoyancy	uplifted
promising	actual decreases	devoted
partisan	medical bills	sentenced

3. Like Evelyn Waugh, Martin Amis infuses his prose with his own (i) _____ wit. His satiric novels are honeycombed with cutting jibes honed to razor sharpness, and consequently even his scenes chronicling grotesque tragedies often bring a (ii) _____ smile to the reader’s lips.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
sartorial	disapproving
scintillating	discreet
feckless	wry

4. Ms. Llewellyn is known to gently _____ students who don't do their homework, but because of her generally amiable demeanor, she refuses to punish anyone and seldom even raises her voice.

pillory
detest
malign
penalize
chide

Questions 5–6 are based on the following reading passage.

Michael Lewis, the American journalist and non-fiction writer, originally studied art history as an undergraduate and worked for a prominent art dealer before obtaining a masters degree in economics at the London School of Economics. After a short stint at Salomon Brothers, he wrote *Liar's Poker*, which became a tremendous success. However, his fame and fortune continued to arc

5 upward with the publication of *Moneyball* and *The Big Short*. Some argue that his education in the humanities, in addition to finance, greatly contributed to the popularity of his work.

An alternative explanation exists. Although baseball and Wall Street are not commonly associated, Lewis's works concerning both those topics share more than the common theme of lucre. All the books cited above focus on mavericks "gaming the system." Lewis's protagonists,

10 such as Billy Beane of the small market Oakland Athletics and the small, out of the establishment traders that bet against mortgage derivatives, are smart non-conformists who rebel against monolithic systems by exploiting inherent inconsistencies. Such a theme echoes the American nation-building construct—lone, free individuals winning against great odds by employing common sense and ingenuity. This is a story line that Americans hear from birth; it is no wonder that

15 Lewis's books are popular despite subjects that are not necessarily of universal interest. Further support for this thesis is that *Moneyball* became a major motion picture and a film of *Liar's Poker* is in development. Of course, unlike baseball games, such debates can never be definitively scored.

5. The author primarily does which of the following?

- (A) Contrasts two opposing theories for a process
- (B) Discusses two suppositions and implicitly favors the latter
- (C) Details two programs and definitively prefers the latter
- (D) Describes a writer's work and its dearth of popularity
- (E) Outlines the biography of a writer and critiques his work

6. The author does all of the following EXCEPT

- (A) employ an idiomatic expression
- (B) describe the protagonists in question
- (C) reference popular culture as evidence
- (D) discuss the parallels shared by Lewis's two professions
- (E) mention his subject's formative influences

For questions 7–8, select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

7. The representative's violent ascension to prominence began with a _____ attack on the comparatively conciliatory leaders of his own party.

- ☐ truculent

- ☐ partisan
- ☐ savage
- ☐ biased
- ☐ imperious
- ☐ dissembling

8. Even from a distance, the man could see that the tornado had _____ from the site all but the most basic elements of his childhood home; nothing but traces of the original foundations remained.

- ☐ tethered
- ☐ extirpated
- ☐ recapitulated
- ☐ interred
- ☐ obliterated
- ☐ hallowed

9. The headmaster at Leawood Day School noticed that scores on math tests were lower this year than in previous years. This year, all students took math courses during the first period of the school day; in years past, they had taken math during the final period of the day. Reasoning that the students perform better on math tests when they are fully awake, the headmaster concluded that test scores would be higher if math classes were moved to the end of the day.

The headmaster's reasoning depends upon which of the following assumptions?

- (A) It would be possible to reconfigure the school's schedule to accommodate having math classes in the afternoon.
- (B) Several schools similar to Leawood Day School hold math classes in the afternoon.
- (C) The quality of the teaching has little bearing on test scores.
- (D) This year the math department started using new, unfamiliar curricular materials.
- (E) Students are more likely to be fully awake during the final period of the day than they are during the first period of the day.

Question 10 is based on the following reading passage.

Ever-present in Jamaican folklore and storytelling is the character of the trickster Anansi, an African spider-god who regularly outsmarts other animal-god characters. Also known as Kwaku Ananse, 'Nancy Spida,' and Aunt Nancy in the Southern U.S., the character of Anansi originated with the Ashanti people in Ghana. In Jamaican culture, as well as throughout the Caribbean, Anansi

has been a symbol of slave resistance. Just as Anansi uses cunning and subterfuge to achieve victories over his oppressors, so too did slaves employ such strategies within the power structure of the plantations.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

10. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

- ☐ Anansi originated in Jamaican folklore.
- ☐ Jamaican folklore features other characters that have both divine and animal characteristics.
- ☐ Anansi is known on at least two continents.

Verbal Set 2

For questions 1–4, select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blank in the way that best completes the text.

1. It is in no way shocking that scientific experiments sometimes lead to _____; however, in order for results to be deemed valid, peer review studies must consistently duplicate the normal pattern of the original study.

anxiety
malfunctions
anomalies
vaccines
paradigms

2. Debates over free will have always focused on the extent to which humans may be said to be fully (i) _____ their actions. Dr. Wegner in his article deliberately and artfully (ii) _____ the traditional talking points of the controversy, instead asking a tangential, though possibly more (iii) _____, question: What effect does a person's belief in free will have on his or her well-being?

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
responsible for	mitigates	fundamental
determined by	eschews	ideological
based on	contradicts	flashy

3. Once the candidate established herself as the clear front-runner, it took but

a brief interlude in the clamor for all her erstwhile (i) _____ to gather around her and to begin loudly proclaiming their (ii) _____. It seemed, in other words, to cause these newcomers not an iota of discomfort to behave in a manner that a casual observer might have characterized as (iii) _____ outright hypocrisy.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
supporters	distaste	tantamount to
detractors	magnanimity	reciprocal with
zealots	fealty	hinging on

4. Some substances toxic to humans induce lassitude and torpor, whereas others incite (i) _____ or (ii) _____.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
convulsions	complaints
quarrels	retching
apathy	drowsiness

Questions 5–6 are based on the following reading passage.

Scottish economist Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations* heralded the market-based economic system that has increasingly become the norm since the book’s publication in 1776. Some say that Smith’s magnum opus was to economics as Newton’s *Principia Mathematica* was to physics or as Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* was to biology. Certainly the book made its impact in developed

5 economies.

1776 predates wide usage of the term *capitalism*, now commonly associated with Smith, and which Smith refers to as a “system of natural liberty.” Smith presented what we today consider Economics 101: supply and demand, and the importance of specialization and the division of labor. He also posited that individuals pursuing their own self-interest could unintentionally create a

10 more just society by so doing—an idea sometimes referred to as the “Invisible Hand.”

Even Smith’s critics do not deny the book’s immense influence. Murray Rothbard levels the criticism that *The Wealth of Nations*, in fact, eclipsed public knowledge of all economists—better ones, he says—before Smith.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

5. Which of the following statements are not in contradiction with the opinions of Murray Rothbard as expressed in the passage?
- ☐ Smith was possibly the third best economist of all time.
 - ☐ *The Wealth of Nations* should not have been as influential as it was.
 - ☐ Adam Smith’s work was not particularly influential.
6. Which of the following would be an example of the “Invisible Hand” as described by Adam Smith?
- (A) A group of moviegoers who are able to get cheaper tickets for a film by buying their tickets as a group
 - (B) A society in which the division of labor frees certain people to pursue careers that might seem impractical in a non-capitalist society
 - (C) A university in which classes are first-come, first-served, thereby equitably distributing courses according to the passion and dedication of students
 - (D) A market in which there are more buyers than sellers, thus forcing the price of goods upwards
 - (E) A stock exchange in which each trader acts according to a different set of information, such that certain commodities become hyped and their prices overinflated

For questions 7–8, select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

7. By the third quarter, the home team had lost any chance of emerging victorious, the game becoming an utter _____, a fact made most evident, perhaps, by the escalating jeers coming from the nearby bleachers.

☐ debacle

- ☐ rout
- ☐ boondoggle
- ☐ forgery
- ☐ fallacy
- ☐ infirmity

8. Only by disregarding the warning signs—equivocations, unexplained absences, disinterest—could the young husband continue to _____ his partner’s fidelity.

- ☐ suspect
- ☐ aver
- ☐ dismiss
- ☐ disparage
- ☐ assert
- ☐ doubt

Questions 9–10 are based on the following reading passage.

Fame and fortune are often associated with virtue, industry, and a host of other attributes. However, random strokes of fate often determine such success and said commonly perceived virtues prove irrelevant. For instance, decades after her death, Coco Chanel remains the epitome of French fashion and her name, as well as the company she founded, is known throughout the

5 world. Yet, few realize that she, while undeniably talented, initially succeeded by leveraging her status as a courtesan. As a company owner, it would be an understatement to say that she was not known for her generous treatment of her employees. During the Nazi occupation, she lived a privileged life at the Hotel Ritz and her lover at the time was a German intelligence operative.

Conversely, there is the example of Madeleine Vionnet, a professional contemporary of

10 Chanel. She is often credited with permanently transforming fashion

through her use of the bias cut—cutting material against the grain of the fabric. In the 1930s, her gowns were worn by Hollywood stars, and her standing was second to none. She was also, in many ways, an early feminist, establishing largely unheard of employee benefits—such as day care and medical care—for her largely female staff. In addition, she lobbied for fashion copyright protections. When the

15 Second World War broke out, she closed her business and simply retired. Today, she is largely unknown outside of the fashion industry.

9. The author wrote the passage to posit which of the following?

- (A) That the relationship between virtue and success is inverse
- (B) That an inferior designer was more successful than a superior one
- (C) To contrast the aesthetic of Chanel to that of Vionnet
- (D) To suggest that no causal relationship exists between personal qualities and professional legacy
- (E) To contrast the difference between transitory and lasting success

10. The author discusses the employee benefits offered by Vionnet in order to

- (A) emphasize Vionnet's anti-Nazi politics
- (B) illustrate Vionnet's admirable qualities
- (C) highlight Chanel's reputed drug use and collaboration
- (D) demonstrate the economic burden of French socialist policies
- (E) provide details that bolster Vionnet's feminist credentials

Verbal Set 3

For questions 1–4, select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blank in the way that best completes the text.

1. The actress was desperate to (i) _____ the part in the new Michel Gondry film. It was (ii) _____ role, with lots of onscreen time and a number of long scenes that would allow the actress, usually cast as a vapid ingénue or bombshell, to truly show her dramatic range.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
land	a grave
ascertain	a plum
ensure	a theatrical

2. Nora Ephron's 1989 film, *When Harry Met Sally*, was more than a hit movie—for a generation, it was a cultural _____ regarding the often fraught relations between men and women.

rudder
bolster
touchstone
stanchion
cornerstone

3. The professor explains the Efficient Market Hypothesis with _____ uncommon among business finance faculty: she is not fully convinced of the validity of the theory.

an enthusiasm
a degree of humility
a thoroughness
a level of skepticism
an eloquence

4. Some have argued that people who work in the service industry experience subtle psychological damage each time they (i) _____ their true emotions in order to put on a smile for the customer. Unfortunately, such efforts are (ii) _____ of the job, as no one wants to be served by a weepy waiter or an irate flight attendant.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
masquerade	the apex
simulate	the conceit
mask	part and parcel

Questions 5–7 are based on the following reading passage.

Simone de Beauvoir’s feminism was heavily informed by existentialist ethics. Within this frame of thought, good and evil are expressed in human beings’ transcendence and “immanence,” respectively. Human existence can only be justified via continually expanding into the future by engaging in freely chosen projects—i.e., transcendence. Transcendence is thus a general goal

5 for human beings, while its opposite—immanence—is considered a degradation of existence, from “liberty into constraint.” Freely chosen, immanence is a moral fault, but when inflicted, it is described as “oppression.” In a social environment in which women are prevented from choosing and engaging in serious projects because of their status as women, their ability to transcend is systemically thwarted, so transcendence becomes a specifically feminist goal. De Beauvoir explains

10 that women are viewed as intrinsically passive and immanent, in opposition to men who are meant to be active and transcendent.

In the society observed by de Beauvoir, “[women] live ... attached through residence, housework, economic condition, and social standing to certain men—fathers or husbands ...” It is specifically women who are attached to men—not men to women nor women and men to each

15 other. As de Beauvoir notes, the nature of this relationship, overlapping the assumption that men are the active transcendent half of humanity, leaves women in a position of forced immanence.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

5. According to the passage, Simone de Beauvoir believed which of the following?

- ☐ In society, women are attached to men.
- ☐ Women are intrinsically passive and immanent.
- ☐ Self-constraint is worse than imposed constraint.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

6. According to the passage, immanence is always

- ☐ a moral fault
- ☐ a degradation of existence
- ☐ oppression

7. The passage could best be described as which of the following?

- (A) An explanation of existentialist ethics and transcendence
- (B) An explanation of feminist theory and female immanence
- (C) A diatribe about immanence and a social injustice
- (D) A description of a philosopher's influences and framework
- (E) An outline of social structure and conflicts

For questions 8–9, select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

8. The _____ between parties is rapidly becoming insurmountable, as a lack of faith on both sides creates conditions where issues once considered incontrovertible are becoming subject to contention.

- ☐ accord
- ☐ prevalence
- ☐ rift
- ☐ breach
- ☐ travesty
- ☐ piety

9. The influence of Bennett's research can hardly be understated, but what is surprising is that his ideas have given birth to two related, yet _____ systems of thought within the same field.

- ☐ suitable
- ☐ divergent
- ☐ impactful
- ☐ complementary
- ☐ distinguished
- ☐ incongruous

10. Exterminator: Using poisoned food is the most effective tactic for combating a mouse infestation. The mouse will carry the food back to the nest, causing all of the mice to die, while a trap will kill only the one mouse that falls into it. If all signs of the mice disappear for three consecutive weeks after poisoned food is used, the homeowner can be sure that the poison was successful in eradicating the mice.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously calls into question the exterminator's claim that the absence of signs for three weeks means the mice have been eradicated by the poison?

- (A) Because mice hide whenever they sense humans, it is very difficult to see or hear mice even when there is an active infestation.
- (B) It is more humane to use "live-catch" traps that allow homeowners to release the still-living mice outside.
- (C) In the spring, many mice that nest in houses begin foraging for food outside and do not return to the comfort of the house until the fall or winter.
- (D) There are several different kinds of poison that could be used, some of which are more effective than others.
- (E) It sometimes takes longer than three weeks for all of the mice to ingest and die from the poison.

Verbal Set 4

For questions 1–4, select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blank in the way that best completes the text.

1. For eons, _____ was considered not only polite, but virtuous; now, fashionable behavior lauds laxity and tardiness, and arriving at a function an hour late is considered appropriate.

probity
parsimoniousness
prodigality
punctiliousness
panache

2. The danger of giving too many long and bombastic speeches while on the campaign trail is that a politician can come off as _____ rather than eloquent.

unscrupulous
voluble

frank
hostile
languid

3. It is strange to think that for the majority of the 1950s, the _____ of nuclear holocaust was a daily part of people's lives, so much so that elementary school students ran drills in which they had to dive under their desks and curl up into a ball.

specter
annihilation
brutality
detonation
arms race

4. As opposed to the hedonism and (i) _____ of his undergraduate years, during his doctoral program Boehm became a model of (ii) _____, and his earnest devotion led to academic laurels.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
apathy	diligence
studiousness	morality
duplicity	detachment

Questions 5–6 are based on the following reading passage.

What differentiates science and non-science? According to the modern definition of science, the Ancient Greeks were not scientists but rather philosophers. Their investigations were performed in an unscientific manner, as is illustrated by Aristotle and his conclusions about the properties of water. Before studying water, Aristotle discovered that matter existed in three

5 main categories: solid, liquid, and gas. He concluded that a solid was the least expanded of the three and verified this by seeing that a solid always sank in a liquid of

the same type. However, when Aristotle encountered water, he saw that it had properties that contradicted his previous categorization. In order to reconcile this disparity, he postulated that water was an exception and that the shape of solid water caused it to stay afloat. This, of course, is incorrect.

10 To the contrary, the studies of Galileo Galilei followed a certain self-made doctrine for gathering data and performing scientific experiments. Galileo's method forced one to first form a hypothesis, then design an experiment to confirm or deny this hypothesis, and then accept or discard the hypothesis based on one's findings. Using this method, Galileo disproved many commonly held misconceptions about the rules of physics. In one of his more famous

15 experiments, Galileo hypothesized that the Earth's gravitational field resulted in the same acceleration of all objects, regardless of mass. To prove this, he dropped two iron balls of different masses from an elevated place and showed that gravity pulled on both masses evenly. This experiment disproved the commonly held belief (at the time) that an object with greater mass would fall to the ground more quickly.

5. The author's primary purpose in writing this passage is to

- (A) explain the modern distinction between science and non-science via historical examples
- (B) criticize the research methods employed by the Ancient Greek philosophers
- (C) illustrate the importance of following the scientific method as invented by Galileo Galilei
- (D) compare and contrast the historical definition of science with the modern-day definition
- (E) argue that the findings of Galileo are more important than those of Aristotle

6. Which of the following can be properly inferred from the passage?
- (A) Solid water has the same shape as other solid forms of matter.
 - (B) When dropped from the same height, an object with greater mass will fall to the ground more quickly than an object with less mass.
 - (C) One cannot be both a scientist and a philosopher.
 - (D) If Aristotle had followed Galileo's method, he would have rejected his hypothesis that solids were the least expanded form of matter.
 - (E) In the absence of the scientific method, one cannot disprove commonly held misconceptions about the rules of physics.

For questions 7–8, select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

7. In many pre-agrarian societies, the shaman or medicine-woman was considered the most _____ member of the group: indeed, her knowledge seemed to include every subject, from history and healing to parenting and spirituality.

- ☐ perspicacious
- ☐ mendacious
- ☐ superfluous
- ☐ sagacious
- ☐ duplicitous
- ☐ mellifluous

8. Wilderness first-aid trainers often assert that certain life-saving procedures must be _____ when the situation demands, notwithstanding the presence of minor contraindications.

- ☐ utilized
- ☐ medicated
- ☐ contrived
- ☐ employed
- ☐ created
- ☐ disputed

Questions 9–10 are based on the following reading passage.

Lousia May Alcott's *Little Women* opens to a common scenario—the women knitting at home and waiting for news from the man of the family, who is at the war front. The family dynamics of *Little Women*, as a microcosm of the larger society, are marked by explicitly articulated male dominance. The division of labor has it so that women are confined to the domestic sphere while

5 men step into the public sphere and engage in activities there, returning to the domestic sphere at night to be cared for by their spouse or female children. Alcott describes the character of Meg, a young wife, as “often ... lonely,” with her husband “absent till night, and nothing to do but sew, or read, or potter about.”

Marmee later tells Meg that she ought to “take [her] part in the world's work,” even though

10 she is a woman. Ultimately, however, “taking her part in the world's work” meant no more than talking to her husband about politics whilst remaining at home, allowing him to continue to be the mediator between Meg's individuality and the world at large. Chapter 38 of the novel wraps up the issue by concluding that “a woman's happiest kingdom is home, her highest honor the art of ruling it [as a] wise wife and mother,” such position being “the sort of shelf on

which young wives and

15 mothers may consent to be laid, safe from the restless fret and fever of the world.” Some have read Alcott’s romantic glorification of women’s confinement as sarcastic, but either way, her loving readers must have agreed with the statement, for the novel has never been out of print.

9. The primary purpose of the passage is to

- (A) explain the continued popularity of a novel
- (B) detail the domestic confinement of 19th century women
- (C) analyze the sociological implications of a work of art
- (D) argue for the emancipation of women
- (E) indict the politics of a literary work

10. The passage implies that for a woman to effectively “take [her] part in the world’s work,” she must do which of the following?

- (A) Talk to her husband about politics
- (B) Rule her home
- (C) Sew, read, and potter about
- (D) Find a mediator to interact with the world at large
- (E) Leave the house

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

11. The passage implies which of the following about American society at the time that *Little Women* depicts?

- ☐ It was wartime.
- ☐ It glorified women’s confinement.
- ☐ The vast majority of public activities took place during the day.

Answers to Mixed Mini Sets

Verbal Set 1

1. **Wag.** The sentence concerns “Commentators and comedians.” Since defining a “gaffe” (a mistake) “as a politician accidentally telling the truth” is meant to be funny, the blank needs to be a word for a comedian. A “wag” is a joker, although not necessarily a professional one, and a decent match. An “apologist” would be a supporter who made excuses for the corrupt politicians; this doesn’t fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole. A “diplomat” also wouldn’t be likely to publicly say something so impolite about politicians. And finally, although a comedian could also be an “egoist” (self-centered person) or “transgressor” (violator of rules), these words are not synonyms for “commentators and comedians.”

2. **Pathetic, actual decreases, sentenced.** The first sentence alone provides little indication of what the first blank should be: there is a “low rate of growth” and “the 2007 financial crisis,” which are both negative, but the blank isn’t necessarily so. Economists describe the low rate of growth as surprising? Not surprising? Terrible? Normal? Read on for more context. Blank (ii) describes examples of something that causes “a corresponding

decline in lifestyles.” The best fit is “actual decreases,” which refers back to the “wages” in the first sentence. “Medical bills” represent a cost, but this goes unquantified, so to claim “a corresponding decline in lifestyles” would be a stretch. “Buoyancy” when applied to the economy means a high level of activity, so this choice is the opposite of what is needed. With “actual decreases” in the second sentence, there is better context for the first blank. Economists (in general) describe a “low rate of growth in wages,” and “many cite examples of actual decreases,” which is even worse, so indeed the first blank should be something like “paltry” or “poor”; “pathetic” in this context is a synonym. “Promising” is opposite and “partisan,” which means biased or prejudiced, is unrelated. The final sentence continues the negative characterization of this “unfortunate trend,” predicting “years of poverty and deprivation” for an “often blameless” group. “Uplifted” and “devoted” are too positive, but “sentenced” to (i.e., punished with) “years of poverty and deprivation” works.

3. **Scintillating, wry.** The first blank describes Martin Amis’s “wit.” The second sentence describes Amis’s novels as full of sharp “jibes,” or insulting remarks; “scintillating,” which means clever or amusing, describes such an author’s wit quite well. “Sartorial” (relating to style of dress) and “feckless” (incompetent or good-for-nothing) are great GRE words, but don’t describe a clever author’s wit. The second sentence says that because of the author’s wit, descriptions of sad and horrible scenes “often bring a _____ smile to the reader’s lips.” Why would a reader smile when reading about something awful? The smile must be ironic, because of the contrast between the tragic scene and the clever writing. The word that fits best is “wry,” which can mean ironic. A “disapproving” smile doesn’t make sense, and there is no need for a reader to be “discreet” or inconspicuous while reading a disturbing section of a book; no one else knows what the reader is smiling about anyway.

4. **Chide.** The sentence describes what the teacher “gently” does to “students who don’t do their homework.” She is too “amiable” (friendly or good-natured) to punish them, so the blank must mean something like lightly criticize, or “chide.” The adverb “gently” is important here, because it’s impossible to gently “detest” or “pillory” them (attack or ridicule publicly). “Malign” (say bad things about) is also too negative, and Ms. Llewellyn doesn’t punish anyone, so “penalize” doesn’t work.

5. **(B).** The author discusses two ideas, but subtly favors the latter; language such as “it is no wonder” indicates an implicit sympathy for the second suggestion. Thus, choice (B) is correct. Choice (A) distorts the point as “theories” are not the same as ideas, the two ideas are not exactly “opposing,”

and the issue is not a “process.” Choice (C) is incorrect—the last sentence of the passage undermines “definitively” and “programs” are not the same as ideas. Choice (D) is wrong because “dearth” means lack, and Lewis’s work is certainly very popular. Choice (E) is incorrect because, in addition to missing the point, there is no critique, only a very brief description.

6. **(D).** Lewis had jobs in the art and banking worlds; the passage draws no parallels between the two, so (D) is correct. (Some parallels are drawn between baseball and finance, but these were not Lewis’s two professions.) Choice (A) is incorrect because “gaming the system” is idiomatic. Choice (B) is incorrect as the fourth sentence of the second paragraph describes Lewis’s protagonists. Choice (C) is incorrect because movie making, used as evidence, is part of popular culture. Choice (E) is incorrect as the introductory discussion of Lewis’s education can fairly be called a mention of “formative influences.”

7. **Truculent, savage.** The blank requires a word that contrasts with “comparatively conciliatory” and modifies the word “attack,” something like a strong attack. “Truculent” and “savage” both suggest a disposition to fight and are therefore the correct answer. The word “imperious,” meaning arrogant and domineering, is close, but doesn’t have the same strength as the correct answers do. “Partisan” and “biased” do form a pair, but do not contrast with “conciliatory.” Finally, an attack that is “dissembling” would be sneaky or bluffing, but the sentence does not suggest that the attack was meant to be sneaky.

8. **Extirpated, obliterated.** This sentence is about as purely definition-based as you can get: the house was torn from the ground and utterly destroyed. “Extirpated” and “obliterated” both fit. “Tethered” means tied to something. “Recapitulated” means to summarize and is better known by its shortened version: recap. “Interred” means to place in a grave or tomb. And “hallowed” means to make holy or to be greatly revered. None of the latter four options form a pair, nor do any of them fit the context of this sentence.

9. **(E).** The headmaster’s argument explicitly relies on the idea that students perform better on math tests when they are fully awake. Noting the drop in scores, the headmaster reasons that this drop is due to the change in class time as opposed to any other factor or combination of factors. The assumption must make a connection between the time of the class and the waking state of the students.

(A) The logistics of the schedule are irrelevant to the headmaster’s position that scores would improve if the class time were moved.

(B) The time at which other schools hold math classes is irrelevant to the headmaster's argument, especially since the efficacy of that scheduling is not mentioned.

(C) While this choice could be assumed, it is not necessary to assume that the quality of teaching has little effect to conclude that a time change will raise scores.

(D) This choice provides an alternative reason for the lower scores that is contrary to the headmaster's conclusion. Thus, if anything, the headmaster would have to assume the opposite.

(E) CORRECT. This choice is the direct link needed between time of day and student wakefulness.

10. 2nd and 3rd only. According to the passage, "Anansi originated with the Ashanti people in Ghana," so the first statement is untrue. The passage also states that in Jamaican folklore, Anansi "outsmarts other animal-god characters," so those characters must exist, which supports the second statement. Finally, since Anansi is called "Aunt Nancy" in the United States and is from Ghana, Anansi is known on at least two continents. This supports the third statement.

Verbal Set 2

1. Anomalies. The opening phrase "It is in no way shocking that" suggests that whatever follows will at first appear to be "shocking." The second part of the sentence provides another clue when it says "however" other scientists must be able to "duplicate the normal pattern" of the original experiment in order to consider its results valid. So the blank must be filled by a word that describes results that deviate from what is expected, such as the correct answer "anomalies." Although "anxiety" and "malfunctions" might be unexpected outcomes of scientific experiments, they do not fit with the second part of the sentence and so are not correct. "Vaccines" and "paradigms," or models, are expected outcomes of scientific experiments and so cannot be correct either.

2. Responsible for, eschews, fundamental. Your first clue is "free will." One can only be "responsible for" the things one decides, or freely wills, to do. Judgments of people might well be "determined by" or "based on" something that they have done, but such judgments would be an outcome of determining responsibility, not the responsibility itself. For the second blank, the word "instead," even though it occurs later in the sentence, implies that Dr. Wegner is avoiding "the traditional talking points of the controversy." He "eschews" them. There is nothing in the sentence to suggest that Dr. Wegner "mitigates" (reduces the severity of) or "contradicts" the points that are usually made

when “free will” is discussed. The word “though” indicates that the third blank contrasts with the word “tangential.” A “tangential” question is one that is related to the issue but not at its core, so such a question would usually be regarded as less important to answer. The third blank, then, should mean something like at the core of the issue, or “fundamental.” There is nothing in the sentence to suggest that the question is “ideological” (strongly related to a particular belief system or ideology) or “flashy.”

3. Detractors, fealty, tantamount to. “Erstwhile” means past or former, indicating that those who are now “gathering around” the candidate were once doing something different—that is, criticizing or detracting. The correct answer for the first blank must be “detractors.” “Supporters” and “zealots” (fanatical supporters) are the reverse of what you want and are there to trap anyone who doesn’t notice the word “erstwhile.” These former “detractors” are “gathering around her” to proclaim their loyalty, or “fealty,” in a way that is deeply inconsistent with their past actions, as they are “behaving in a manner” that one might call “outright hypocrisy.” They are not proclaiming their “distaste” or “magnanimity,” which means generosity, especially from a former opponent. Since the last sentence says that the former opponents didn’t feel at all embarrassed about behavior that might be described “as _____ outright hypocrisy,” the third blank must mean equivalent to or the same as, which is exactly what “tantamount to” means. Neither “reciprocal with” (an equal exchange with) nor “hinging on” (dependent on) fit the desired meaning here.

4. Convulsions, retching. This sentence contrasts various symptoms of exposure to toxic substances. The two blanks must contrast with “lassitude” (tiredness) and “torpor” (sluggishness) because of the word “whereas.” Additionally, the word “incite” indicates that the blanks will contain words that are active rather than passive. Although “convulsions” (violent seizures) and “retching” are not opposites of “lassitude” and “torpor,” these are the only choices that might be active symptoms of poisoning. “Quarrels” (arguments) and “complaints” are not symptoms of poisoning. Incorrect choices “apathy” and “drowsiness” are somewhat similar to “lassitude” and “torpor” and are therefore the opposite of what you want.

5. 1st and 2nd only. The first statement is correct because Rothbard says that there were “better [economists] before Smith.” This means that at least two were better than Smith, but Smith could still have been the third best (the passage does not directly state that Rothbard thinks that Smith comes in third place, but the question asks for statements that do not contradict Rothbard’s remarks). The second statement is correct because Rothbard says that Smith’s

book “eclipsed public knowledge” of economists that Rothbard regarded as better than Smith. This is consistent with the idea that *The Wealth of Nations* should not have been as influential as it was—or, at the very least, does not contradict the idea that *The Wealth of Nations* should not have been as influential as it was. The third statement is not correct because, according to the first line of the third paragraph, “[e]ven Smith’s critics do not deny the book’s immense influence.”

6. **(C).** The “Invisible Hand” is described in the second paragraph as the idea that “individuals pursuing their own self-interest could unintentionally create a more just society.” Choice (A) is wrong because the final result is not particularly just—this would be a better choice if the moviegoers’ actions somehow caused a benefit to people other than themselves. Choice (B) is wrong because it has little to do with selfishness or justice, but with another aspect of Smith’s writings. Choice (C) is correct because this system promotes selfishness (each student tries to sign up as quickly as possible for each class, without thinking of others), but those classes are then said to be “equitably

distributed.” Choice (D) is wrong because raising prices isn’t inherently selfish, no one appears to be competing, and the end result is not particularly just. Choice (E) is wrong for the same reasons as (D).

7. **Debacle, rout.** If the team has no chance of winning the game in the third quarter, the game must have been a crushing failure or a drubbing. “Debacle” and “rout” fit well. Note that a “boondoggle” is certainly bad, but it is an unnecessary and wasteful project. “Forgery” means fake and there’s nothing fake about a bad loss. “Fallacy” means a mistaken belief and “infirmity” means a physical or mental illness, neither of which fits this sentence.

8. **Aver, assert.** The young husband is ignoring certain warning signs regarding his partner’s fidelity. This would suggest that he believes his partner to be faithful. Of the answer choices, “aver” and “assert” are near synonyms that would complete the sentence in a similar way. “Suspect” could possibly work here, but there is no other word that produces a sentence with the same meaning. The remaining options all provide opposite tones for the sentence. If he paid attention to the warning signs mentioned, the husband might “doubt” or “dismiss” his partner’s fidelity, or he might even “disparage,” or belittle, his partner for the lack of fidelity.

9. **(D).** The passage indicates that Chanel and Vionnet are examples illustrating a theory that personal virtues are “irrelevant” to material success. This matches choice (D). Choice (A) is a distortion, as “irrelevant” indicates no relationship, not an inverse one. Choice (B) confuses an example given in the passage with the purpose of the passage and creates a hierarchy that the passage did not. Choice (C) again confuses example and purpose; furthermore, the passage does not focus on aesthetics. Choice (E) is an irrelevant comparison and also confuses example and purpose.

10. **(B).** When a question uses the phrase “in order to,” the correct answer will address the author’s purpose for inserting the detail rather than the literal meaning. Choice (A) is at best unknown, as her company was in operation before the war. Choice (B) is correct because the information supports the author’s theory that personal virtue is irrelevant to material success. Choice (C) comes from the wrong paragraph, as this information about Vionnet does not “highlight” anything about Chanel. Choice (D) is not supported by anything in the passage. Choice (E) is a distortion; the author mentions that Vionnet could be so thought of, but his point is merely about her personal integrity and does not address her feminist credentials.

Verbal Set 3

1. **Land, a plum.** The first blank needs to be a synonym of get. “Ascertain” does not fit that meaning, and “ensure” is used incorrectly—the actress might want to ensure that she gets the part, but it doesn’t make sense to say that she wants to “ensure the part” itself. The second blank should describe a role with “lots of onscreen time” and good scenes; you need a synonym for good. That’s exactly what “plum” means. “Grave” (important or harmful) and “theatrical” (relating to theater or overly dramatic in a negative way) do not fit the desired meaning.

2. **Touchstone.** You need a clue that matches “more than a hit movie” and goes with the idea of having meaning for a whole generation of people. “Touchstone,” or something used to make judgments about other things, matches perfectly. “Cornerstone” doesn’t work—a cultural touchstone is a single important event, place, work of art, etc. A “cultural cornerstone” would be something the whole society is built upon (like individualism, Islam, or the monarchy, depending on the society). A “rudder” is literally part of a ship related to steering; if you are lost in life, you are like a ship without a rudder. A “bolster” is pretty similar to a “stanchion,” at least when used metaphorically to mean a support (literally, a “bolster” is a pillow, and a “stanchion” is an upright bar or post), so neither is the answer.

3. **A level of skepticism.** The colon means that the blank will agree with the clue “not fully convinced,” so the correct answer is “a level of skepticism.” “An enthusiasm” is the opposite of what would fit this blank. “Degree of humility,” “thoroughness,” and “eloquence” do not match the fact that she is “not fully convinced” about this theory.

4. **Mask, part and parcel.** The sentence says that people who work in the service industry “put on a smile for the customer,” implying that they hide their true emotions in some way. “Masquerade” is close, but it means either to pretend to be someone or to be disguised as something else; neither meaning works for the first blank. To “simulate” emotions is to pretend to feel them, not to hide them, which doesn’t work either, so the correct answer for the first blank is “mask.” For the second blank, you need something like a requirement. “Apex” is a high point (i.e., The apex of my career was playing for the Knicks). “Conceit” means a fanciful notion. “Part and parcel,” meaning an essential piece of something, is the correct phrase.

5. **1st only.** The first statement is justified because in the second paragraph, de Beauvoir is quoted as saying exactly so. The second statement is not justified because at the end of the first paragraph, de Beauvoir indicates that women “*are viewed as* intrinsically passive and immanent.” This does not mean that de Beauvoir believes this (in fact, the second paragraph gives good evidence that she believes precisely the reverse). The third statement is not justified because, although de Beauvoir views both self-constraint and imposed constraint (oppression) as negative, she does not indicate which type she considers to be worse. Though the passage says that “immanence is a moral fault” when someone chooses it, the first paragraph does not indicate whether de Beauvoir believes this.

6. **2nd only.** The first paragraph states that immanence is considered “a

degradation” before going back and forth between immanence as a freely chosen moral fault and immanence as the result of oppression. Thus, immanence is not always characterized as a moral fault or as oppression.

7. **(D).** The first sentence of the passage announces that existentialist ethics were a major influence on de Beauvoir’s philosophy. Much of the rest of the passage is devoted to explaining that philosophy, which makes choice (D) correct. Choice (A) is too broad as the passage doesn’t explain all of existential ethics, of which transcendence is just one concept. Similarly, (B) is too broad as the passage does not discuss all of feminist theory, just de Beauvoir’s. Choice (C) is wrong—the passage is not a “diatribe,” or bitter attack. Choice (E) is again too broad for the passage.

8. **Rift, breach.** “Incontrovertible” indicates that there were issues that were once totally accepted by both parties. Now they are “subject to contention,” indicating that there is a widening gap, or fissure, between the parties: a “rift” or “breach” between them. Note that the other four answer choices do not have a pair among them, nor do their meanings reflect the intended meaning of the sentence. An “accord,” or treaty, would be the opposite of what the sentence suggests. And though the fissure between the parties might be considered by some to be upsetting, there is not a “travesty” between the parties. “Piety” can mean either the quality of being religious/reverent or a belief that is held with reverence, but neither meaning fits here. And finally, “prevalence,” which means commonplace, also does not fit with the clues in the sentence.

9. **Divergent, incongruous.** The word “yet” indicates that the words that fill the blank will contrast with “related.” While not perfect synonyms, “divergent,” which means developing in different directions, and “incongruous,” which means not in harmony, would make sentences that are alike in meaning, so they are the correct pair. “Suitable,” “impactful,” “complementary” (working well together), and “distinguished” do not contrast with the word “related.”

10. **(C).** The exterminator explains the effects of using poisoned food to combat a mouse infestation: mice will pick up the food and carry it to the nest, where all of the mice will eat the food and die as a result. The exterminator then claims that if X happens, then it will be certain that Y happened first. Specifically, he claims that if all signs of the mice disappear for three consecutive weeks after setting out poisoned food, then the mice all must have died as a result of that poisoned food. The correct answer will weaken this claim, for instance by showing that if X happens, it will not

necessarily mean that Y happened; perhaps there is another reason why X happens.

(A) This choice is very tempting, but the exterminator argues that “all signs” of the mice “disappear”; this choice mentions only the difficulty of seeing and hearing mice. These do not represent “all signs” of an infestation; mice may leave droppings, chew things up, and so forth. Further, the mice are not harder to see and hear only after poison has been used. They are always hard to see and hear, so this does not provide an alternative explanation as to why signs might diminish or disappear after poison has been used.

(B) This choice may be true, but it does not address the exterminator’s claim that if all signs disappear, then the *poison* must have killed the mice.

(C) CORRECT. This choice offers an alternative explanation for the absence of signs of an infestation. If the mice have left the house, then any signs of infestation would also cease because the mice are no longer there. However, the signs will have ceased because the mice left voluntarily, not because they have been eradicated by the poison, as claimed by the exterminator.

(D) It is likely true that different poisons have different levels of efficacy, but this argument does not distinguish between types of poison. The claim is simply that the poison must have killed the mice (as opposed to some other explanation for why the signs of mice would disappear).

(E) The exterminator does not claim that the poison will work within three weeks (or within any time frame at all). He only claims that if the signs disappear over three consecutive weeks, then that means that the poison worked. It might be the case that the signs don’t disappear until weeks 3, 4, or 5, but the exterminator’s claim would still hold: because the signs have disappeared for three consecutive weeks, the poison worked.

Verbal Set 4

1. **Punctiliousness.** What was the case “for eons” is contrasted with the situation “now,” which is that “laxity and tardiness” are “fashionable” and “considered appropriate.” So it must be that the blank is some behavior that is not lax or not tardy. “Punctiliousness,” which is the state of being strict in observance of formalities, fits with the former, and with the latter, too, if punctuality is a formality. “Probity,” which means integrity or honesty, certainly fits with “virtuous,” but doesn’t contrast with what is happening “now.” Two of the choices are antonyms: “parsimoniousness” means frugality to the point of stinginess and “prodigality” is the quality or situation of

spending money without care. Though opposite, both are negative and wouldn't be "considered not only polite, but virtuous," nor do they contrast with "laxity" or "tardiness." The final choice, "panache," meaning flamboyance or flair, is not indicated by the sentence—don't read too much into "fashionable."

2. **Voluble.** The first clues in this short sentence are "bombastic" (pompous and verbose) and "long," one of which should agree with the blank. The word "eloquent" should contrast with the blank due to "rather than." "Voluble," which is used to describe someone who talks incessantly, fits perfectly. "Unscrupulous" and "hostile" are negative but don't really relate to talking too much in a pompous way. "Frank," meaning direct and sincere in speech, is neither in direct agreement nor in direct disagreement with any of the clues. And finally, "languid," which means slow and relaxed, is not supported by the rest of the sentence.

3. **Specter.** If elementary school students ran drills in which "they had to dive under their desks and curl up into a ball," there was a fear or a threat that was a daily part of people's lives. A secondary meaning of the word "specter" (which can also mean ghost) is something widely feared as a dangerous occurrence. "Annihilation," "brutality," "detonation," and "arms race" all seem to fit with the theme of a nuclear holocaust, but these words do not mean fear or threat.

4. **Apathy, diligence.** "As opposed" indicates a reversal between what happened in Boehm's undergraduate years and during his doctoral program, which is also indicated by the switch from "hedonism," or pleasure-seeking, to "earnest devotion," probably to academic studies, as this devotion "led to academic laurels." The first blank should either match "hedonism" or contrast "devotion," and the second blank should match "earnest devotion" or be something related to academic success. The best answers are "apathy," indifference or lack of interest, and "diligence," commitment or hard work. "Studiousness" would be a good fit for the second blank, but is an opposite trap in the first blank. There are no clues to suggest that he was deceitful, or exhibiting "duplicity." In the second blank, "morality" might *feel* right: if your personal view is that "hedonism" is immoral, this would provide the contrast required. However, pleasure-seeking is not *by definition* immoral, any more than "morality" would necessarily lead to academic laurels. "Detachment" means indifference, so it's a near synonym of "apathy"; it's another opposite trap that would work well in the other blank, but not in blank (ii).

5. **(A).** The author's primary purpose in writing this passage is to explain the distinction between science and non-science via historical examples, such as those of Aristotle and Galileo. The author begins by positing the question of differentiating the two, and then goes on to use historical examples to explain why each does or does not meet the qualification for modern science. Thus, choice (A) is correct. Regarding (B), the author never criticizes the Ancient Greek philosophers, just labels their method unscientific. As for (C), nowhere does the author claim that it is important to follow Galileo's scientific method, just that this is now the modern definition of science. Regarding (D), the author never makes mention of the historical definition of science. Lastly, as for (E), the author never argues that the

findings of Galileo are more important than those of Aristotle. Further, the author only discusses one finding of each philosopher/scientist, so this answer is out of scope.

6. **(D).** As the second paragraph states, Galileo's method "forced one to first form a hypothesis, then design an experiment to confirm or deny this hypothesis, and then accept or discard the hypothesis based on one's findings." Aristotle's hypothesis was that solids were the least expanded form of matter, and the experiment he designed to prove this was to show that solids sank within liquids of the same type. As this did not hold true for water, under the Galilean method Aristotle would be forced to discard his hypothesis based on the results of his experiment. Thus, choice (D) is correct. Regarding (A), the passage does not contain any information about the shape of solid water or of other solid forms of matter, only about Aristotle's conjectures on the shape of solid water. Regarding (B), the passage claims the opposite of this fact: an object with larger mass will not fall to the ground more quickly than an object with lesser mass. As for (C), the passage states that the ancient Greeks were more philosophers than scientists, but never prohibits one from being both. As for (E), the passage states that Galileo used his scientific method to disprove many commonly held misconceptions about the rules of physics, but never states that one cannot do this in the absence of his method.

7. **Perspicacious, sagacious.** The colon signals that the second part of the sentence agrees with the first part, so the blank must express how the shaman's knowledge seems "to include every subject." The only pair of words that would match in this sentence are "perspicacious" and "sagacious," both of which mean wise or astute. "Mendacious" and "duplicitous" both mean dishonest or deceitful, but nothing in the sentence suggests that the shaman would be the most untruthful member of the group. "Superfluous" means unnecessary and "mellifluous" means sweet-sounding, neither of which fits in the context of this sentence.

8. **Utilized, employed.** The sentence suggests that despite certain minor "contraindications," which are specific situations in which a procedure should not be performed, life-saving procedures should be performed when the situation demands. Though first-aid might include medication, procedures would not be "medicated." And "disputed" does not have a pair in the answer choices, nor would it make sense to dispute any life-saving procedures. While it might be possible for life-saving procedures to be "contrived" or "created," there is no clue in the sentence to suggest that trainers think that these procedures should be made up. Thus, the correct answers are "utilized" and

“employed.”

9. **(C).** The passage describes the role of Alcott’s women in their society and briefly wonders about the author’s motivation. Choice (A) concerns only the last sentence of the passage. Choices (B) and (D) ignore that the passage discusses a novel rather than reality. Choice (D) is also too broad and somewhat nonsensical since the passage concerns the past. Choice (E) misses the author’s tone—there is no indictment, merely a discussion.

10. **(E).** In the second paragraph, the passage dismisses Meg’s “taking part” by saying it “meant no more than” talking to her husband, “remaining at home,” and allowing him to be a mediator between her and the world. This implies that she must “leave the house,” which matches choice (E). Choice (A) misses the point of the passage and is almost backwards. Choices (B) and (C) are misplaced details about the alternative to “taking part.” Choice (D) distorts the second paragraph, which says Meg’s husband was her mediator to the world at large.

11. **1st and 3rd only.** The first statement is justified, as the first sentence states that the man of the house was at the war front. The third statement must follow, because the passage states that men went out in public to conduct activities and returned home at night. The second statement, while quite possibly true, is not mentioned in the passage. The passage only states that Alcott glorified this condition in her novel, not that the entire society did so.

Verbal Practice Section 1: Easy Difficulty

20 Questions

Time: 30 Minutes

For questions 1–6, select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blank in the way that best completes the text.

1. A dry-farmed tomato raised in low-nitrogen soil will often have the nutrient value of a much larger conventionally grown tomato, and its flavor may be similarly _____ .

delicious
healthful
scanty

concentrated
shrunk

2. Most viewers of today's reality television underestimate the degree of _____ with which the seemingly artless narrative of each episode is assembled: oftentimes, actors interviewed on camera are asked to repeat their story half a dozen times before producers are satisfied.

dramaturgy
opportunism
fallacy
contrivance
histrionics

3. Many (i) _____ have commentated that football reflects an industrial perspective because the game time is inflexibly determined by the clock, whereas baseball stems from an agrarian one, in which, the passage of time is more (ii) _____ and determined by events.

Blank (i)

Blank (ii)

pundits	amorphous
amateurs	pacific
dilettantes	asymmetrical

4. Ernest Hemingway, the novelist and proponent of traditional masculine virtues that were already considered (i) _____ by his more progressive peers, eventually lost currency with the general public; although his earlier literary works remained popular, his continuing adherence to that code drove him to disdain society, which, in turn, (ii) _____ him.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
effeminate	shunned
anachronistic	eulogized
sardonic	murdered

5. While a (i) _____, the smallest amount that can exist independently, of water could be said to be a single molecule, a (ii) _____ of dust could be made up of pollen, hair, human skin cells, minerals from soil, or even burnt meteor particles. Thus, one definition of dust is “solid particles with a diameter of less than 500 micrometers”—a (iii) _____ definition that is based only on size and state of matter rather than on structure.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
plethora	trove	precise
parameter	covey	loose
quantum	mote	deleterious

6. From the battle’s opening (i) _____ to its (ii) _____ conclusion, the forces of destruction razed a path through the city, ultimately leaving behind a (iii) _____ stillness where there once had been streets and squares bustling with life.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
finale	sanguinary	blissful
salvo	celebrated	routine
error	blithe	disquieting

For each of questions 7–10, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

It is no revelation that people prefer immediate rewards. What is less well known is that people are willing to renounce a significant portion of a given reward in order to expedite delivery. This phenomenon is known as “discounting,” because the value of a delayed reward is discounted, or reduced, in the mind of the receiver. Discounting helps explain the straightforward

5 “time value of money” (a dollar now is worth more than a dollar later), but its manifestations can be far more dramatic.

Behavioral economists have identified extreme discounting in experiments in which subjects were offered either a dollar immediately or three dollars the next day. Individuals who consistently choose significantly smaller rewards for their immediacy are described as

10 “present-biased.” Present-bias may seem innocuous, but it has serious ramifications. In another experiment, young children were given a marshmallow, then told that if they could wait a few minutes to eat it, they would receive a second one. Those unable to endure the delay suffered from more behavioral problems in adolescence and scored markedly lower on standardized tests than the children who were able to wait and thereby earn another treat. Traits such as indolence

15 and apathy may indeed be manifestations of present-bias; material success is predicated on one’s ability to recognize hedonistic impulses, understand their consequences, and delay or suppress gratification.

What was once known as “exponential discounting” (because the length of the delay before a reward was given seemed to correlate directly with the size of the perceived discount) has been

20 renamed “hyperbolic discounting,” because the effects of time delay do not seem strictly linear.

A study showed that people offered \$50 now or \$100 in a year were

likely to choose the former.

But when people were offered either \$50 in 5 years or \$100 in 6 years (the same choice 5 years in the future), the vast majority chose the latter. This experiment reveals the difficulty of making effective financial decisions about one's future priorities, just as the choice to procrastinate

25 requires the unlikely supposition that one's future self will have a greater set of resources to accomplish the postponed task than one's present self.

7. The function of the second paragraph within the passage may be most appropriately characterized as
- (A) analyzing the psychological sources of the phenomenon introduced in the first paragraph
 - (B) elaborating upon and qualifying the main proposition put forth in the first paragraph
 - (C) providing an alternative point of view on the positions already established by the author
 - (D) illustrating one aspect of the phenomenon named in the first paragraph and offering possible social implications
 - (E) drawing general conclusions about specific examples presented earlier

8. The passage suggests which of the following about the traits of indolence and apathy?
- (A) They are predicated on one's material success.
 - (B) They may be regarded as the effects of a tendency toward extreme discounting.
 - (C) They may be manifested in present-bias.
 - (D) They may seem innocuous, but they have serious ramifications.
 - (E) They are the cause of one's ability to identify and suppress hedonistic impulses.
9. It can be inferred that the word *hyperbolic* in the phrase "hyperbolic discounting" signifies, in this context,
- (A) the nonlinearity of decision making based on various delays
 - (B) the exaggeration of the effects of time delay
 - (C) the direct correlation between a delay's duration and a perceived discount's magnitude
 - (D) the exponential growth of the size of the discounting
 - (E) the lack of certainty in one's perception of longer and shorter delays
10. According to the passage, which of the following is true of the children described in the passage who were able to wait to eat their first marshmallow?
- (A) They scored lower on standardized tests than children unable to wait.
 - (B) They suffered more frequently from behavior problems as adolescents.
 - (C) They each received a second marshmallow as part of the experiment.
 - (D) They could be characterized as indolent or apathetic.
 - (E) They can accurately be described as present-biased.

Question 11 is based on the following reading passage.

The female arkbird will lay eggs only when a suitable quantity of nesting material is available, and the climate is suitably moderate. This winter is

the coldest on record, but somewhat counterintuitively, the temperature change has actually increased the amount of nesting material as trees and plants die, shedding twigs and leaves. However, although nesting material is abundant, _____ .

11. Which of the following options for the blank above is best supported by the passage?

- (A) the female arkbird will likely migrate to avoid the cold
- (B) arkbird mortality rates increase as the weather becomes less moderate
- (C) female arkbirds prefer the type of nesting material produced in warmer weather
- (D) an abundance of nesting material provides increased protection for arkbird eggs
- (E) the female arkbird will not lay eggs this winter

For questions 12–15, select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

12. Floodwaters had already breached the library’s walls, but hopeful volunteers in hip boots worked tirelessly to _____ the damage.
- ☐ exacerbate
 - ☐ ameliorate
 - ☐ recant
 - ☐ forfeit
 - ☐ recount
 - ☐ mitigate
13. Eleanor of Aquitaine, who married Henry II of England, was dead and forgotten for hundreds of years, until Katherine Hepburn _____ her in “The Lion in Winter,” injecting her own vitality into the depiction of that queen.
- ☐ mummified
 - ☐ mocked
 - ☐ resurrected
 - ☐ glamorized
 - ☐ immortalized
 - ☐ parodied
14. However beneficent the intentions, if the civilian death toll continues to climb, ongoing contact with the local populace may well prove _____ to the aim of normalizing relations.
- ☐ honorable
 - ☐ bedazzling
 - ☐ unpropitious
 - ☐ inimical
 - ☐ captivating
 - ☐ incongruous

15. Despite numerous attacks on the witness's character, his testimony is supported by evidence and appears to be _____ .

- ☐ vociferous
- ☐ fallacious
- ☐ credible
- ☐ antagonistic
- ☐ assiduous
- ☐ sound

Question 16 is based on the following reading passage.

The chemicals division at Company M spent 4% of its 2008 budget on marketing. The consumer products division spent 35% of its 2008 budget on marketing, while the machinery division spent only 2% of its 2008 budget on marketing.

16. Which of the following conclusions is best justified by the data above?

- (A) The consumer products division spent more on marketing in 2008 than the chemicals and machinery divisions combined.
- (B) Consumers are more swayed by marketing than are the mostly corporate buyers of chemicals and machinery.
- (C) On average, all three divisions combined spent less than 35% of their 2008 budgets on marketing.
- (D) The company's overall spending on marketing is between 4% and 35%.
- (E) The chemicals division spent 100% more on marketing in 2008 than did the machinery division.

Questions 17–19 are based on the following reading passage.

Maps are essential décor for any social studies class, and though they are helpful tools in beginning to understand geography, maps are merely 2-D representations of a 3-D world and will always carry certain inherent inaccuracies. Because of their flatness and size restrictions, maps require manipulation, rendering them incapable of showing the actual shape of the Earth

5 and the continents, nations, and other features upon it. Though these might seem like necessary concessions, the implications of such manipulations move beyond the blackboard and can have damaging effects; forcing students to see the world in 2-D each day has the attendant effect of teaching them to understand the world in two-dimensional terms.

Furthermore, maps present borders as fixed, unchanging entities, which is a misleading

10 implication to present in a history course. Borders have been changing throughout the history of civilization, and the United States is a perfect example of a country with borders that have blurred and bled into one another for decades as states continued to form and join as recently as the 20th century.

17. The author's main idea is that

- (A) maps are a necessary evil
- (B) maps present borders as static
- (C) 3-D representation of the world is impossible
- (D) outdated information makes education less effective
- (E) graphic representation can encourage cognitive misconceptions

18. Which of the following, if true, would most undermine part of the author's evidence?

- (A) Some students exposed to maps grasp 3-D and dynamic concepts about the world.

- (B) Most teachers rely very little on the maps displayed in their classrooms.
- (C) Computer-generated map displays increasingly in use in classrooms show changes in boundaries almost instantaneously.
- (D) Maps from hundreds of years ago contain errors.
- (E) 2-D maps do not indicate topographical features effectively.

19. The author does which of the following in the passage?

- (A) Employs circular logic.
- (B) Cites a historical case.
- (C) Uses physical description to support an accusation.
- (D) Discusses a hierarchy of problems with maps.
- (E) Rebuts a commonly held view.

Question 20 is based on the following reading passage.

In 1928, Sir Alexander Fleming, working at St. Mary's Hospital in London, observed that a bluish-green mold had contaminated a culture of *Staphylococcus*, and that the areas of the *Staphylococcus* bacteria nearest to the mold were being destroyed. Upon testing a pure culture of this mold, Fleming discovered that the mold killed many types of bacteria. He named the substance *penicillin* and

5 published his results in 1929.

It was not, however, until over a decade later that a team of researchers from Oxford, aided by an American laboratory, were able to increase the growth rate of *penicillin*—by then recognized to be the strongest antibacterial agent known at that time—such that enough of it could be produced to treat Allied soldiers wounded on D-Day, in 1944.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

20. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

- ☐ Fleming did not fully appreciate the therapeutic value of *penicillin*.
- ☐ At some point prior to 1944, *penicillin* could not be grown fast enough.
- ☐ Since ancient times, antibacterial agents have been used to treat wounded soldiers.

Answers to Verbal Practice Section 1

1. **Concentrated.** “Similarly” indicates that the relatively small “dry-farmed tomato” has all the flavor of a “conventionally grown” large tomato, just as it has all the nutrients. The blank requires a word that means something like condensed. Only “concentrated” works. “Shrunken” and even “scanty” might be attractive, but neither captures the idea that the tomato has a great deal packed into a small package. And while a dry-farmed tomato might be both “delicious” and “healthful,” again, neither of these create a sentence that fits with the clue offered in the first part of the sentence.

2. **Contrivance.** This blank takes its clue from the phrase “seemingly artless.” As is often the case in GRE questions, the word “seemingly” should set you up to be thinking of an opposite to “artless,” which means genuine, not artificial. In this case, then, you want a word that denotes something deliberately constructed or fabricated: something “contrived.” The other options denote opinions that might be assigned to reality television, but “dramaturgy” (the practice of dramatic composition), “opportunism” (exploitation), “fallacy” (misconception), and “histrionics” (theatrics) are not antonyms of artless and are therefore incorrect.

3. **Pundits, amorphous.** The clue for the first blank is “commentated.” Neither “amateurs” nor “dilettantes” (a synonym of amateurs) are likely to make this kind of knowledgeable comment. The correct choice for the first blank is “pundits,” or experts in a particular field. The pivot word *whereas* means that the second blank opposes “inflexibly determined.” “Amorphous” fits this meaning. Nothing in the sentence suggests that the passage of time is “pacific” (peaceful) or “asymmetrical.”

4. **Anachronistic, shunned.** The first blank must reflect the opinion of “progressive peers” regarding that which is “traditional” (“progressive” indicates wanting to move forward—away from traditions). The correct answer, “anachronistic,” refers to something that is in the wrong period or era and often connotes something old-fashioned or behind the times. The incorrect answers, “effeminate” (feminine) and “sardonic” (mocking), do not contrast with “progressive.” The second blank must match “disdain” because of the expression “in turn”; “shunned” is a good match. “Murdered” is too strong for the second blank while adhering to a behavior would not “eulogize” someone.

5. **Quantum, mote, loose.** A “quantum” is “the smallest amount that can exist independently” and is a perfect fit for blank (i). “Plethora” means a large

amount of something, which is the opposite of what the clue suggests, and “parameter” is a boundary. For blank (ii), a “mote” is a speck or small amount; the word is specifically associated with dust. “Trove” means a collection of valuable things and “covey” means a small group of things. In blank (iii), since the definition is “based only on size and state of matter rather than on structure,” it is “loose,” rather than strict or “precise.” Nowhere in the sentence is it suggested that this definition is “deleterious,” meaning causing harm.

6. **Salvo, sanguinary, disquieting.** A “salvo” is a simultaneous release of bombs and is often used metaphorically to mean the start of some kind of fight; this is a better fit to describe the opening battle than either “finale” or “blissful.” Every clue in the sentence is negative, so you want to describe the battle’s conclusion in a negative way—only “sanguinary” (involving much bloodshed) matches. The other options, “celebrated” and “blithe” (untroubled happiness), are the opposite direction. Finally, a “stillness where there once had been streets and squares bustling with life” is neither “blissful” nor “routine,” but very much disturbing, or “disquieting.”

7. **(D).** The first paragraph introduces the phenomenon of “discounting”: the reduction in the perceived value of a delayed reward. Discounting can account for “straightforward” effects such as the time value of money, but “more dramatic” manifestations are also hinted at. Some of these dramatic manifestations of “extreme discounting” are described in the second paragraph. That paragraph introduces “present-bias” by describing two experiments (one in which \$1 now is preferred to \$3 tomorrow, and another in which children struggle to resist marshmallows). The consequences of the marshmallow experiment are stated and ruminated upon in a larger social context (how present-bias may prevent material success). Thus, the second paragraph elaborates upon a particular, extreme version of the phenomenon introduced in the first paragraph and draws out a few larger implications.

Regarding choice (A), the second paragraph does not explain where discounting comes from psychologically. Regarding choice (B), the first paragraph does not really introduce a “proposition” per se, which would be a claim of some sort. Rather, the first paragraph simply defines a phenomenon. Additionally, the second paragraph does not “qualify” (limit) the first paragraph in any way. As for choice (C), the author has staked out no position in the first paragraph; he or she has only described a phenomenon. The second paragraph does not take an alternative point of view, either. As for choice (E), there are no true “specific examples” introduced in the first paragraph for the second paragraph to draw conclusions from.

8. **(B).** According to the passage, “traits such as indolence and apathy may indeed be manifestations of present-bias,” so the correct answer choice will say more or less the same thing. Choice (A) mixes up words from the text (“predicated,” “material success”), but does not match the meaning of the passage. The passage says that material success is predicated on the “ability to recognize hedonistic impulses,” not that indolence and apathy are predicated on material success. Choice (B) is correct but is in disguise. The passage describes “manifestations of present-bias,” but this answer choice talks about “the effects of a tendency toward extreme discounting.” However, the beginning of the second paragraph defines “present-bias” in terms of “extreme discounting.” That is, present-bias is really nothing more than a tendency toward extreme discounting. This disguise makes choice (B) tricky. Regarding choice (C), be careful with language! Saying that these traits “are manifested *in* present-bias” means exactly the reverse of “are manifestations *of* present-bias.” In the former, the traits are somehow hidden, but they show up *in* or *through* something on the surface called present-bias. The passage, on the other hand, describes present-bias as the trait hidden inside of

indolence and apathy. Choice (D), like choice (A), mixes up words from the text. Present-bias—not indolence and apathy—is what “may seem innocuous,” but has “serious ramifications.” Choice (E) also grabs language from the text but uses it in a mixed-up way. The language “traits such as indolence and apathy” shows up in the same sentence as the “ability to recognize hedonistic impulses ... and delay or suppress gratification,” but those two phrases are not connected in an “X causes Y” way.

9. **(A).** This Inference question asks what can be deduced about a particular word, “hyperbolic,” as used in the phrase “hyperbolic discounting.” Do not try to figure out the word’s meaning in your head; wrong answer choices have been devised to play off of your possible knowledge of the word “hyperbolic.” Rather, go to the text. The author says that “‘exponential discounting’ ... has been renamed ‘hyperbolic discounting,’ because the effects of time delay do not seem strictly linear.” The meaning of “hyperbolic” must have to do with this idea, that “the effects of time delay do not seem strictly linear.” Only choice (A) works. Be careful of choice (B)—the use of the word *hyperbole* in everyday speech to mean exaggeration makes this a trap answer.

10. **(C).** Specific detail questions ask for something absolutely true according to the passage. This question asks specifically about the children who were able to wait. Choice (C) is correct; the second paragraph states that “if [the children] could wait a few minutes to eat [the first marshmallow], they would receive a second one.” Incorrect choices (A), (B), (D), and (E) describe the children who *didn’t* wait.

11. **(E).** When the question stem asks for the option “best supported by the passage,” it is asking for a conclusion that is the logical synthesis of the premises in the argument. The argument gives two requirements for egg laying: there must be nesting material and the climate must be moderate. While “moderate” hasn’t been specifically defined, it’s safe to say that “the coldest winter on record” is the opposite of “moderate.” Therefore, the bird will not lay eggs. The fact that the nesting material requirement has been filled—even above and beyond what is required—doesn’t fix the problem. Choices (A), (B), (C), and (D) offer statements for which the passage does not offer enough information to evaluate.

12. **Ameliorate, mitigate.** Floodwaters had already entered the library, but the “hopeful” volunteers are working anyway—they hope to limit the damage. “Ameliorate” and “mitigate” both have the sense of making something better without completely solving it. Note that “exacerbate” means the opposite (to make worse), and “recant” and “forfeit” are negative words that don’t fit the sentence (you could “recant” your former statements and “forfeit” an athletic competition, for instance). Finally, “recount” means to narrate and nothing in the sentence suggests that the volunteers were discussing the damage to the library.

13. **Resurrected, immortalized.** The answers must oppose “dead and forgotten.” Both “resurrected” and “immortalized” fit. While “glamorized” might be tempting, it does not fit the clues from the sentence (“vitality” is not the same as “glamorous”). “Mocked” and “parodied” form an incorrect pair—the sentence gives no indication that Eleanor is being made fun of. Finally, “mummified” is another trap based on the theme that Eleanor of Aquitaine had been dead for years, but this word does not have a pair nor does it fit the clues given in the sentence. Note that “resurrected” and “immortalized” are not synonyms, but both certainly oppose the clue “dead and forgotten.”

14. **Unpropitious, inimical.** Though there are good (“beneficent”) motives, lots of people are dying. If this continues, then this “ongoing contact” may end up harming the stated goal of “normalizing relations.” “Unpropitious” and “inimical” both mean adverse or harmful. “Incongruous” means not

incompatible or inconsistent. While this could be a match for the blank, meaning-wise—since contact with the locals may be incompatible with the aim of normalizing relations—it lacks a match among the answer choices. “Honorable” doesn’t fit the desired meaning. And while “bedazzling” and “captivating” do form a pair, they provide a meaning that is not in line with what the sentence suggests.

15. **Credible, sound.** The testimony “is supported by evidence,” so it must be believable. The correct answers are “credible” and “sound,” which both mean believable. “Vociferous” (vehement and insistent) and “antagonistic” (feeling hostile towards) are a pair but do not mean believable. “Fallacious” means false, the opposite of what the blank requires. “Assiduous” describes something that is marked by careful attention or consistently applied effort and does not fit this sentence.

16. **(C).** Regarding choice (A), the consumer products division spent a higher “percentage” on marketing, but that doesn’t mean it spent more actual dollars (maybe the consumer products division is much smaller than chemicals and machinery). Choice (B) should trip a red alert! The passage offers absolutely no information about consumer behavior. Choice (C) is correct—on average, all three divisions spent less than 35% of their budgets on marketing. 35% of any number, averaged in with less than 35% of some other numbers, will certainly generate an average under 35%. Note that on Logic Reading Comprehension questions, correct conclusions are often fairly obvious or are near paraphrases of information you’ve already read in the passage. Regarding choice (D), the passage does not indicate whether the company has other divisions besides chemicals, machinery, and consumer products, so this conclusion cannot be drawn. Choice (E) is wrong because while the chemicals division may have spent a higher percentage, this reveals nothing about the actual number of dollars spent or the relative sizes of the two departments’ marketing budgets.

17. **(E).** The author’s thrust is that 2-D representation warps students’ perception; it pushes them to think of the world as flat and static rather than as 3-D and dynamic. The author does not say maps are necessary or evil, so choice (A) is too extreme. Choice (B) is a true detail from the passage but is more narrow than the author’s overall point. Choice (C) might be implied but the purpose of the passage is to discuss the effect of such tools. Similarly, choice (D) might be inferred from the second paragraph but ignores the main issue of the essay.

18. **(C).** The second paragraph critiques the static quality of maps. Choice (C) eliminates that problem. As for choice (A), “some” means at least one, not a majority—the example of what may just be a few exceptional students does not do much damage to the evidence or the point that, in general, maps cause students to think about the world in 2-D. The author’s evidence involves the presence of maps in the classroom, so the amount of use is irrelevant; eliminate choice (B). Choice (D) is also irrelevant, as the passage premises involve modern maps. Choice (E) is backwards; it strengthens the evidence that maps impede 3-D comprehension.

19. **(B).** In the second paragraph, the author uses the example of the 20th-century United States to buttress his or her argument. Choices (A) and (E) are incorrect; the passage contains neither circular logic nor a rebuttal. As for choice (C), the author does use physical description but not in support of an “accusation.” Choice (D) is incorrect because the author listed problems but

did not create a hierarchy.

20. **2nd only.** The passage states that Fleming discovered penicillin and that others developed it. His feelings or predictions about his discovery cannot be inferred. The passage does, however, say that “it was not until a decade later that a team of researchers from Oxford, with the help of an American laboratory, were able to increase the growth rate of penicillin ... such that it could be produced in sufficient quantity to treat Allied soldiers wounded on D-Day, in 1944.” Thus, at some point prior to 1944, penicillin was being grown too slowly. Finally, while penicillin was used to treat Allied soldiers in 1944, that does not mean antibacterial agents were used “since ancient times.”

Verbal Practice Section 2: Medium Difficulty

20 Questions

Time: 30 Minutes

For questions 1–6, select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blank in the way that best completes the text.

1. Cormac McCarthy writes in an idiom both spare and flowery, with paragraphs of short, declarative sentences interspersed with long, _____ passages of description and philosophizing.

boring
floral
baroque
classical
fictional

2. Simony is one of the three primary (i) _____ in Joyce's *Dubliners*, recurring in almost every story in the collection. In some stories, the simony is more or less literal, with characters attempting to purchase salvation with money. In other stories, it arrives in a more (ii) _____ form.

Blank (i) Blank (ii)

theses	spiritual
leitmotifs	pecuniary
characters	figurative

3. Mixed-media artist Mae Chevrette begins each painting by affixing to canvas a photo from her travels, then embedding (i) _____ such as used ticket stubs and concert posters before applying paint. The final works, emblazoned with quotes as well as evidence of Chevrette's extensive and wide-ranging travels, convey a sense of joyful (ii) _____.

Blank (i) Blank (ii)

devices	philosophy
---------	------------

apocrypha	wanderlust
ephemera	anomie

4. Taxation of legal substances known to be of a (i) _____ nature necessarily threads a thin line; it threatens to (ii) _____ government support for consumption of a product the use of which the government is rightly interested in curtailing.

Blank (i) Blank (ii)

noxious	legitimize
salubrious	incentivize
solicitous	signify

5. The newspaper's essay contest soliciting defenses of anti-vegetarianism yielded only a handful of entries that did not allow authors' (i) _____ to dictate their arguments: focusing on the seemingly universal human (ii) _____ for consuming animal products, these authors successfully navigated the gray area between simple self-justification and genuine apologia. The successful submissions argued not so much that desire or tradition could justify the current palate, but that the eradication of factory farming, the (iii) _____, and the return to natural feed can blunt the evils caused by its excesses.

Blank (i) Blank (ii) Blank (iii)

erudition	penchant	effacement of resources
proclivities	salutation	imputation of ecology
tenacity	earmark	mitigation of suffering

6. The long-term Senator began his career as an unrepentant (i) _____ for his party's excesses, defending policies that posterity has since judged to be reactionary, even (ii) _____; more recently he has taken (iii) _____ line, denying that those very policies ever reflected the party's values.

Blank (i) Blank (ii) Blank (iii)

critic	surreptitious	a restorative
apologist	illegal	an unconscionable
gadfly	retrograde	a revisionist

Questions 7–9 are based on the following reading passage.

The increasing number of published scientific studies ultimately shown to have been based on erroneous data threatens not only reputations of individual scholars but also perceptions of the field as a whole. Since the general public often interprets such debunkings as evidence of malicious or conspiratorial intentions on the part of researchers, these incidents risk being

5 construed as evidence that fraudulent practices pervade the discipline. Such conclusions are rendered all the more potent by the rousing prospect of exposing hypocrisy in a field that prides itself on its rigor. It would therefore behoove interested parties to go to lengths to demonstrate that such episodes, while incidentally regrettable, are not necessarily signs of malfeasance, and are in fact fully consistent with a healthy science. Indeed, the very practices

10 of hypothesis testing and scientific replication are in place precisely to redress such concerns.

Spurious results may linger briefly in the communal ethos, but the more attention they garner for their ingenuity and impact, the more likely they are to be subjected to the crucible of attempted replication. Just as in a thriving garden, small weeds may crop up from time to time only to get pulled out at signs of trouble, so too in science do specious findings occasionally attempt to

15 infiltrate the canon only to get uprooted and tossed aside in the end by the inexorable process of scientific natural selection.

7. In the context of the passage, the word *rousing* (line 6) is used to indicate that

- (A) scientists often take deep satisfaction in adhering to their own rules
- (B) people may find the chance to catch others in their own web to be galvanizing

- (C) scientific non-experts are unaware that their criticisms of more specialized areas of study could be construed as exposing hypocrisy
- (D) uncertainty itself can be something that the general public finds exciting
- (E) scientific revolutions often happen when most experienced academics least expect them

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate <u>all</u> that apply.
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8. The author of the passage would most likely defend which of the following scenarios as instances of “healthy science”?

- ☐ A young researcher discovers an important error in an established text and makes careful note of it in her personal logbook.
- ☐ A highly influential scholar publishes a controversial finding in a well-regarded journal only to be shown by follow-up studies to have inadvertently relied on an invalid statistical method.
- ☐ Unbeknownst to his collaborators, a scientist tweaks his data to be more consistent with a theory that has already won much empirical support.

9. Which of the following best describes the overall purpose of the passage?
- (A) To develop a scientific hypothesis and then describe evidence refuting it
 - (B) To argue that a problem that many people believe to be endemic to a specific domain is in fact much more widespread
 - (C) To encourage more robust dialogue between scientific experts and laypeople
 - (D) To highlight a possible interpretation of a phenomenon and then point out how that interpretation is mistaken
 - (E) To build support for a position and then contend that that position is fundamentally flawed

Question 10 is based on the following reading passage.

Mayor of Middletown: Two years ago, in order to improve the safety of our town's youth, I led the charge for a law requiring all bicycle riders to wear helmets when riding within city limits.

My opponents claim the law is a failure because, last year, we had a higher incidence of bicycle accident victims with severe head injuries than in the previous year. The more important statistic,

5 however, is the bicycle accident fatality rate, which has dropped nearly 30% since the law passed.

Clearly, the helmet law has been a success.

10. Which of the following, if true, would best support the mayor's claim that the helmet law has been a success?
- (A) If accident victims do not die as a result of a head injury, they often suffer from permanent brain damage.
 - (B) While only 15% of all bicycle accidents resulting in injury occur as a result of a collision with a motor vehicle, those accidents represent 90% of fatal accidents.
 - (C) In bicycle accidents, injuries to hands, knees, and elbows are far more common than head injuries.
 - (D) Typically, fatality rates for bicycle accident victims who sustain serious head injuries are twice as high when the victims are not wearing helmets as when they are.

(E) The effect of the helmet law in Middletown is typical; other towns also experienced a higher incidence of head injuries but a lower fatality rate.

Questions 11–12 are based on the following reading passage.

Ultraviolet radiation (with a wavelength in the range of 290–400 nanometers), visible light (400–760 nm), and infrared radiation (760–3,000 nm) are the three forms of energy that the Earth receives from the sun. Within the ultraviolet spectrum, the three sub-categories are UVC (200–290 nm), UVB (290–320 nm), and UVA (320–400 nm). Most UVC rays do not reach the Earth

5 because ozone and other gases in the upper atmosphere absorb them, but exposure to this type of radiation from germicidal lamps and mercury lamps may still be hazardous. Excessive exposure to visible light is also thought to be harmful, but it is not of extreme importance with respect to prevention of skin damage. Most skin damage is caused by UVA and UVB radiation.

Ten times more UVA than UVB reaches the Earth, but the amount of UVA needed to produce

10 sunburn in human skin is 800–1,000 times higher than the amount of UVB needed. Nevertheless, UVA intensifies the sunburn effects of UVB through delayed erythema and aids in cancer formation. Thus, effective sunscreens and sun blocks must protect throughout both the UVB and UVA ranges.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

11. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

- ☐ A form of energy with a wavelength in the range of 2,000–2,500 nanometers would not be categorized as ultraviolet radiation.
- ☐ UVB rays cannot cause cancer formation without the intensifying effects of UVA.
- ☐ Ultraviolet radiation is not a form of infrared radiation.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

12. The sentence “Nevertheless, UVA intensifies ... cancer formation” (lines 12–13) serves which of the following roles?

- ☐ It provides a factual basis for creating sunscreens and sun blocks with certain properties.
- ☐ It undermines an argument presented earlier in the passage.
- ☐ It suggests that, within the wavelength range of ultraviolet radiation, radiation with wavelength lower than 320 nm can exacerbate the carcinogenic properties of radiation with a wavelength higher than 320 nm.

For questions 13–16, select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

13. Even the most accomplished performers at times have difficulty with some of Rachmaninoff's more perilous passages—the composer seems often to have written his music with the deliberate intent to _____ .

- ☐ confound
- ☐ unnerve
- ☐ transmute
- ☐ transmogrify
- ☐ distribute
- ☐ malign

14. Americans can scarcely suppose that all 100,000,000 speakers of Indian English are united in error; it is past time that we recognized that distinctively Indian constructions are not _____ .

- ☐ fads
- ☐ solecisms
- ☐ idioms
- ☐ dialects
- ☐ pidgins
- ☐ lapses

15. The _____ adventurer James Brawnson spends the majority of his autobiography trying to make his life sound like something out of an Indiana Jones movie, but in the end, according to some reviewers, it all comes off rather forced and unconvincing.

- ☐ hapless
- ☐ bold
- ☐ self-styled
- ☐ unlucky
- ☐ so-called
- ☐ intrepid

16. One of the more bizarre powers of the U.S. presidency is the more or less _____ authority to grant pardons, negating months or even years of criminal litigation in an instant.

- ☐ impartial
- ☐ unqualified
- ☐ unbiased
- ☐ executive
- ☐ sweeping
- ☐ tyrannical

Questions 17–20 are based on the following reading passage.

Long regarded as a necessary evil, the royal mistress is a classic staple of the French court. It was hardly a new trick for a monarch to use mistresses and political advisors as scapegoats, but the Bourbons did it with their own particular flare and brand of ceremony. Much of life in the French court was dictated by tradition, ritual, and custom, and the role of the mistress was

5 no exception to this. Mistresses were there to please the king and be the target for unwanted criticism, but they were also expected to stay out of political affairs.

This, of course, was hardly ever the case. The mistresses of Louis XIV, however, were rather well behaved in comparison to those of the future kings. Louis XIV fathered 13 illegitimate children with his mistresses over the course of his life. Thus, his many mistresses were often

10 more concerned with securing rights for their illegitimate offspring than with meddling in affairs of the state. This lack of political meddling made them somewhat less prone to the tremendously harsh scrutiny faced later by those of Louis XV. Additionally, Louis XIV's absolutist rule certainly had much to do with his mistresses remaining in their "proper places." Furthermore, Louis's strict control of the presses kept much of the harshest criticism at bay.

15 Nevertheless, there was still a steady stream of underground literature and cartoons that demonstrated abhorrence for many of Louis's paramours. What was important about the criticism that did proliferate against his mistresses, however, was that it was used to great advantage by Louis XIV. Indeed, he used it to deflect criticism from himself. By having an easily disposable female to shoulder the blame for various monarchical mishaps, Louis was able to retain his

20 appearance of absolute control and otherworldly perfection.

There would, however, be consequences for such skillful puppet-mastery in the coming century. Louis XIV was the singular architect of a vast veil of fictive space inlaid between him and his people, creating a dangerous precedent of masterful manipulation that could not be maintained to the same degree by later monarchs. It was clear that Louis XIV crafted this fictive

25 space cleverly and with great skill, peppering it with self-promoting propaganda to control his image in the collective imagination of his people. His progeny, however, were simply not as adept at doing so. Even more problematic, although future monarchs were not able to dexterously manipulate this fictive space themselves, it did not go away. Instead, it was the satirists, pamphleteers, and playwrights who took over its construction in the years leading up to the

30 Revolution. In short, though it was Louis XIV who wrote his own mythology, Louis XVI would have his written for him.

17. The primary purpose of the passage is to
- (A) critique the morals of the court of Louis XIV
 - (B) discuss the popular opinion of French royal mistresses
 - (C) contrast the mistresses of Louis XIV and Louis XV
 - (D) suggest the main cause of the French Revolution
 - (E) describe the utility and flaws of a political tradition
18. According to the passage, all of the following were reasons that the mistresses of Louis XIV were less problematic than those of Louis XV EXCEPT:
- (A) They were more concerned with securing the futures of their offspring.
 - (B) There was little freedom for the press under Louis XIV.
 - (C) They produced more offspring than did those of Louis XV.
 - (D) Louis XIV was a skillful politician.
 - (E) They were relatively uninterested in affairs of state.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate <u>all</u> that apply.
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19. The passage suggests which of the following?
- ☐ Necessary evils are part of monarchies.
 - ☐ Writing one's own mythology can be good statesmanship.
 - ☐ Louis XIV viewed Louis XV as an unsatisfactory heir.
20. The passage implies that
- (A) Louis XIV made mistakes that led to the Revolution
 - (B) Louis XIV was a member of the Bourbon family
 - (C) Louis XV wrote his own mythology
 - (D) the most troublesome mistresses were those of Louis XVI
 - (E) Louis XIV had more mistresses than Louis XVI

Answers to Verbal Practice Section 2

1. **Baroque.** Because the description of “short, declarative sentences” matches up with the word *spare* in the first part of the sentence, you need something in the blank that matches up with “flowery,” meaning full of elaborate literary words or phrases. “Boring” is judgmental, and “floral” just means “of flowers.” Both “classical” and “fictional” might work, but the sentence does not provide clues to suggest the meaning of either. “Baroque,” meaning highly ornate and extravagant in style, fits the sentence.

2. **Leitmotifs, figurative.** A theme that reappears throughout a work of art is called a “leitmotif” (simony—“attempting to purchase salvation with money”—is not a “thesis” in *Dubliners*, nor is it a “character”). You are told “Simony is more or less literal” in some stories, but “in other stories,” it must be the opposite, or “figurative.” The other options, “spiritual” and “pecuniary” (related to money) do not contrast with literal.

3. **Ephemera, wanderlust.** “Used ticket stubs and concert posters” are not “devices,” nor are they “apocrypha” (fake). Rather, they are “ephemera,” printed matter not intended to be saved. In the second blank, “wanderlust” describes a love of travel, matching much better with the rest of the sentence than either “philosophy” or “anomie” (lack of ethical standards).

4. **Noxious, incentivize.** If “the government is rightly interested in curtailing” the use of a product, this suggests that the product is somehow harmful, or of a “noxious” nature, so that’s the first blank. Both “salubrious” (healthful) and “solicitous” (expressing concern) are positive words. By taxing such products, the government gains a profit from their consumption. That the government is “threading a thin line” suggests that there is a conflict: on the one hand, the government has an interest in increasing profits, and on the other hand, it has an interest in curtailing the use of the taxed substance. So the problem is that the taxation provides a reason to encourage, or “incentivize,” use of the product. This taxation would neither “legitimize” nor “signify” government support for this product consumption.

5. **Proclivities, penchant, mitigation of suffering.** The clue for the first two blanks is given in the claim that “authors successfully navigated the gray area between simple self-justification and genuine apologia.” “Apologia” means defense, so the authors were defending eating meat. But they did not allow their desire to eat meat to derail their arguments. The first two blanks require something like desires or tendency, and both “proclivity” and “penchant” mean that. “Erudition” (knowledge) is tempting, but it doesn’t fit

because saying that someone did not allow his knowledge to drive his arguments is a way of saying that the arguments were bad, and that would not describe the “successful” arguments that won the contest. “Tenacity” (persistence) is also a trap because it looks like tendency. “Salutation” (greeting) and earmark (identifying feature or characteristic) are good GRE vocabulary words but have the wrong meaning. The third blank requires something that can blunt the evils of eating meat, and that goes along with “the eradication of factory farming” and “the return to natural feed,” so you are looking for something that contributes to the well-being of or detracts from the harms done to animals raised for food. “Mitigation of suffering” (easing of suffering) fits this bill. “Effacement of resources” (wiping out of resources) and “imputation of ecology” (blaming of ecology) would both increase harm done to animals and so cannot be correct.

6. Apologist, retrograde, a revisionist. For the first blank, you want a word that means to defend. Surprisingly, that’s precisely what “apologist” means (the word apology once meant a speech offered to defend or justify). “Critic” and “gadfly” (a particularly annoying critic) are both opposite to the desired meaning. For the second blank, something similar to “reactionary,” but even stronger and more negative, is needed. Since “reactionary” means opposed to

change, you want a word that means very opposed to change. “Retrograde” will do, since it suggests a retreat to some earlier state. “Surreptitious” (secretive) has the wrong meaning and “illegal” goes too far. The third blank describes an approach that recasts history or challenges a conventional history. That sort of recasting is called “revisionist.” “Restorative” can’t be correct because the denial isn’t restoring anything. “Unconscionable” (unreasonable or immoral) goes too far; denying that policies reflected the party’s values could just indicate wishful thinking or a lack of perceptiveness.

7. **(B).** As the passage states, some mistakes in scientific results “risk being construed as evidence that fraudulent practices” are going on. Non-science people are “rous[ed]” by the “prospect of exposing hypocrisy in a field that prides itself on its rigor.” The author, then, believes that there is no fraud, but that laypeople may mistakenly believe such fraud exists and be excited by the prospect of calling out, or exposing the hypocrisy of, these scientists who claim to be so rigorous and objective. Answer (B) best matches this idea. Choices (A), (D), and (E) could be true in the real world but are not mentioned in the passage. Choice (C) contains many words from the right area of the passage, but the passage does not suggest that laypeople are unaware; if anything, the passage suggests that they are likely aware.

8. **2nd only.** The author of the passage argues that erroneous findings will be eventually corrected via the process of “scientific natural selection,” or being subjected to scrutiny. “The very practices of hypothesis testing and scientific replication are in place precisely to redress such concerns,” the author writes. The first statement is incorrect, since there is no such scrutiny—no one else will read the researcher’s logbook. The third statement is incorrect because the scientist tweaks his data deliberately—this is more like the “fraudulent practices” described earlier in the passage than the “healthy science” described later—and because no scrutiny takes place.

9. **(D).** The passage points out that the discovery of erroneous findings *could* be seen as malfeasance by researchers, then goes on to show how these same findings are actually a healthy and natural part of the scientific process. Choice (A) isn’t correct because the author does not develop a scientific hypothesis. Choice (B) is incorrect because the author shows that the purported problem isn’t actually a problem at all. Choice (C) is tempting but the author is not actually trying to promote dialogue. The author does build a certain position but never tries to tear that position down, as choice (E) states.

10. **(D).** The mayor claims the law is a success because the accident fatality rate has dropped nearly 30% since the law passed. Opponents claim the law is

a failure because more people have suffered from severe head injuries since the law passed. The answer choice that supports the mayor's claim will rebut the opponents' claim or somehow weaken its effect. While choice (A) may be true, it does not address the mayor's claim that the helmet law in particular has been successful in its goal to protect bicycle riders. Choice (B) is tempting because it offers a compelling reason why the town might want to enact a helmet law in the first place. However, reasons to enact the law are out of the argument's scope, which concerns the success of the already enacted law. This choice does not provide any information allowing you to assess the success (or failure) of the helmet law. Furthermore, choice (B) introduces "motor vehicles," which are also out of scope. Choice (C) may be tempting because the goal of the law is to protect the town's youth, and, presumably, it is desirable to limit all kinds of injuries. However, the focus of the argument is on a helmet law.

Choice (D) is correct—when bicyclists suffer serious head injuries, the chances of dying are twice as high for those not wearing helmets. The converse is that people with head injuries are less likely to die from those injuries if they were wearing a helmet. In other words, some of the injured would have been on the fatality list instead had they not been wearing helmets. This supports the mayor's case by showing that the premise used by the mayor's opponents

does not actually indicate a failure in the law. Regarding choice (E), the fact that the results are similar in other towns means merely that the outcome is predictable in some way; it does not necessarily indicate success.

11. **1st and 3rd only.** The passage states that ultraviolet radiation is in the range of 290–400 nm, so energy with a wavelength of 2,000–2,500 nm would not fall in that range (in fact, it would fall into the range of infrared radiation). The passage additionally states that UVA rays intensify UVB damage and can aid in cancer formation, but it cannot be inferred that UVA rays are *necessary* for cancer to form. Finally, since ultraviolet radiation has a wavelength in the range of 290–400 nanometers and infrared radiation is in the range of 760–3,000 nm, ultraviolet radiation is not a form of infrared radiation.

12. **1st only.** That UVA rays can intensify sunburn and aid in cancer formation “provides a factual basis” for the recommendation in the next sentence that sunscreens block both UVB and UVA rays. The highlighted sentence does not “undermine an argument”—in fact, no “argument” exists in the passage, which is informative and factual. Finally, the third statement is the opposite of what is given: UVA (above 320 nm) “exacerbates the carcinogenic properties” of UVB (below 320 nm), not the other way around.

13. **Confound, unnerve.** Very experienced performers have so much difficulty with some of Rachmaninoff’s “more perilous [difficult] passages” that it sometimes seems as though the music was intentionally designed to [blank]. The blank must mean something like confuse or cause people to struggle. “Confound” means confuse and so is a good match. “Unnerve,” which means to cause someone to lose confidence, also works. “Transmute” and “transmogrify” both mean to transform, which doesn’t mean difficult. Neither “distribute” nor “malign” (say bad things about or slander) has a match and so cannot be correct.

14. **Solecisms, lapses.** That which “Americans *can scarcely suppose*” is false, so “distinctively Indian constructions” are not errors. The blank should mean something like errors. “Lapses” are errors and “solecisms” are grammatical errors. “Dialects” and “pidgins” (simplified versions of a language) have close to the same meaning, but that meaning is the wrong one; Indian English is indeed a dialect of English. “Idioms” are also related to language, but you could describe some “distinctly Indian constructions” as idioms, so it is not correct. “Fads” doesn’t have a match and so also cannot be correct.

15. **Self-styled, so-called.** The most important words here are “forced” and “unconvincing,” used to describe Brawnson’s account of his adventures. That

means that Brawnson is decidedly not Indiana Jones, so the blank must in some way negate “adventurer.” “Self-styled” and “so-called” both imply that Brawnson may call himself an adventurer, but other people might not, which is exactly what the blank needs. “Hapless” and “unlucky” form a pair, but this answer isn’t correct because adventurers can certainly be unlucky and the story of an unlucky adventurer would not necessarily be “forced and unconvincing.” “Bold” and “intrepid” also form a pair, but they would enhance Brawnson’s reputation as an “adventurer.”

16. **Unqualified, sweeping.** The key here is that the power to grant pardons can negate “months or years of criminal litigation in an instant.” That implies the power is quick and absolute. “Sweeping” correctly captures the absolute nature of this power. Although “unqualified” can mean without qualifications, it is also used to mean without limits. Using the less common second meaning of an everyday word like “unqualified” is a typical GRE test writer trick. “Unbiased” and “impartial” form another pair, but the meaning is not correct because although a person or a selection process could be described as “unbiased,” the authority to do something cannot be. “Tyrannical” is going too

far—nothing in the sentence suggests that the president is an oppressive dictator—and “executive” doesn’t mean much of anything in this context because all presidential powers are, technically, “executive.”

17. **(E).** In the first paragraph, the author outlines the political role of royal mistresses in France and goes on to discuss the virtues and pitfalls of this system. Choice (A) is out of scope, as the author avoids moral judgments. Choice (B) is too narrow; popular opinion is a detail, one of the pitfalls. Choice (C) is wrong because the passage does not contrast the mistresses—about whom there is very little information—but rather their effect on French politics. Choice (D) is incorrect (and too extreme) because the author does not say it was the *main* cause.

18. **(C).** This issue is largely discussed in the second paragraph, which provides support for the four incorrect choices. Choice (C) is correct because, though the author does mention the number of Louis XIV’s illegitimate children, the passage does not mention the number for Louis XV or compare those numbers.

19. **2nd only.** In the last paragraph, the passage describes the success Louis XIV had in writing “his own mythology” and compares that to the less satisfactory attempts by his successors. The first statement is out of scope as the author only states that it was a staple of the French court, not all courts. Similarly, no indication is given of Louis’s opinion of his successor.

20. **(B).** In the first paragraph, the author states that the Bourbons brought a unique “flare” to the French custom of royal mistresses. Regarding answer (A), the passage discusses the success and skill of Louis XIV; mistakes are only attributed to his successors. Choice (C) is unsupported—the passage notes that Louis XVI did not write his own mythology but Louis XV is not mentioned. Answers (D) and (E) are wrong for similar reasons—the passage compares the volume of and problems caused by the mistresses of Louis XIV and Louis XV. But nothing is mentioned in that regard for Louis XVI.

Verbal Practice Section 3: Hard Difficulty

20 Questions

Time: 30 Minutes

For questions 1–6, select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill in the blank in the way that best completes the text.

1. While it is tempting to think that artists like Picasso literally see the world in a markedly different way, examination of the artist's creative process reveals _____ movement from roughly realist sketches toward his famous Cubist style through a series of ever more abstract steps.

an obsessive
an iterative
a random
a historical
a dicey

2. Researchers from the University of Southampton concluded that ethnic differences are likely not the cause of mutual mistrust, citing government surveys that show that cooperation and trust are no higher in racially _____ neighborhoods than in mixed communities.

militant
parochial
provincial
homogeneous
sectarian

3. Though in her home country of Denmark the singer always enjoyed an outpouring of support verging on the (i) _____, she continues overseas to confront certain impediments to success—evidence, perhaps, that not all art is (ii) _____.

Blank (i)

Blank (ii)

evanescent	fully decipherable
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adulatory	universally translatable
totalitarian	entirely tractable

4. That (i) _____ rhetoric is so easily (ii) _____ the language of patriotism is perhaps one of the greatest dangers of relying too heavily on the latter to bolster public morale.

Blank (i) Blank (ii)

pacifist	phased in
obsequious	couched in
bellicose	implied by

5. The very title of Evelyn Waugh's *Sword of Honour* trilogy suggests a robust and (i) _____ tale, and the bare outline seems to fit, as the protagonist Guy Crouchback serves as a commando, trains as a paratrooper, and is dispatched to Yugoslavia to aid the partisans. In fact, however, Crouchback is an extraordinarily (ii) _____ man, ill-at-ease with his younger and more (iii) _____ fellow officers, and almost never motivated by appetite or impulse.

Blank (i) Blank (ii) Blank (iii)

pell-mell	effete	vigorous
red-blooded	venerable	puerile
avant-garde	literary	timorous

6. In the contemporary climate of academic specialization, the typical university lecturer of only two centuries ago, who was expected to (i) _____ views on subjects as diverse as geography, physics, and the fine arts, seems a veritable (ii) _____, and we forget at our peril that it was precisely such breadth of learning that led to some of the great discoveries and even (iii) _____ shifts in the sciences, as when Darwin drew upon his knowledge of philosophy and economics to articulate his famous theory of evolution.

Blank (i) Blank (ii) Blank (iii)

propound	astrophysicist	hegemonic
gainsay	polymath	paradigmatic
demarcate	autodidact	minuscule

Questions 7–10 are based on the following reading passage.

Without a doubt, one of the pinnacle achievements of modern physics is the development of Maxwell's equations. Their beauty lies in their elegant simplicity, while the breadth and depth of Maxwell's equations speak for themselves. These four simple equations, coupled with the Lorenz Force Equation, form a full basis for modeling the behavior of an entire branch of physics: classical

5 electrodynamics and optics. Further, despite their deceptive simplicity, Maxwell's equations have withstood the test of time. While equations modeling most other fields of physics have been modified to accommodate new experimental results and theories, Maxwell's equations have not been altered since their original conception in 1861. Take, for instance, Einstein's theory of general relativity, first published in 1916. Although the equation governing general relativity was also

10 elegant and powerful, and laid the framework for most modern astrophysics, Einstein himself did not realize and correct an error within his equation until nearly fifteen years later. Newtonian mechanics has given way to more powerful theoretical frameworks and analytical mechanics has bent under the weight of quantum theory, but Maxwell's equations stand as originally written, tried and true.

15 Maxwell's four equations, the majority of which are less than twenty characters, are the mathematical formulation of four very simple ideas. First, any free electric charge will result in an electric field. Second, magnets do not have free charges, but are always paired together with a positive and negative end, yielding a magnetic field that has a looped structure. Third, a magnetic field that changes in time will result in an electric field and, fourth, an electric current or changing

20 electric field will produce a magnetic field. It is truly amazing that these

four simple rules,
unmodified, have been used to model all electric, magnetic, and optics
studies for more than
150 years.

7. Which of the following best expresses the author's intent in writing the passage?
- (A) To argue that Maxwell's equations are the most important equations in all of physics
 - (B) To explain the significance and meaning of Maxwell's equations
 - (C) To argue that Maxwell is a more important name in physics than Einstein
 - (D) To describe the implications of each of Maxwell's four equations
 - (E) To advocate further studies in the field of electromagnetism and optics

8. The author references Einstein's theory of general relativity for which of the following reasons?
- (A) To argue that the equations of electricity and magnetism are more important than the equations of relativity
 - (B) To provide an example of an equation that has been unwavering in time
 - (C) To advocate that Maxwell was a more important historical figure than Einstein
 - (D) To show that the implications of Maxwell's equations are far more powerful than general relativity
 - (E) To provide an example of an important equation that has been modified over time
9. Which of the following is not mentioned as a rule in any of Maxwell's four equations?
- (A) The looped structure of a magnetic field results from coupled charges.
 - (B) A magnetic field that changes in time results in an electric field.
 - (C) Any free electric charge results in an electric field.
 - (D) Magnetic fields are generated by unpaired magnetic charges.
 - (E) An electric current will produce a magnetic field.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

10. Which of the following can be correctly inferred from the passage?
- ☐ Maxwell's four equations form a full basis for modeling the behavior of classical electrodynamics and optics.
 - ☐ Einstein's equations of general relativity were incorrect as originally written in 1916.
 - ☐ Newtonian mechanics has been modified by quantum theory.

Question 11 is based on the following reading passage.

When people are told that some behavior is common, they are more likely to indulge in that behavior even when society disapproves of it. For example, if many people are shown littering in

an anti-litter advertisement, observers may subconsciously feel that littering is a normal, accepted activity. Thus, in order to influence behavior effectively, it is critical not to show or discuss anyone

5 engaging in an activity that the advertisement seeks to discourage.

11. Which of the following, if true, most undermines the argument's conclusion?

- (A) In a study, the most effective anti-smoking advertisement featured a person smoking amidst a disapproving crowd.
- (B) The most effective way to influence behavior is for parents to teach their children not to litter.
- (C) People who watch public service advertisements are typically aware that actors are merely pretending to engage in the disapproved behavior.
- (D) Teenagers are more likely to litter than the general population and less likely to be influenced by anti-litter advertisements.
- (E) In a study, the most effective anti-littering advertisement featured a pristine public park with children playing in the background.

For questions 12–15, select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

12. Although bonobos are a good deal more gregarious than chimpanzees, they do not hesitate to _____ those whose continued presence would otherwise undermine the safety or even equanimity of the group.

- ☐ patronize
- ☐ imperil
- ☐ oust
- ☐ jeopardize
- ☐ safeguard
- ☐ ostracize

13. Perhaps because his military training discouraged indirection, the National Incident Commander sought a _____ and open conversation with the Governor.

- ☐ plain
- ☐ profane
- ☐ frank
- ☐ brusque
- ☐ pert
- ☐ boisterous

14. Though croquet is proverbially a genteel game, it is not enough to play your own ball well—you must _____ your opponent's play as well, even when impeding his or her progress costs you strokes.

- ☐ scotch
- ☐ anticipate
- ☐ obviate
- ☐ underscore
- ☐ eliminate
- ☐ stymie

15. A report in General Hospital Psychiatry finds that panic attacks _____ the effects of diabetes, probably by interfering with patients' self-care, leading to a 75% increase in the frequency of symptoms.

- ☐ exacerbate
- ☐ hinder
- ☐ impede
- ☐ aggravate
- ☐ indemnify
- ☐ degrade

Question 16 is based on the following reading passage.

A certain medication used to treat migraine headaches acts by blocking pain receptors in the brain. When a person takes the medication within one hour after ingesting grapefruit or grapefruit juice, however, the effectiveness of the medication is significantly diminished. Researchers have determined that the grapefruit contains a compound that alters the shape of the pain receptors,

5 with the result that the medication can no longer bind with them completely.

16. Which of the following conclusions could be most properly drawn from the information given above?

- (A) If one takes the medication more than an hour after ingesting grapefruit, its effectiveness is not diminished.
- (B) Ingesting grapefruit after taking the medication does not diminish the effectiveness of the medication.
- (C) There is only one type of pain receptor in the brain.
- (D) The medication is fully effective only when it properly binds with its target pain receptors.
- (E) It is not possible to design a medication for migraine headaches that can bond with the altered receptors.

Questions 17–19 are based on the following reading passage.

Jeffrey C. Goldfarb suggests public-spirited dialogue need not happen after a traditional theater show, as it is most successful when it happens during a show. He believes that the live component of the theater distinguishes it from other media objects, and allows meaning to arise from the interaction between performers and audience as the performance is happening.

5 Whereas television or film, for instance, has no room for active dialogue, theater does because the performers and audience are present in the space together. The theatrical text becomes the medium, and the performers speak through the way in which they perform the text, while the audience does so through a number of culturally sanctioned actions: applause, laughter (both laughing with and laughing at), sighing, gasping, cheering, and booing. Goldfarb recounts a

10 particular occurrence surrounding a production of *Dziady* (Forefather's Eve) in Poland in 1968.

The show had been ordered to close and, on its last night, the theater was overcrowded with supporters. They were an enthusiastic, vocal audience who entered into "dialogue" with the actors and read into the play's anti-czarist language a critique of Soviet government. When the performance ended, the crowd went into the streets to protest. The play's content became

15 political through dialogue and, in a way, the theater building held a public sphere where an anti-Soviet audience gathered to affirm their political sentiment before taking it to the street in open, public protest.

What Goldfarb does not write about is how uncommon such an event is, especially for today's American theatergoers. Augusto Boal was probably closer to the reality of current

20 Western theater when he complained about how still everyone is expected to keep during any performance, constantly policed by other audience members. The high prices on professional theater tickets and an elitist value on cultural tradition (versus popular, technology-based mass media) combine to produce an aristocratic culture surrounding theater. In this manner, a “high class” code of etiquette is imposed upon the performance space, dictating that audience members

25 are to remain quiet: the actors speak, the audience listens. As Boal criticizes in *Legislative Theatre*, traditional form sets up a relationship where “everything travels from stage to auditorium, everything is transported, transferred in that direction—emotions, ideas, morality!—and nothing goes the other way.” He argues that this relationship encourages passivity and thus cancels theater’s political potential.

17. The primary purpose of the passage is to

- (A) lay out a viewpoint and present a perceived omission
- (B) articulate an original thesis
- (C) deride an established tradition
- (D) contrast two opposing ideas
- (E) reconcile two opposing ideas

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

18. The author implies which of the following about theater?

- ☐ In some social settings, passivity is considered a virtue.
- ☐ Augusto Boal would approve of the events of the closing performance of *Dziady*.
- ☐ Physical presence has a bearing on the creation of active dialogue.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

19. Which of the following must be true according to the passage?

- ☐ By contemporary American social mores, the Polish audience described would be exhibiting other than “high class” behavior.
- ☐ *Dziady* criticized the Soviet regime.
- ☐ Theater is more educational than film.

Question 20 is based on the following reading passage.

In the 1930’s, Pablum, the first pre-cooked, dried baby food, was sold in America. Pablum took its name from the Latin word *pabulum*, which meant “foodstuff,” and was also used in medicine to refer to a passively absorbed source of nutrition. While Pablum contained vitamin D and thus helped to prevent rickets in an era in which child malnutrition was still widespread,

5 ironically, the word *pablum*—undoubtedly influenced by the negative connotation of the word *pabulum* as well as the physical reality of a mushy, bland, rehydrated cereal—today means “trite, naïve, or simplistic ideas or writings; intellectual pap.”

20. Which of the following best describes the irony of the shifting meanings of the word *pablum*?

- (A) A word for a passively absorbed source of nutrition is used for a substance actively fed to babies.
- (B) Many babies would have died of malnutrition without Pablum.

- (C) A word derived from Latin is still in use in modern English, although the meaning has changed somewhat.
- (D) A cereal designed to be nourishing now lends its name to a word for something lacking in substance.
- (E) Just as babies are fed bland food, *pabulum* today means “bland writing or ideas.”

Answers to Verbal Practice Section 3

1. **An iterative.** Although one might think that Picasso “[saw] the world” in an unusual way, his artistic process actually progressed from style to another “through a series of ever more abstract steps.” The correct answer, “iterative” means involving repetition or reiteration. None of the other choices fits the idea of a movement that both takes place in steps and has a definite direction—it cannot be “random” or “dicey,” since it has a clear aim and structure, and neither “obsessive” nor “historical” reflects the required meaning.

2. **Homogeneous.** According to the sentence, “ethnic differences” are not the root cause of “mutual mistrust” because surveys show that trust is no higher in [blank] neighborhoods than in racially mixed neighborhoods. The blank must describe areas without many differences. If you borrow those very words, you might anticipate something like unmixed, the same throughout. “Homogeneous” has just this meaning. “Militant” and “sectarian” (partisan) are a pair, but it would be expected that trust would be lower in racially partisan or combative neighborhoods, so these answers are traps for anyone who misses the contrast that the sentence sets up with “mixed communities.” Similarly, “parochial” and “provincial,” which both mean unsophisticated or narrow-minded, are also traps.

3. **Adulatory, universally translatable.** If the singer enjoys an “outpouring of support,” you’d expect it to “verge” on extremely positive support—in this case, “adulation,” which means extreme adoration. “Evanescent” (fleeting) and “totalitarian” (dictatorial) don’t fit the desired meaning. The fact that her art is not as well received in other places means that it might not carry over, or “translate,” to those places. The two wrong answers for the second blank, which contain two words related to being understandable or usable, “decipherable” and “tractable,” are close, but do not capture the sense of artistic adaptation implied in the second clause.

4. **Bellicose, couched in.** Since the “rhetoric” (persuasive language) presents a danger, you are looking for something dangerous: “bellicose,” meaning aggressive or warlike, is a perfect fit. “Obsequious” means servile and “pacifist” means favoring or supporting peace, so neither of those seems particularly dangerous. The bellicose rhetoric is expressed in, phrased in, or laid out in the language of patriotism; “couched in” means the same thing as laid out in. This is a better fit than “implied by,” since to say that patriotism implies bellicose rhetoric is to make the assumption that patriotism is aggressive in itself, rather than simply yielding easily to aggression. It doesn’t

make logical sense to say “phased in the language of patriotism,” so this choice looks like a trap for someone reading quickly who might misread it as “phrased in.”

5. **Red-blooded, effete, vigorous.** The first word should echo “robust” and fit the military derring-do described in the “bare outline.” “Red-blooded” suggests virility and heartiness. “Pell-mell” (jumbled or disorderly) and “avant-garde” (innovative) are great GRE words, but don’t echo “robust.” “In fact, however” suggests that Crouchback is not actually robust, and he is further described as “ill-at-ease,” and “never motivated by appetite or impulse.” These suggest something like feeble or impotent. “Effete” is even better, as it describes someone lacking vigor and energy. “Venerable” (deserving of reverence) cannot be correct because it is strongly positive, which doesn’t fit with the sentence’s description of Crouchback. “Literary” is a theme trap. Although the sentences are describing a book, the second blank is specifically describing a character in the book, and the character is not a person concerned with literature. For the third blank, the phrasing “and more” suggests a contrast with Crouchback; you’re not looking, then, for something that is a pure synonym for “younger” but for something that goes against the description of Crouchback as “effete.” The best answer is “vigorous.” “Puerile” (immature) is a trap—it seems to echo “younger,” but the sentence

does not suggest that these younger officers are immature. “Timorous” (timid) is a reversal trap. It is a match for the description of Crouchback, not the desired contrast, and so cannot be correct.

6. Propound, polymath, paradigmatic. The “university lecturer of two centuries ago” was expected to have, or to set out, views on diverse subjects. To “propound” a view is to set it forward or lay it out. “Demarcate” (mark the boundaries of) is not a good fit; “gainsay” means to contradict, and while the lecturer may have the ability to contradict views on diverse subjects, this doesn’t make as much sense as laying them out. A person with a wide, practically encyclopedic breadth of knowledge is a “polymath.” “Astrophysicist” doesn’t fit, since it is only the name of one specialized branch of study; an “autodidact” is someone who is self-taught. In the final blank, you are looking for something stronger than “great discoveries”: something like a change (or shift) in the way science is done, or the way scientific theories are understood—the theory of evolution is an example of such a change. A paradigm is a model or template for doing something, so “paradigmatic” is an excellent match for this blank. “Hegemonic” (describing a dominant or ruling power) is too strong. “Minuscule” (tiny) is a trap for anyone who didn’t notice the “and even,” which indicates that the blank has to be filled by a word that goes further than “great discoveries.”

7. (B). The author uses the first paragraph of the passage to explain why Maxwell’s equations are so significant. The second paragraph discusses the meaning of each of Maxwell’s equations. Answer choice (B) presents both of these ideas. Further, choice (A) incorrectly states that this passage argues that Maxwell’s equations are the most important in physics. Choice (C) incorrectly compares Maxwell to Einstein. Choice (D) is too narrow; it fails to address the author’s intent in writing the first paragraph. Finally, the author does not advocate for further studies as described in answer choice (E).

8. (E). Before introducing Einstein’s theory of general relativity, the author states that Maxwell’s equations have “withstood the test of time.” The author goes on to say that, in contrast, although Einstein’s equations are “elegant and powerful,” they had to be modified not long after their postulation. Therefore, the author uses Einstein’s theory of general relativity to provide an example of an important equation that has been modified over time, as answer choice (E) describes. Answer (A) is incorrect as the author does not directly compare the fields of electricity and magnetism and relativity. Answer (B) is incorrect as it states the opposite of what is mentioned in the paragraph. Choice (C) incorrectly compares Maxwell to Einstein as opposed to their equations.

Finally, choice (D) is incorrect because the implications of Maxwell's equations are never compared to those of Einstein's general relativity.

9. **(D).** The passage states that magnets do not have free charges but are always paired together with a positive and negative end. Therefore, answer choice (D) is not mentioned, as it claims that magnetic fields are generated by unpaired magnetic charges. Answer choice (A) is presented in Maxwell's second equation: paired, or coupled, charges yield a looped magnetic field. Answer (B) is presented in Maxwell's third equation, choice (C) is presented in Maxwell's first equation, and choice (E) is presented in Maxwell's fourth equation.

10. **2nd only.** The passage states that Einstein did not realize and correct an error in his theory of general relativity until 15 years after the theory was postulated in 1916. Therefore, Einstein's original equations of general relativity must have been incorrect as written in 1916. The first statement cannot be inferred as the passage says that Maxwell's equations, coupled with the Lorenz Force Equation, form the full basis for electrodynamics and optics. The third statement incorrectly infers that Newtonian mechanics has been modified by quantum theory, whereas the last sentence in the first paragraph states that it is analytical mechanics, and not Newtonian mechanics, that has been modified by quantum theory.

11. **(A).** According to the argument, if “many” people are shown littering in an anti-litter ad, then those watching the ad “may” feel that littering is normal or accepted. The author concludes from this that the “bad” behavior should not be shown or discussed at all in an ad that seeks to discourage this “bad” behavior. The question asks for a piece of information that weakens the author’s conclusion. Choice (A) illustrates that the author’s assumption is not valid: a very effective anti-smoking ad featured one person smoking. That is, an effective ad did feature someone engaging in the negative behavior. While answer (B) may be true, the conclusion is not concerned with the most effective way to influence a particular type of behavior. Regarding choice (C), the conclusion focuses on what not to do (show or discuss the discouraged behavior) in order to influence behavior in an effective manner. That observers are aware that the ads may feature actors does not influence that particular conclusion. Regarding choice (D), the conclusion is not concerned with whether advertisements are more or less effective than other means for influencing teenagers. Finally, answer choice (E) strengthens the author’s position: the best advertisement does not show the behavior that the ad seeks to discourage, however, the question asks for a weakener, not a strengthener.

12. **Oust, ostracize.** “Although” implies an action that you wouldn’t ordinarily expect from “gregarious,” or friendly, animals; they would be unfriendly. The “otherwise” in “continued presence would otherwise undermine” implies that bonobos sometimes do something to exclude others. “Oust” (expel) and “ostracize” (exclude from a group) have slightly different meanings but work because they give the sentence the same overall meaning. “Imperil” and “jeopardize” both mean something like “endanger,” but this pair does not oppose “continued presence” as directly as do “oust” and “ostracize.” Neither “patronize” nor “safeguard” means anything similar to exclude, so they are not correct either.

13. **Plain, frank.** Since his training “discouraged indirection,” you can expect a word like direct. The word “open” suggests that the Commander wanted to be candid. “Plain” and “frank” both suggest unornamented but not necessarily unfriendly speech. “Brusque,” on the other hand, suggests a discourteous bluntness. “Profane” (irreverent or disrespectful), “pert” (attractive in a neat and stylish way), and “boisterous” (rowdy or rambunctious) do not fit with the desired meaning.

14. **Scotch, stymie.** “Though” suggests that the word is opposed to gentility, and so you might expect something like behave coarsely toward. The word “impeding” provides a more precise idea: the blank requires something like

aggressively block. “Scotch,” which means abruptly end, and “stymie,” which means thwart, are both good. “Obviate” (prevent or preclude), and “eliminate” are tempting, but don’t quite have the right meaning because they imply preventing the other player from playing, rather than impeding his or her progress.” The word “anticipate” is also tempting, because it is often helpful to be able to anticipate an opponent’s play in a game, but this word has no match and so cannot be correct. “Underscore” (emphasize) doesn’t have a match either but also doesn’t fit meaning-wise.

15. **Exacerbate, aggravate.** Since panic attacks eventually lead to “a 75% increase in the frequency of symptoms,” they make the effects of diabetes much worse. “Exacerbate” and “aggravate” have precisely this meaning. In some contexts, “hinder” and “impede,” which mean to block something, would mean to make worse, but blocking the symptoms of a disease would actually help. “Degrade” is a negative word, meaning demote, debase, or impair, but none of its meanings work here. “Indemnify,” which means to secure against hurt or loss, doesn’t fit either.

16. **(D).** The passage says that the medication has been shown to be less effective when taken after grapefruit consumption because grapefruit consumption has been shown to affect the binding of the medication to pain receptors. It can be concluded that effective binding is needed to enable the full effectiveness of the medication, as answer choice (D) states. Regarding choice (A), the passage says that grapefruit or grapefruit juice ingested within an hour will “significantly” diminish the effectiveness of the medication. This does not mean that grapefruit or grapefruit juice ingested more than an hour before the medication is ingested will have no effect on the medication; it may have a mild effect. Regarding choice (B), the passage speaks only of taking the medication after ingesting grapefruit; it says nothing about what might happen when eating grapefruit after taking the medication. As for choice (C), while the passage discusses one kind of pain receptor, this does not mean that these are the only pain receptors in the brain. Answer (E) is out of scope. The passage offers no information about possible research or design of new migraine medications.

17. **(A).** The author presents Goldfarb’s view in the first paragraph and then highlights an omission in Goldfarb’s thesis in the second paragraph. Answer choice (B) is incorrect because “original” contradicts the text—the author recounts the opinions of Goldfarb and Boal. Choice (C) is wrong, as the author does not “deride” anything, and the word “established” is not supported by the text. Answer (D) is eliminated because there is no contrast nor opposing ideas—Goldfarb neglected to mention that something he discussed was quite uncommon, but Goldfarb’s ideas do not oppose Boal’s. Similarly, regarding choice (E), no reconciliation is attempted and there are still no opposing ideas.

18. **1st, 2nd, and 3rd.** The first statement must be true, as the second paragraph indicates that some American audiences consider passive behavior polite. The second statement must be true since, according to the last sentence of the second paragraph, Boal criticized passivity because it “cancels theater’s political potential.” The third statement is a good match for this sentence from the first paragraph: “Whereas television or film, for instance, has no room for active dialogue, theater does because the performers and audience are present in the space together.”

19. **1st only.** In the first paragraph, the passage describes the interaction between the Polish audience and the cast; in the second paragraph, the author states that American “high class” behavior involves remaining quiet in the theater. Together, these two pieces of information support the first statement.

The second statement is incorrect—the passage states that the audience “read into,” or interpreted, the anti-czarist language as a critique of the Soviet regime; while the play may very well have been intended that way, this cannot be inferred from the given information. The comparison concerning education in the third statement is unjustified because the passage only states that the live element is unique to theater.

20. **(D)**. The word “irony” is an outcome of events contrary to what was, or might have been, expected. Choice (A) is not ironic—the medical term *pabulum* means a passively absorbed nutrition, and babies receive the baby food Pablum in a passive way. Choices (B), (C), and (E) may be true, but also do not fit the definition of ironic. Answer (D) is indeed ironic—the word now means nearly the opposite of what was originally intended. Only answer choice (D) presents this kind of ironic twist.