



# Text Completion Drills

## DRILL 1

Directions: For each blank select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

Question 1

Just as different people can have very different personalities, so too can pets—even those of the same species and breed possess varied \_\_\_\_\_.

initiations
implementations
aptitudes
rationalizations
temperaments

Question 2

Frustrated by her husband’s lack of \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, Lisa tried to motivate him to \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ for

greater

things.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
initiative	mitigate
lassitude	invigorate
eloquence	strive

Question 3

At the edges of the universe astronomers have discovered \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ objects called quasars, which have given scientists the first direct \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ of the existence of stars in distant galaxies.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
remote	corroboration
paranormal	distortion
viscous	intuition

Question 4

If one were asked who transmitted the first radio broadcast of the human voice, one might guess the \_\_\_\_\_ inventor Guglielmo Marconi, but in fact the feat was accomplished by the much \_\_\_\_\_ less \_\_\_\_\_ well-known \_\_\_\_\_ Reginald \_\_\_\_\_ Fessenden.

infamous
renowned
contingent
cogent
insistent

Question 5

The difference in economic terms between a bond and a note is still observed by the United States Treasury, but in other markets the \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ the two terms has become unimportant and the two words are used \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
distinction between	statistically
similarity of	interchangeably
usefulness of	differentially

Question 6

Now known as Administrative Professionals’ Day, Secretaries’ Day was created in 1952 by Harry F. Klemfuss, a public relations professional who \_\_\_\_\_ the value and significance of administrative assistants in order to attract more women to the profession.

proscribed
touted
refuted
undermined
admonished

Question 7

When editing manuscripts, literary scholars must remain acutely aware of textual \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_; the differences among extant versions of the same work—resulting from printing errors, editing demands, or constant revisions—often make it \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ for scholars to publish truly \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ texts.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
conformities	pejorative	cosmetic
anomalies	daunting	innovative
congruities	banal	authoritative

Question 8

With a similar contrast between a partly cloudy sky and a dark street, the cover of the recent rock CD \_\_\_\_\_ a famous surrealist painting from the early 1900s.

admires
obfuscates
evokes
disenchants
sanctions

Question 9

Although John F. Kennedy was known for his carefree flag football games, Gerald Ford should be \_\_\_\_\_ as our football president: He turned down offers to play for two National Football League teams in order to pursue a career in public service.

relegated
abrogated
annulled
criticized
apotheosized

Question 10

Though many \_\_\_\_\_ endlessly praised his work, Dan often wished for some honest criticism.

sycophants
pedants
benefactors
adversaries
mavericks

Question 11

The losing game show contestant experienced a strange mix of \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_; although she was disappointed that she didn't win the million dollar prize, she was still \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ about returning to her normal life.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
despondency	ambivalence	confounded
fruition	elation	euphoric
decisiveness	equivocation	overwrought

Question 12

The magazine article from 1956 decrying the \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ of sequels and remakes flooding the nation’s movie theaters that summer \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ the claim that such derivative films are a uniquely 21st-century phenomenon.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
dearth	underscored
quality	belied
glut	predicted

Question 13

Although considerable \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ resources had already been expended on the new drug, development had to be halted due to adverse effects during human testing; once hailed as a kind of \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ that could be used to treat numerous physical and mental ailments, the drug will likely be remembered only as a financial albatross that bankrupted its developers.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
assiduous	sinecure
pecuniary	mendicant
wholesome	panacea

Question 14

Sheila would often \_\_\_\_\_ about her boyfriend’s habits, but everyone could tell that her seemingly bitter complaints were mostly facetious.

waffle
rail
dissemble
grieve
mince

Question 15

Although the stress tests given to European banks are supposed to reassure \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ investors by distinguishing the reliable financial institutions from the more \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ ones, the lack of candor from those reporting has made the test results \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
prolix	precarious	monetary
cantankerous	staunch	suspect
timorous	venerated	sound

DRILL 2

Directions: For each blank select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

Question 1

Carey and Skylar’s constant bickering dismayed their mother, who had grown weary of their \_\_\_\_\_.

squabbles
laudations
affectations
procrastinations
humor

Question 2

The Mayor was so \_\_\_\_\_ by the long trial that, despite his eventual acquittal, he admitted his failing health and declined to run for re-election.

distraught
exonerated
inspired
debilitated
vindicated

Question 3

Despite her hearing loss and \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ painful arthritis, Maj was a pleasant and surprisingly \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ dog.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
mildly	enervated
chronically	agile
sympathetically	acute

Question 4

While any bird egg will suffice for the tradition of egg decorating, those with \_\_\_\_\_ shells are preferred, so as to prevent breaking when their contents are hollowed.

tenuous
pristine
permeable
resilient
obtuse

Question 5

Hand-cuffing the two \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ men stopped the \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ violence, but did nothing to cease the volley of \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ they continued to yell at each other.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
prevaricating	corporeal	epithets
moiling	rhetorical	blows
belligerent	histrionic	projectiles

Question 6

Though she willingly admitted that the \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ town was scenically beautiful, Christine could not help but feel it was \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ backwater compared to her previous home in the city.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
sprawling	a cultural
desolate	an attractive
bucolic	a picaresque

Question 7

The Roman Empire’s military and political \_\_\_\_\_ was often challenged by the smaller but ambitious Persians, who for centuries fought wars intended to usurp Rome’s dominion.

heterodoxy
methodology
hegemony
impotence
timorousness

Question 8

The chairman’s \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ comments about the environmental disaster caused people to grow even angrier at the company, \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ a situation that was already \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
compassionate	edifying	parlous
glib	exacerbating	inured
solicitous	mollifying	compliant

Question 9

Allowing distinguished figures to \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ on their experiences, lives and wisdom learned, the memoir genre has given us such significant works as Ulysses S. Grant’s *Personal Memoirs*, an interesting, well-written account of his days as a general and a president. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the genre also provides an outlet for anyone who wants to share any \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ experience, as evidenced by the \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ release of a fly-by-night internet celebrity’s memoir next month.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
extemporize	apocryphal	laudable
expatiate	petty	laughable
exagitate	eccentric	impending

Question 10

Although Father’s Day, first celebrated in 1908, is now an honored tradition in the United

States, it did not always enjoy such \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_; rather, unofficial \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ from prominent figures such as Woodrow Wilson and William Jennings Bryan were required before Americans \_\_\_\_\_ embraced \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ holiday.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
decorum	opprobrium
ennui	accolades
esteem	hyperbole

Question 11

Some conservative theologians subscribe to the belief of Biblical \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ as far as the Scripture never being wrong when it comes to revealing God, his vision, and his news to humanity. However, other literalist Christians believe the \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ refers to the Bible being without error in every way, including matters of chronology, history, biology, sociology, politics, et \_\_\_\_\_ cetera.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
inerrancy	centurion
fallacy	erudition
interpretation	doctrine

Question 12

When he was alive, the magnate was described as arrogant, bitterly critical, and \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_\_. Nevertheless, the speaker, who was often the victim of his legendary \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_\_, was able to find \_\_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ things \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ say \_\_\_\_\_ about \_\_\_\_\_ him.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
efficacious	diatribes	magnanimous
bellicose	encomiums	imperious
chastened	eulogies	vindictive

Question 13

When the mother \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_\_ the disruptive child, she did not expect his siblings to encourage malevolent behavior; rather, she anticipated that the children would mock and \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ their troublesome brother and through this punishment, he would refrain from harassing \_\_\_\_\_ others.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
touted	deride
calumniated	laud
pilloried	renege

Question 14

Many city-dwellers have a \_\_\_\_\_ of knowledge about their food sources: indeed, a number of \_\_\_\_\_ people \_\_\_\_\_ have \_\_\_\_\_ never \_\_\_\_\_ even \_\_\_\_\_ seen \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ live \_\_\_\_\_ chicken \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ cow.



pith
dross
surfeit
dirge
dearth

Question 15

Most fans dismissed the press release detailing the comedian’s ill health as a hoax, as she had frequently \_\_\_\_\_ her audience by feigning a physical ailment as part of her stage routine.

reconnoitered
hoodwinked
lambasted
vitiated
derided



DRILL 3

Directions: For each blank select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

Question 1

An aloe plant may be an excellent choice for those who are interested in gardening but keep busy schedules; aloes easily \_\_\_\_\_ without frequent watering or careful maintenance.

facilitate
ingest
consume
flourish
advance

Question 2

Howard’s friends recognize that his nervous \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ on meeting strangers belies an underlying gregariousness, while new acquaintances often \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ perceive him as churlish.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
chatter	falsely
silences	accurately
banter	quickly

Question 3

The artist, who specialized in \_\_\_\_\_ scenes, eagerly sat down to paint his favorite landscape—a peaceful pasture filled with hills and valleys.

halcyon
perennial
bucolic
eclectic
quiescent

Question 4

Her performance review noted that Jill suffers from a lack of \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, and often makes insulting remarks despite her best efforts to be polite; worse, the review went on to point out that it happens regularly, even though she has no intention of \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ anyone.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
candor	exacerbating
tact	lauding
deference	denigrating

Question 5

The administration had nothing but contempt for the ultimate Frisbee team and frequently spoke \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ it.

didactically
affably
jocularly
morosely
disdainfully

Question 6

By disclosing and explaining the details of her personal finances before they could be used against her, the council member \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ her opponent’s attacks during the campaign. Rather than waiting to react to the inevitable criticism should her opponent find something questionable, her campaign manager thought this strategy would be more \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
prefigured	enigmatic
decried	pragmatic
precluded	dogmatic

Question 7

Lindsay, cognizant of the effects of second-hand smoke but hesitant to inconvenience her party guests, \_\_\_\_\_, as she was unsure whether to ask people to smoke outside during the party.

dissembled
vacillated
equivocated
disparaged
concurred

Question 8

The literary agent took \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ at the statement that slush piles are nothing but \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_; he argued that several major authors, including Stephenie Meyer, Judith Guest, and even Anne Frank, were discovered in such piles of unsolicited, soon-to-be-rejected manuscripts.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
gratification	requisitions
accession	dross
umbrage	compendiums

Question 9

While some academics applaud the modernist movement in many universities to treat history and fiction as inherently related fields, there remains a vocal group of traditional historians and literary critics who \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ such \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ worldview and insist that the \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ nature of the two disciplines must be inviolate.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
venerate	a dogmatic	separate
deride	an axiomatic	logical
celebrate	a heretical	intertwined

Question 10

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* was one of the first major American novels to be written in \_\_\_\_\_ voice, using the unaffected language of the common person describing everyday events.

an erudite
a reticent
an urbane
a quotidian
a quixotic

Question 11

The question of when, if ever, history can be considered \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ is contentious, to say the least. One could argue, for example, that any evaluation of the 180-year-old presidency of Andrew Jackson would likely be \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ the controversies that define evaluations of more contemporaneous political leaders, and yet a plethora of passionately held views continues to polarize. The \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ of any one judgment is perhaps the one certainty surrounding the issue.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
apolitical	characteristic of	objectivity
tendentious	free from	mellifluousness
unexpurgated	mired in	subjectivity

Question 12

The \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ state of the city’s public schools certainly demands immediate attention, but it is important that our remedies be thoughtful and comprehensive. While appropriate measures of teacher performance and subsequent accountability will undoubtedly play a vital role in revitalizing our schools, it would be \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ the many other factors at play, factors as widely divergent as the system’s deteriorating physical capital and students’ home lives. Even the most talented teachers are challenged, for example, to \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ of an unstable or abusive home environment on a student’s ability to learn.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
execrable	an error to neglect	terminate the ability
tendentious	a solution to ignore	mitigate the effects
transient	a panacea to solve	exacerbate the influence

Question 13

With his relentless energy but equally diminutive attention span, Garlin \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ his talents on several potentially exciting but uncompleted projects, much to the dismay of his friends who, while venerating his enthusiasm, \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ his unfocused nature.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
squandered	impugned
evinced	parried
burnished	defalcated

Question 14

The origins of La Tomatina, an annual Spanish event in which participants hurl overripe

tomatoes at one another for up to two hours, are \_\_\_\_\_, with possible theories including a friendly food fight and a volley aimed at a bad musician.

esoteric
ephemeral
apposite
nebulous
ubiquitous

Question 15

The \_\_\_\_\_ group in the adjoining room made it difficult for students taking the mid-term examination to concentrate.

obstreperous
quiescent
rapacious
enervated
antagonistic

DRILL 4

Directions: For each blank select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

Question 1

Susan \_\_\_\_\_ the theater; she bought tickets for all the shows put on by the local drama group.

abhorred
cherished
owned
loathed
managed

Question 2

The so-called “thieves’ cant” was a \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ language created by thieves, beggars, and swindlers in England in the 1530s to allow them to communicate without the authorities knowing what was going on. Although the cant was widely used by criminal subcultures five hundred years ago, it is now mostly \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_, found only in literature and fantasy role-playing games.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
clandestine	obsolete
bourgeois	pervasive
sacrilegious	contemporary

Question 3

Currently \_\_\_\_\_ in philately, Roger decided to pursue his new hobby because he had already become \_\_\_\_\_ an \_\_\_\_\_ expert \_\_\_\_\_ numismatist.

a dilettante
a philanderer
a mentor
a specialist
an eccentric

Question 4

While the \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ structures of Lego projects are often impressive, it’s the internal \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ such as flower pots, sink fixtures, and working windows that make them truly magical.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
august	minutiae
external	stratagems
incidental	proboscises

Question 5

Prior to taking on the new invader, the defending army had engaged in arduous combat; it is likely that the \_\_\_\_\_ resulting from waging two battles in two days played a part in its

subsequent

defeat.

bellicosity
pugnacity
pacification
enervation
aggravation

Question 6

Often considered one of the best films in cinematic history, *Breakfast at Tiffany’s* faced several \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ during production. The film’s star, Audrey Hepburn, almost refused the part, afraid it would \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ her pristine image; further, the film faced intense scrutiny from censors, and the director had to make several compromises to \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ them.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
complications	augment	assuage
harbingers	tarnish	refute
advancements	peruse	discomfit

Question 7

The \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ of medieval papal power was the pontificate of Innocent III, whose immense personal prestige cowed monarchs from the powerful Philip II “Augustus” of France to the \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ John of England, who earned such derisive epithets as “Lackland” and “Softsword.” Even before Innocent’s tenure, though, the involvement of Pope Henry IV in the Investiture Conflict had begun to hint at the tension between spiritual and \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ leadership that would eventually boil over in the Protestant Reformation.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
zenith	feckless	archaic
perigee	intemperate	temporal
antipathy	resplendent	consecrated

Question 8

Ironically, the myth of Martin Van Buren’s \_\_\_\_\_ was due largely to circumstances that had little to do with Van Buren himself; in reality, of all the U.S. presidents since Andrew Jackson, Van Buren exceeded the average in education, intellect, and experience.

profundity
stoicism
mediocrity
aptitude
malleability

Question 9

Some argue that profiting from terrible suffering by publishing photographic books about natural disasters is shameless \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, but perhaps the practice has the \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ effect of helping us to appreciate the humanity of people living far way.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
presumptuous	salutary
idolatrous	specious
profiteering	sedulous

Question 10

While she may have answered him truthfully—in the strictest sense of the word—it became clear to Sergei after the incident that Sheryl had actually been trying to \_\_\_\_\_.

vituperate
obfuscate
illuminate
covet
desiccate

Question 11

Certainly a roundabout narrative, the book—much like the others in the author’s pseudo-autobiographical series—proved to be unpopular among those who preferred \_\_\_\_\_ to loquaciousness.

succinctness
enlargement
garrulousness
gregariousness
perspicacity

Question 12

During training to handle \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ arguments, the students on the debate team practiced techniques for quickly coming up with remarks that were \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ even when they might know very little about the topic and would have only a few minutes to prepare.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
spurious	sanctimonious
extemporaneous	germane
contentious	seditious

Question 13

Although they stood with the congressman in a tenuous display of solidarity, the incensed commissioners \_\_\_\_\_ could \_\_\_\_\_ not \_\_\_\_\_ conceal \_\_\_\_\_ their \_\_\_\_\_.

camaraderie
rancor
adulation
facetiousness
hubris

Question 14

The \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ with which the second-string quarterback managed to turn the tide of the game shocked even those who were familiar with his skills. Previously, he was more infamous



for his deceitful \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ off the field than for anything he had accomplished with a ball in his hand, but his immediate impact on the decisive game is likely to turn some of his erstwhile doubters into \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ fans.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
indolence	petulance	recumbent
alacrity	chicanery	ardent
probity	recidivism	fetid

Question 15

The magazine article was \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ about the police commissioner’s accomplishments. Although some lawyers’ groups argued against the appropriateness of his tactics, the double-digit drop in the crime rate since his appointment suggests that all the journalist’s praise was \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
effusive	specious
tentative	presumptuous
bombastic	apposite

DRILL 5

Directions: For each blank select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

Question 1

Rich found the chance shift in the path of the storm \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, as he was hoping to use the excuse of heavy weather to \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ more much needed time. With the deadline \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ and his credibility on the line, he will have to find a way to get the presentation done.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
hilarious	deplete	deferred
disappointing	garner	nigh
successful	refuse	audacious

Question 2

The defense attorney’s \_\_\_\_\_ closing statement was not enough to sway the jurors in his client’s favor; stirring words could not conceal the defendant’s evident guilt.

deceptive
eloquent
lengthy
crafty
impromptu

Question 3

A recent Harris Poll indicated that many professions have seen a decline in their \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ over the past several years; teaching, in contrast, has \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ more respect over the same time period.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
ranks	reflected
prestige	squandered
fortunes	reaped

Question 4

In 1770s colonial New England, Puritans \_\_\_\_\_ the celebration of Christmas, which they considered to be an odious reminder of the Pope’s tyranny.

placated
extolled
circumscribed
tempered
repudiated

Question 5

The \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ lining of an eggshell is \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_, and this is the reason using salt water to boil an egg can make the egg taste salty. For the same reason, it is important not to store eggs in the refrigerator with uncovered, strong-smelling food items since the scents can

\_\_\_\_(iii)\_\_\_\_ the egg, causing it to taste bad.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
yolk	impermeable	permeate
membrane	flexible	addle
albumen	porous	infect

Question 6

Many dog owners treat their pets too \_\_\_\_\_, forgetting that canines have evolved in competitive environments in which emotional coddling was a sign of weakness.

aggressively
quixotically
fortuitously
indulgently
belligerently

Question 7

As part of Marina Abramovičs groundbreaking exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, the artist herself logged 700 hours over the course of 3 months in a small chair. Visitors were invited to sit across from the performance artist’s stolid countenance, for whatever \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ they desired, the \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ sitting for only a few moments and the bold sitting for several hours; the visitors thus became \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ components of the piece, wittingly \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ unwittingly.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
motive	irresolute	integral
tenure	boorish	culpable
approbation	genial	nascent

Question 8

Repulsed by \_\_\_\_\_ employees, the executive informed his staff that he preferred constructive \_\_\_\_\_ criticism to \_\_\_\_\_ calculated flattery.

natty
profligate
rapacious
sententious
obsequious

Question 9

Students may consider modernist works such as James Joyce’s *Finnegan’s Wake* to be more \_\_\_\_\_ than Victorian prose: Victorian narratives are linear and predictable, while Joyce’s tortuous plots are fragmented and fickle, and they confound the reader.

banal
recondite
elegiac
mundane
panegyric

Question 10

It struck Professor Steele as \_\_\_\_\_(i)\_\_\_\_\_ that the eighteenth-century Bavarians devoted such effort to building houses of worship because at the same time, the rest of Europe’s religious fervor was \_\_\_\_\_(ii)\_\_\_\_\_, while movements such as nihilism gained steam.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
felicitous	weltering
anomalous	forswearing
querulous	dissipating

Question 11

Ancient generals, lacking modern technologies such as radio and satellite communication, often found that one of the most significant challenges in warfare was accurate \_\_\_\_\_ of the myriad of changes on the battlefield or in the campaign.

fortification
adulteration
appraisal
accretion
adumbration

Question 12

In psychological literature, the “sleeper effect” refers to the phenomenon in which a persuasive message from a trustworthy source loses \_\_\_\_\_ over time, while the efficacy of a message from a less credible source simultaneously increases.

prescience
erudition
evasiveness
control
cogency

Question 13

Pundits do not believe that the sporadic calls for her ouster—outcries spurred by both her unusual lifestyle and social policies—have compelled the monarch to seriously consider \_\_\_\_\_.

abnegation
vacillation
castigation
asceticism
misanthropy

Question 14

For some time, scientists refused to believe that Earth’s continents are made of moving tectonic plates. Physicists, who could not devise a theory to explain the now-accepted process, rejected the theory outright, as did geologists, who were far too \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ in their thinking, thereby \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ the advancement of science for a time.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
officious	checking
assiduous	limning
dogmatic	asseverating

Question 15

E.L. Doctorow argues that the role of artists in the 21st century is to provide a reminder that even in \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ world, one thing is \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_: America will always be a nation of \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ free expression.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
an arcadian	egregious	unfettered
an idiosyncratic	autonomous	circumscribed
a volatile	immutable	jingoistic

DRILL 6

Directions: For each blank select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

Question 1

Dolly Madison, the wife of President James Madison, was known especially for her \_\_\_\_\_, remaining calm even as the British invaded Washington D.C. during the War of 1812.

impracticality
cynicism
equanimity
zeal
malevolence

Question 2

Seth was extremely \_\_\_\_\_, and did not enjoy activities that required effort to meet new people.

extroverted
introverted
gregarious
lackluster
jaded

Question 3

Though Denise’s colleagues occasionally took the distant look on her face to mean that she was \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, she was actually thoroughly \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ of what was happening in the office at all times.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
truant	insensible
oblivious	sedulous
fetching	cognizant

Question 4

Some religious leaders have declared inaction on environmental issues to be \_\_\_\_\_, because it may now be considered a sin to pollute the earth.

fathomable
splenetic
iniquitous
diaphanous
dilatory

Question 5

Because he ate high-calorie snacks while riding the exercise bike, Julie ridiculed DeRay’s workout \_\_\_\_\_ philosophy \_\_\_\_\_ as \_\_\_\_\_.

fatuous
pithy
indolent
hackneyed
precarious

Question 6

Marty could not help but view the glass as half-empty: for example, when the economy turned around and jobs began to \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, Marty insisted to all who would listen that the good news would be quite transient, that another recession was \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_, and that those who doubted him would later appreciate his unwillingness to celebrate.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
proliferate	superfluous
aggrandize	imminent
poke	odious

Question 7

The recent convert, still a \_\_\_\_\_ with respect to the rites of her church, did not yet feel completely \_\_\_\_\_ comfortable \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ her \_\_\_\_\_ new \_\_\_\_\_ faith.

pilgrim
iconoclast
ascetic
tyro
poseur

Question 8

Veeder claims that the very notion of the existence of synonyms is \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, as words depend on \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_, connotation, and linguistic and cultural context for their \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ meanings.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
veracious	denotation	subjective
fallacious	cogitation	distinct
maladaptive	mastication	interchangeable

Question 9

Politicians’ tendency to \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ their own virtues by demeaning their opponents is \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_: what if voters forget the name of the candidate and remember only that of his adversary?

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
enfeeble	injudicious
tout	ostentatious
democratize	apt

Question 10

Video game enthusiasts know that, while the astounding advances in technological innovation



might increase the level of fun of the gaming experience, such a result is by no means \_\_\_\_\_.

desultory
endemic
salient
ineluctable
seminal

Question 11

*Middlemarch* author George Eliot reportedly bemoaned the dearth of \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ women, of which her well-educated main character, Dorothea, was a \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_\_. Therefore, Eliot scholars have long debated the author’s meaning in marrying Dorothea to the elderly preacher Casaubon and having him exploit his bride for \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ needs.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
captious	paradigm	menial
erudite	misogynist	clerical
venal	chimera	nebulous

Question 12

Dismissed by the establishment, professing nothing but disdain for the canon, and yet beloved by his followers who trumpet his \_\_\_\_\_ opinions, the raffish pundit is laughing all the way to the \_\_\_\_\_ bank.

iconoclastic
blithe
inveterate
meretricious
meritless

Question 13

The 1966 opening of the relatively expansive Grace Memorial Bridge signaled a \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ improvement in highway safety in the low country of South Carolina; the old bridge had been \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ narrow, creating a \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ driving experience for traders and tourists alike.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
prodigious	insufficiently	malodorous
subsidiary	meagerly	cantankerous
radiant	precariously	perilous

Question 14

Sarah Grand’s short story, “The Tenor and the Boy” was a \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ account of her popular novel *The Heavenly Twins*, for it was published years before the novel was completed. Unlike the novel’s characters, who were drawn in rich detail, the short story contained mere \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ caricatures.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
fallow	fractious
parochial	dynamic
nascent	unbedizened

Question 15

One might sometimes wonder whether some of the stories passed down through generations are veritable or \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_; whether the heroes had such endless mettle or were, in their hearts, occasionally \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_; and whether the denizens of the times described were really so \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_, or were perhaps tinged with a bit of guile.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
heretical	pusillanimous	halcyon
jejune	arrant	ingenuous
apocryphal	insouciant	piquant

DRILL 7

Directions: For each blank select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

Question 1

Although his latest project was relatively \_\_\_\_\_ —little more than a few basic plot points scribbled on a napkin—the veteran screenwriter easily sold the story to a major Hollywood studio.

undeveloped
polished
convoluted
prosaic
tortuous

Question 2

Despite being located in hot and sunny California, San Francisco is famous for its \_\_\_\_\_ weather, engendered by the confluence of two different meteorological systems in the Bay Area.

stimulating
adverse
balmy
appealing
duplicitous

Question 3

Possessing few natural resources upon its newly-granted independence in 1863, Singapore remained economically \_\_\_\_\_ until an influx of industrialization and foreign investment took hold there.

powerful
prosperous
solvent
fortuitous
dubious

Question 4

Wealth and technology wrought by industrialization gave nations in the northern hemisphere strategic \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_\_. This included sophisticated weaponry that could easily overpower the more \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ arms held by the countries of the southern hemisphere.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
adoration	intricate
advantage	perilous
consequence	rudimentary

Question 5

Even though legislators claimed the Contagious Diseases Acts strengthened the nation, social

purists argued the Acts \_\_\_\_\_ the nation’s moral growth by encouraging licentious behavior.

advanced
ameliorated
hampered
supplanted
enhanced

Question 6

The new lecture hall’s \_\_\_\_\_ design reflected the architect’s minimalist influences.

posh
intricate
unadorned
refulgent
grandiose

Question 7

Bentham provided the conceptual model for modern prisons, though not the actual structural model. In Bentham’s \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, a central watchtower provided a \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ view of all subjects under surveillance, theoretically allowing the guard to observe all of their actions; the tower, however, was structured in such a way that the subjects being observed could not see the guard. This meant that the prisoners were forced to assume that they were being \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_, even when the guard was off-duty, allowing prison administrators to be economical in their employment of guards.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
schematic	constricted	castigated
epitome	panoramic	scrutinized
quintessence	salubrious	exonerated

Question 8

The grave accusations made by the plaintiff were almost entirely \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ the testimony of two witnesses. Therefore, when the court \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ the credentials of those witnesses, the plaintiff’s case disintegrated, and the relevant claims were shown to be \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
subservient to	vindicated	facetious
isolated from	repudiated	unerring
dependent on	debated	specious

Question 9

Modern tennis fans have come to realize that, although, quantum technological leaps in racquet technology have lead to \_\_\_\_\_ increases in the speed and power with which players can hit the ball, this has not necessarily lead to a more entertaining game.

innocuous
halcyon
malleable
commensurate
tractable

Question 10

Many Major League Baseball relief pitchers choose an electrifying theme song to play as they take the mound; the song \_\_\_\_\_ their fans and instills fear in their opponents.

eviscerates
enervates
assuages
innervates
pervades

Question 11

Emmet Ray, a fictional jazz guitarist in Woody Allen’s film *Sweet and Lowdown*, is a paradoxical character; while he displays sophisticated musical artistry, his personality is typically \_\_\_\_\_.

petulant
elegant
audacious
maladroit
multi-faceted

Question 12

The editorial, though intended to \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ the current administration, inadvertently \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ several claims made against the regime suggested as a preferable alternative, effectively \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_ any plans for a change in leadership.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
impugn	attenuated	politicizing
bolster	substantiated	metamorphosing
venerate	benighted	castrating

Question 13

Humans have a natural affinity for Vervet monkeys; in both their habits and their personalities, they remind us of the essential humanity of non-human creatures. Vervet monkeys, like most humans, are \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, conducting most of their activities during the day. Their \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ behavior and desire for company shows us that humans are not the only species that values \_\_\_\_ (iii) \_\_\_\_.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)	Blank (iii)
quotidian	collaborative	litheness
circadian	gregarious	camaraderie
diurnal	egregious	fatuity

Question 14

A mathematician should not automatically reject theorems that might at first seem witless or juvenile; advanced degrees are not a license for \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_, nor do they \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ arrogance or egotism.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
haughtiness	sanction
puerility	dispel
substantiation	cultivate

Question 15

Bettelheim’s \_\_\_\_ (i) \_\_\_\_ of “Hansel and Gretel” is thorough and well-researched, but ultimately not compelling due to his \_\_\_\_ (ii) \_\_\_\_ focus, which is severely constricted by his narrow worldview.

Blank (i)	Blank (ii)
incantation	parochial
exegesis	sweeping
relish	jaundiced

## ANSWERS

### Drill 1

1. E
2. initiative, strive
3. remote, collaboration
4. B
5. distinction between, interchangeably
6. B
7. anomalies, daunting, authoritative
8. C
9. E
10. A
11. despondency, elation, euphoric
12. glut, belied
13. pecuniary, panacea
14. B
15. timorous, precarious, suspect

### Drill 2

1. A
2. D
3. chronically, agile
4. D
5. belligerent, corporeal, epithets
6. bucolic, cultural
7. C
8. glib, exacerbating, parlous
9. expatiate, petty, impending
10. esteem, accolades
11. inerrancy, doctrine
12. bellicose, diatribes, magnanimous
13. pilloried, deride
14. E
15. B

### Drill 3

1. D
2. silences, falsely
3. C
4. tact, denigrating
5. E
6. precluded, pragmatic
7. B
8. umbrage, dross
9. deride, heretical, separate
10. D
11. apolitical, free from, subjectivity
12. execrable, an error to neglect, mitigate the effect
13. squandered, impugned



- 14. D
- 15. A

### Drill 4

- 1. B
- 2. clandestine, obsolete
- 3. A
- 4. external, minutiae
- 5. D
- 6. complications, tarnish, assuage
- 7. zenith, feckless, temporal
- 8. C
- 9. profiteering, salutary
- 10. B
- 11. A
- 12. extemporaneous, germane
- 13. B
- 14. alacrity, chicanery, ardent
- 15. effusive, apposite

### Drill 5

- 1. disappointing, garner, nigh
- 2. B
- 3. prestige, reaped
- 4. E
- 5. membrane, porous, permeate
- 6. D
- 7. tenure, irresolute, integral
- 8. E
- 9. B
- 10. anomalous, dissipating
- 11. C
- 12. E
- 13. A
- 14. dogmatic, checking
- 15. volatile, immutable, unfettered

### Drill 6

- 1. C
- 2. B
- 3. oblivious, cognizant
- 4. iniquitous
- 5. A
- 6. proliferate, imminent
- 7. D
- 8. fallacious, denotation, distinct
- 9. tout, injudicious
- 10. D
- 11. erudite, paradigm, menial
- 12. A
- 13. prodigious, precariously, perilous

14. nascent, unbedizened
15. apocryphal, pusillanimous, ingenuous

## Drill 7

1. A
2. B
3. E
4. advantage, rudimentary
5. C
6. C
7. schematic, panoramic, scrutinized
8. dependent on, repudiated, specious
9. D
10. D
11. D
12. impugn, substantiated, castrating
13. diurnal, gregarious, camaraderie
14. haughtiness, sanction
15. exegesis, parochial

## EXPLANATIONS

### Drill 1

**1. E** If you notice the same direction trigger *so too*, you can recycle the clue *personalities* for the blank. None of *initiations*, *implementations*, or *rationalizations* means *personalities*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), and (D). Although *aptitudes* means *skills*, which pets can have, it does not directly relate to the clue in the sentence, *personalities*. So eliminate choice (C), and select choice (E).

**2. initiative and strive**

Lisa is *frustrated* by her husband's lack of something, so that something must be good. *Lassitude* is the quality of being *lazy or lacking in energy*, which is not a good quality. *Eloquence*, or *being skilled in the use of language* is a positive quality, but the lack of *eloquence* would not likely be something that a wife would find frustrating. *Initiative* means *ambition*, a positive quality for a person to have. To *motivate* a person who lacks *initiative*, one must encourage him to try to do things. To *mitigate* means *to make a problem better*, which isn't quite what you're looking for. To *invigorate* means *to give life to something*, and there's no indication in the sentence that the husband is expected to give life to anything. To *strive* means *to aim for*; a person with a lack of *initiative* should try to *aim for* things, so this word is a good fit for the blank.

**3. remote and corroboration**

The astronomers have discovered objects *at the edges of the universe*, so you need a word that is consistent with that clue. *Paranormal* means *beyond the scope of scientific understanding*; it is usually used to describe supernatural things like aliens and ghosts. *Viscous* means *fluid or sticky*, so that word is definitely not consistent with the blank. *Remote* means *distant*, which would describe objects *at the edges of the universe*. The quasars have shown scientists something about *the existence of stars*, so blank (ii) must mean something like *proof*. *Distortion* means *changing*, so that word is not consistent with the blank. *Intuition* is a feeling that something is true, but not actual *proof*. Corroboration means *proof*, and so it is a good fit for blank (ii).

**4. B** With the opposite direction trigger *but in fact*, you can recycle the opposite of the descriptive clue *much less well-known*, by filling the blank with *well-known*. None of

*contingent*, *cogent*, or *insistent* means *well-known*, so eliminate choices (C), (D), and (E). *Infamous* means *well-known*, but in a negative way, so eliminate choice (A). *Renowned* means *well-known*, so select choice (B).

**5. distinction between and interchangeably**

For the first blank, the clues *difference* and *has become unimportant* require something like *difference between*. *Similarity of* and *usefulness of* do not mean *difference between*; *distinction between* does. For the second blank, the opposite-direction trigger *but* and the clue *difference* require something like similar. *Statistically* and *differentially* do not mean *similar*, but *interchangeably* does. Select *distinction between* and *interchangeably*.

**6. B** The clue is that Klemfuss *created Secretaries' Day*, so he must have appreciated the *value and significance of administrative assistants*. None of *proscribed*, *refuted*, *undermined*, or *admonished* means *appreciated*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), (D), and (E). Although *touted* does not—strictly speaking—mean *appreciated*, a person touts only something that is appreciated, so select choice (B).

**7. anomalies, daunting, and authoritative**

For the first blank, recycle the clue *differences*. Of the choices, only *anomalies* means *differences*. The second blank relates how these differences affect the task of *literary scholars*, so a word like *difficult* or *challenging* would make sense. Of the choices, only *daunting* makes sense. The third blank describes the type of texts that such *differences* would make so challenging, so a word that means *genuine* or *authentic* would make sense. Of the choices, *authoritative* is the best fit.

**8. C** The clue is the CD is *similar* to the painting, so you can fill the blank with something like *reminds people of*. None of *obfuscates*, *disenchants*, or *sanctions* means *reminds people of*, so eliminate choices (B), (D), and (E). Although the designer of the CD may *admire* the painting, the CD itself does not. Moreover, *admires* does not mean *reminds people of*. *Evokes* means *reminds people of*, so eliminate choice (A) and select choice (C).

**9. E** Despite the use of the word *although*, the structure of this sentence, including the colon, makes clear that you need a word that goes in the same direction as the clue. Whether you look to *known* or the phrase after the colon (or both), the blank must mean something like *recognized*. None of *relegated*, *abrogated*, *annulled*, or *criticized* means *recognized*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (D). Someone who is positively *recognized* for something would be *apotheosized*, so select choice (E).

**10. A** With the opposite-direction trigger *though*, and the clue that Dan wanted *honest criticism*, the blank can mean something like *yes-men*. None of *pedants*, *benefactors*, *adversaries*, or *mavericks* means *yes-men*, so eliminate choices (B), (C), (D), and (E). *Sycophants* means *yes-men*, so select choice (A).

**11. despondency, elation, and euphoric**

The third blank has the clearest clue, so start there: The trigger *although* indicates that you need a word to contrast *disappointed*, so you need something like *happy*. Of the choices, only *euphoric* means happy. The third blank also provides part of the clue for the first two blanks: They'll describe *a strange mix* of emotions, and they'll be parallel to *disappointed* and *euphoric*. Of the choices for the first blank, only *despondency* matches *disappointed*; of the choices for the second blank, only *elation* matches *euphoric*.

**12. glut and belied**

The sentence states that *sequels* and *remakes* are *derivative*, and thus the article would be *decrying* their existence. Eliminate *dearth*, which means *scarcity*. Also eliminate *quality* as too neutral a word. *Glut* means *overabundance* and correctly reflects the clue word *flooding*. Next, a large quantity of sequels decades ago would *disprove* the *claim* at the end of the sentence. Eliminate *underscored* and *predicted* because neither one is supported. *Belied*

means *disproved*, making *glut* and *belied* the final answers.

**13. pecuniary and panacea**

For the first blank, the information regarding the type of *resources* that were *expended* are the clues *financial albatross* and *bankrupted*. Thus, the first blank must mean something like *financial*. *Assiduous* and *wholesome* do not mean *financial*; *pecuniary* does. For the second blank, you learn that the drug is supposed to be *used to treat numerous physical and mental ailments*. Thus, the second blank must mean something like *cure-all*. *Sinecure* and *mendicant* do not mean *cure-all*, but *panacea* does. Thus, select *pecuniary* and *panacea*.

**14. B** Recycle the clue that Sheila made what seemed like *bitter complaints*. None of *waffle*, *dissemble*, or *mince* mean to make *bitter complaints*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), and (E). You might have associated *grieve* with the word *grievance*, but it actually means *to mourn*, so eliminate choice (D). To *rail* is to make *bitter complaints*, so select choice (B).

**15. timorous, precarious, and suspect**

Because the stress tests are *supposed to reassure* the investors, the first blank must describe someone in need of reassurance, so something like *scared* or *nervous* would make sense; *timorous* is the best match. The second blank describes financial institutions that are *distinguished from reliable* ones, so the word for that blank should contrast with *reliable*. Of the choices, *precarious* offers the best contrast. Finally, the results are reported with a *lack of candor*, so the test results should be *dishonest* or *unreliable*. *Suspect* is the best choice.

## Drill 2

**1. A** Recycle the clue *bickering*. None of *laudations*, *affectations*, *procrastinations*, or *humor* mean *bickering*, so eliminate choices (B), (C), (D), and (E). To *squabble* means to *bicker*, so select choice (A).

**2. D** The clues that the *Mayor* was involved in a *long trial* and as a result suffered *failing health* require that the blank mean something like *sick*. None of *distraught*, *exonerated*, *inspired*, or *vindicated* mean *sick*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (E). *Debilitated* means *sick*, so select choice (D).

**3. chronically and agile**

The sentence starts with the trigger word *Despite* to set up a contrast between the two parts of the sentence. Since the first part describes her poor physical condition and the second her *surprisingly* positive state, the first blank has to describe her arthritis in a negative way. *Mildly* and *sympathetically* would not present the arthritis negatively, so the best answer is *chronically*. Similarly, the clue to the second blank is *pleasant* and it implies that the dog is positively described. *Enervated* means *lacking energy*, and *acute* could mean *perceptive*, which also does not make sense here. Thus the best answers are *chronically* and *agile*.

**4. D** The clue that the goal is *to prevent breaking* the *shell* requires that the blank mean something like *strong*. None of *tenuous*, *pristine*, *permeable*, or *obtuse* mean *strong*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (E). *Resilient* means *strong*, so select choice (D).

**5. belligerent, corporeal, and epithets**

Start with the third blank: You need something that can be yelled, and can't be stopped with handcuffs, so a word like *insults* would make sense in the blank. Of the choices, only *epithets* means insults. The second blank should contrast with the third blank, and describe the type of violence that can be stopped with handcuffs. Hence, you need a word like *physical*; of the choices, *corporeal* is the best fit. Finally, the first blank should mean something like *fighting*, since you know the two men are *handcuffed* and have been engaging in *physical violence*. *Belligerent* is the best choice.

**6. bucolic and cultural**

The sentence starts with the trigger word *Though*, signaling that the two parts of the sentence will be different. Since you know the town is *scenically beautiful*, the second blank means



something else besides its appearance. Eliminate *attractive*, and eliminate *picaresque* because there is no clue that the town refers to an *adventure story*. *Cultural* makes the most sense for the meaning of the second blank. The first blank describes the *scenically beautiful town*, and must mean something similar to *attractive country* as a contrast to the city. Eliminate *sprawling* and *desolate*, neither of which are suggested by the clues. *Bucolic*, which means *pertaining to country pleasantness*, is the strongest fit. The best answers are *bucolic* and *cultural*.

**7. C** Recycle the clue *dominion*. None of *heterodoxy*, *methodology*, *impotence*, or *timorousness* means *dominion*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (D), and (E). *Hegemony* means *dominion*, so select choice (C).

**8. glib, exacerbating, and parlous**

The clues for the first blank indicate that the *chairman's comments* made the people *even angrier*; you can eliminate *compassionate* and *solicitous*, because people would not be angered by *kind or helpful comments*. *Glib* is the best choice. For the second blank, you need something like *making worse*, because you know that the people are even angrier; *exacerbating* is the best fit. The third blank describes the situation that was made worse, so it must have already been *bad*. Of the choices, only *parlous*, which means perilous, is sufficiently negative.

**9. expatiate, petty, and impending**

The clue to the last blank is *next month*, so the missing word must mean *coming* or *about to happen*. *Impending* is the best match, and neither of the two other choices is supported. For the first blank, the clue is that the memoir allows *distinguished figures* to tell us about *experiences and wisdom learned*, so the missing word must mean *write about*. *Extemporize* means *to improvise*, which is incorrect because Grant wrote an actual account, and *exagitate* is incorrect because there is no suggestion of his *stirring up or censuring*. *Expatiate*, which means *to write about in detail*, is the best fit. For the second blank, note the contrast between *the significant works of distinguished figures* and *the experience of a fly-by-night internet celebrity*. The missing word will mean *insignificant*. *Apocryphal* is incorrect because the writings are not necessarily *fictional*, and *eccentric* is incorrect because there's no context to support the experiences being *unusual*. That leaves *petty*, which fits the context of the sentence.

**10. esteem and accolades**

For the first blank, the opposite-direction triggers *although* and *not* cancel each other out, so you can recycle the clue *honored*. Neither *decorum* nor *ennui* means *honor*, but *esteem* does. For the second blank, the semicolon trigger indicates that an explanation will be given about how Father's Day became *an honored tradition*. Ask yourself what was *required* from *prominent figures* before Americans *embraced the holiday*. The second blank must mean something like praise. Neither *opprobrium* nor *hyperbole* means praise, but *accolades* means *praise*. Thus, select *esteem* and *accolades*.

**11. inerrancy and doctrine**

For the first blank, the clue is that the conservatives' belief deals with the *Scripture never being wrong*, suggesting the missing word means *perfection* or *infallibility*. *Fallacy* is the opposite of what you need, and *interpretation* also does not mean *infallibility*. That makes *inerrancy* the best answer for the first blank. For the second blank, the trigger word *However* signals a different interpretation of the same *belief*, the meaning of the missing word. *Erudition*, or *scholarly knowledge*, can be eliminated, and *centurion* is irrelevant to the clues and blank. The right answer is *doctrine*, which means *belief*.

**12. bellicose, diatribes, and magnanimous**

First, find the story. Here is the funeral of a mean, judgmental man. The speaker respectfully

finds nice things to say about him. For the first blank, look for things that go with *arrogant* and *bitterly critical*. Only *bellicose*, meaning *aggressive and hostile*, is sufficiently negative. The second blank describes the actions of the guy, so we need something along the same lines. Although *eulogies* belong at funerals, we need something bad. *Diatribes* work. The last sentence changes the direction by starting with *nevertheless* so we need something positive. Only *magnanimous* is positive.

**13. pilloried and deride**

Start with the first blank because it is easier. The clue *disruptive child* tells you the mother probably *punished* the child. *Touted* would provide you with a sentence that was opposite in meaning and *calumniated* has a similar negative connotation, but it would not be appropriate. The second blank's clue *mock* can be recycled for the blank. *Laud* is opposite of *mock*, and *renege* simply doesn't make sense. Select *pilloried* and *deride*.

**14. E** The same direction trigger provided by the colon and *indeed*, and the clue that some people *have never even seen a live chicken or cow* requires that the blank mean something like absence. None of *pith*, *dross*, *surfeit*, or *dirge* mean *absence*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (D). *Dearth* does mean *absence*, so select choice (E).

**15. B** The same direction trigger *as* and the clues *hoax* and *feigned* require that the blank mean something like *tricked*. None of *reconnoitered*, *lambasted*, *vitiated*, or *derided* mean *tricked*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), (D), and (E). *Hoodwinked* does mean *tricked*, so select choice (B).

### Drill 3

**1. D** The same-direction semi-colon and the clues that an aloe plant is an *excellent choice* for someone who lacks time for frequent *watering or careful maintenance* requires that the blank mean something like *thrive*. None of *facilitate*, *ingest*, *consume*, or *advance* means *thrive*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (E). *Flourish* means *thrive*, so select choice (D).

**2. silences and falsely**

The word in the first blank gives a false impression about Howard's *underlying gregariousness*, so you need something that suggests he isn't sociable; hence, *silences* is the best choice. Since Howard is, underneath it all, gregarious, *new acquaintances* who think him *churlish* are incorrect, so *falsely* is the best fit.

**3. C** Recycle the clue *peaceful pasture* for the blank. None of *halcyon*, *perennial*, *eclectic*, or *quiescent* mean relating to a *peaceful pasture*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (D), and (E). *Bucolic* does mean relating to a *peaceful pasture*, so select choice (C).

**4. tact and denigrating**

The first blank refers to what Jill doesn't have, so you need a word that means *politeness*. Of the choices, only *tact* fits. The second blank refers to what Jill does without meaning to, so you need a word that means *insulting*. Of the choices, only *denigrating* means *insulting*.

**5. E** The same-direction trigger *and* as well as the clue *nothing but contempt* requires that the blank mean something like *disrespectfully*. None of *didactically*, *affably*, *jocularly*, or *morosely* means *disrespectfully*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (D). *Disdainfully* does mean *disrespectfully*, so select choice (E).

**6. precluded and pragmatic**

The council member's strategy made *her opponent's attacks* impossible or useless, so you need a word for the first blank that means something like *made impossible*. Of the choices, only *precluded* makes sense. The second blank is a description of the strategy in opposition to a less effective one, so a word like *effective* or *useful* would make sense. Of the choices, only *pragmatic*, which means *practical*, fits.

**7. B** Lindsay is described as *hesitant* and *unsure*, and is weighing the conflicting motivations of health and convenience, so you need a word that means something like *hesitated* or *was*

*unsure*. Of the choices, only *vacillated* makes sense. Be careful of choice (C): To support *equivocated*, you would have to know that Lindsay had already spoken to guests about the issue.

**8. umbrage and dross**

Start with the second blank. You know from the second part of the sentence that *slush piles* are *unsolicited, soon-to-be-rejected manuscripts*, so the missing word is probably something like *unwanted material*. Of the choices, only *dross* is sufficiently negative. For the first blank, since the agent is *arguing that several major authors were discovered in the pile*, he must not like the idea of the slush pile being called *dross*. The missing word, then, must mean something like *offense*. Of the choices, only *umbrage* means *offense*.

**9. deride, heretical, and separate**

For the first blank, the opposite-direction trigger *while* and the contrast between the clues *modernist* and *traditional* require that the blank mean something like *criticize*. *Venerate* and *celebrate* do not mean *criticize*, but *deride* does. For the second blank, the clue *traditional* as well as the completed first blank require that the second blank mean something like *radical*. *Dogmatic* and *axiomatic* do not mean *radical*, but *heretical* does. For the third blank, the opposite direction trigger *while* and the clue *inherently related* require that the blank mean something like *distinct*. *Logical* and *intertwined* do not mean *distinct*, but *separate* does. Thus, select *deride, heretical, and separate*.

**10. D** To describe the *voice* of the novel, recycle any of the clues *unaffected, common, or everyday*. Of the choices, only *quotidian* makes sense.

**11. apolitical, free from, and subjectivity**

This is a tricky passage. It talks about the controversies that surround history. It seems that even old history can still get people riled up and there are bound to be opposing views. As always, pay attention to trigger words. The second sentence says, *and yet* there are lots of different views. This is a change in direction, so one would think there would only be one view. So the second blank should say something like *past* or *over*. *Free from* works the best. Since everything is being argued, we need something negative or argumentative for the last blank. That knocks out *mellifluousness* and *objectivity*. The first blank speculates on whether or not historical arguments are ever over. *Apolitical* is the best stand-in for the end of arguments over history.

**12. execrable, an error to neglect, and mitigate the effects**

The first blank describes the *state of the city's public schools*; since the author is seeking *remedies*, something like *bad* would make sense in the blank. Of the choices, only *execrable* means bad. The second sentence lists elements that will *play a vital role* in the remedy, but the trigger *while* suggests more needs to be done; of the choices for the second blank, only *an error to ignore* allows this meaning. The final sentence is an example to reinforce this idea, and the blank describes what *talented teachers* would do to negative factors; of the choices, only *mitigate the effects* makes sense.

**13. squandered and impugned**

For the first blank, the clues that Garlin has a *diminutive attention span* and *uncompleted projects* require a word that means something like *wasted*. *Evinced* and *burnished* do not mean *wasted*, but *squandered* does. For the second blank, the opposite-direction trigger *while* and the clue *venerating* require a strong word such as *scorned*. *Parried* and *defalcated* do not mean *scorned*, but *impugned* does. Thus, select *squandered* and *impugned*.

**14. D** The clues *origins* and the entire phrase following the comma requires that the blank mean something like uncertain. None of *esoteric, ephemeral, apposite, or ubiquitous* means *uncertain*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (E). *Nebulous* means *mysterious* which is close enough to *unknown*, so select choice (D).



**15. A** The clue *made concentrating difficult* requires that the blank mean something like *noisy*. None of *quiescent*, *rapacious*, *enervated*, or *antagonistic* means *noisy*, so eliminate choices (B), (C), (D), and (E). *Obstreperous* means *noisy*, so select choice (A).

## Drill 4

**1. B** The same-direction semi-colon trigger and the clue *bought tickets for all the show* require that the blank mean something like *loved*. None of *abhorred*, *owned*, *loathed*, or *managed* means *loved*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), (D), and (E). *Cherished* means *loved*, so select choice (B).

**2. clandestine and obsolete**

The clue for the first blank is that the language was created so the criminals could *communicate without the authorities knowing what was going on*. Thus, the missing word must mean something like *secret*. Of the choices, only *clandestine* fits. The clue for the second blank is that the language was *widely used by criminals five hundred years ago*, but the trigger *although* means you need a word that means the opposite of *widely used*. Of the choices, only *obsolete* makes sense.

**3. A** Even if you do not know the words *philately* and *numismatist*, the clue is *new hobby*, with yet additional information provided by the opposite-direction time trigger *had already become* and associated clue *expert*. Therefore, the blank must mean something like *amateur*. None of *philanderer*, *mentor*, *specialist*, or *eccentric* means *amateur*, so eliminate choices (B), (C), (D), and (E). *Dilettante* means *amateur*, so select choice (A).

**4. external and minutiae**

Start with the second blank, which refers to little things inside the structures: *flower pots, sink fixtures, and working windows*. The word in the blank, then, must mean something like *details*. Of the choices, only *minutiae* makes sense. Now work the first blank: The trigger *while* suggests you need a word that means the opposite of *internal minutiae*. Of the choices, *external* is the best fit. While *august* might be tempting, it's too strong for the context: While the structures are important, there isn't any indication that they're inspiring reverence.

**5. D** The same-direction semi-colon trigger and the clues *arduous combat*, *two battles in two days* and *subsequent defeat* require that the blank mean something like exhaustion. None of *bellicosity*, *pugnacity*, *pacification*, or *aggravation* means exhaustion, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (E). *Enervation* means weakening, so select choice (D).

**6. complications, tarnish, and assuage**

For the first blank, you need a word that explains what happened during production. Audrey Hepburn *almost refused the part* and *the director had to make several compromises*, so a word like *problems* would make sense. Of the choices, only *complications* fits. The second blank describes what Hepburn feared would happen to her image; if she nearly turned down the part because her *image* was *pristine*, she didn't want to *hurt* her image. Of the choices, only *tarnish* can mean *hurt*. The last blank describes why the director made compromises for the censors: to *make them happy*. Of the choices, only *assuage* makes sense.

**7. zenith, feckless, and temporal**

The first blank refers to state of papal power under Innocent; since *his immense personal prestige cowed* even kings, a word that means something like *high point* or *greatest period* would make sense in the blank. Of the choices, only *zenith* works. The second blank refers to John of England. Both the trigger *from ... to* and the *epithets* given to John indicate that you need a word that contrasts with *powerful*. Of the answer choices, only *feckless*, which means *ineffective*, fits. The third blank needs to contrast with *spiritual*: Don't be fooled by the word *and*, which is part of the change direction trigger *tension between ... and*. *Temporal* is the only choice that makes sense.

**8. C** The clue *ironically* indicates that the blank needs to mean the opposite of *exceeded the*

average in education, intellect, and experience, so your answer could be anything that suggests *uneducated, unintelligent, or inexperienced*. Of the choices, only *mediocrity* makes sense.

**9. profiteering and salutary**

The sentence talks about books that make money from publishing other people's disasters. This is often what *profiteering* means. For the second blank, the clue *helping us to appreciate the humanity of people* requires a word meaning something like *helpful*. *Specious* and *sedulous* do not mean *helpful*, but *salutary* does. Thus, select *profiteering* and *salutary*.

**10. B** The opposite-direction trigger *while* and the opposite-direction time trigger *after the incident*, along with the clue *answered him truthfully* require that the second blank mean something like *mislead*. None of *vituperate, illuminate, covet, or desiccate* mean *mislead*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), (D), and (E). *Obfuscate* does mean *mislead*, so select choice (B).

**11. A** The words *unpopular* and *preferred* act as opposite-direction triggers. The clues *roundabout* and *loquaciousness* require that the blank mean something like *briefness*. None of *enlargement, garrulousness, gregariousness, or perspicacity* means *brevity*, so eliminate choices (B), (C), (D), and (E). *Succinctness* does mean *brevity*, so select choice (A).

**12. extemporaneous and germane**

The students will *have only a few minutes to prepare*, so you need a word for the first blank that means *improvised*. *Spurious* means *inauthentic*, and can be eliminated. *Contentious* means *tending to argue* and does not address the lack of time to prepare, so eliminate this choice. *Extemporaneous* means *with little or no preparation* and is the best fit and correct answer. For the second blank, you need a word that means *effectively on topic* because their remarks have to be effective though they might know very little about the topic. *Sanctimonious* means *showing moral superiority* and *seditious* means *inciting a rebellion*, so eliminate these choices. *Germane* means *relevant*, and is the best fit for the second blank.

**13. B** The opposite-direction trigger *although* and the clue *tenuous display of solidarity* indicate that the remainder of the sentence will explain that the solidarity is not heartfelt. Thus, the clue *incensed* requires that the blank mean something like *anger*. None of *camaraderie, adulation, facetiousness, or hubris* means *anger*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), (D), and (E). *Rancor* does mean *anger*, so select choice (B).

**14. alacrity, chicanery, and ardent**

The second-string quarterback doesn't seem to have played much, but is well known off the field for something *infamous* or *deceitful*. For the second blank, *chicanery* fits the bill nicely. For the first blank, we know he turned the tide of the game and did it in a manner that surprised everyone. *Alacrity* will work for this blank since we are told that his impact was immediate. And for the third blank, winning a decisive game is likely to win him some passionate fans, so *ardent* works well.

**15. effusive and apposite**

For the first blank, you need a word that means *expressing praise*, since the journalist is giving praise at the end of the sentence. *Effusive* means *unrestrained in expressing praise*; this is the best fit and correct answer. *Tentative* means *holding back* and is not a match, and *bombastic* means *pompous* and is also incorrect. Since the crime rate has dropped, you need a word that means *appropriate* for the second blank. *Specious* means *seeming true but actually false*; eliminate this choice. *Presumptuous* means *based on assumption*, and is incorrect given the proven drop in crime rate. *Apposite* means *appropriate*; this fits the context of the blank and is the correct answer.

## Drill 5

**1. disappointing, garner, and nigh**

Rich has a deadline approaching and needs some more time. The storm would have given him a good excuse, but it seems to have changed direction. Its shift, therefore, must have been *dis-*

*appointing* to him. He planned to use the excuse to buy himself some more time, so *garner* works in the second blank. The third blank describes the deadline, which is approaching, so *nigh* works well.

**2. B** The clues *stirring words* and *not enough* require that the blank mean something like *eloquent*. None of *deceptive*, *lengthy*, *crafty*, or *impromptu* means *eloquent*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), (D), and (E), and select choice (B).

**3. prestige and reaped**

The two parts of the sentence need to refer to the same topic, so recycle the clue *respect* for the first blank. Of the choices, only *prestige* means *respect*. For the second blank, the clue *decline* and the trigger *in contrast to* indicate that you need a word that means something like *increased*. Of the choices, only *reaped* makes sense.

**4. E** The clue *odious reminder* requires that the blank mean *rejected*. None of *placated*, *extolled*, *circumscribed*, or *tempered* mean *rejected*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (D). *Repudiated* does mean *rejected*, so select choice (E).

**5. membrane, porous, and permeate**

For the first blank, you need a word for the tissue right on the inside of an eggshell. *Yolk* is the central part of the egg, so eliminate this choice. *Albumen* is the egg white, but this does not line the eggshell; eliminate this choice. *Membrane* is the word meaning the *tissue that separates parts of an organism*, and is the best fit. For the second blank, you need a word that states the membrane lets things get through. *Impermeable* means *blocks from passage*, the opposite of what you need. *Flexible* does not mean *allowing to pass through*, so eliminate this choice. *Porous* is the best choice. For the third blank, you need a word that means *enter*, and the correct choice, *permeate*, means exactly that. *Addle* means *to confuse* and *infect* means *to cause to become ill*, and neither choice fits the context of the third blank.

**6. D** The same-direction trigger *too* and the clue *emotional coddling* (and the opposite-direction trigger *forgetting* and its clue *competitive environments*) require that the blank mean something like leniently. None of *aggressively*, *quixotically*, *fortuitously*, or *belligerently* mean *leniently*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (E). *Indulgently* does mean *leniently*, so select choice (D).

**7. tenure, irresolute, and integral**

The second blank has the strongest clue, so start there. The people who sit *for only a few moments* are contrasted with the *bold* who *sit for several hours*, so you need a word that means *not bold*. Of the choices, only *irresolute* fits. Now go to the first blank: If some are described as sitting only briefly, and others for longer periods, then something that means *period of time* would make sense. Of the choices, only *tenure* can mean *period of time*. The third blank refers to the role the visitors play; since the visitors themselves are half of the performance, you might use a word like *necessary* to describe what kind of *components* they are. *Integral* is another word for necessary, so it's the best fit.

**8. E** The clues *repulsed by* and *calculated flattery* require that the blank means something like *flattering*. None of *natty*, *profligate*, *rapacious*, nor *sententious* means *flattering*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (D). *Obsequious* means *flattering*, so select choice (E).

**9. B** The same-direction trigger colon and the clues *tortuous* and *confound* require that the blank mean something like *complex*. None of *banal*, *elegiac*, *mundane*, or *panegyric* means *complex*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), (D), and (E). *Recondite* does mean *complex*, so select choice (B).

**10. anomalous and dissipating**

For the first blank, the clue is the contrast established between *Bavaria* and *the rest of Europe*. Thus, the blank must mean something like *weird*. *Felicitous* and *querulous* do not mean *weird*, but *anomalous* does. For the second blank, the opposite-direction trigger *while*,



and the clue *gained steam* require a word meaning something like *diminishing*. *Weltering* and *forswearing* do not mean *diminishing*, but *dissipating* does. Thus, select *anomalous* and *dissipating*.

**11. C** The clues *lacking radio and satellite*, *significant challenges*, and *changes on the battlefield* require that the blank mean something like *information about*. None of *fortification*, *adulteration*, *accretion*, or *adumbration* means *information*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (D), and (E). *Appraisal* means *review* or *evaluation*, so choice (C) is the best answer.

**12. E** The trigger *while* indicates that the two parts of the sentence will disagree, and the opposition is expressed by *loses* and *increases*. Thus, the blank needs to mean *effectiveness* of a *persuasive message*. Of the choices, only *cogency* conveys this sense of a *convincingly logical* message.

**13. A** The clue *ouster* requires that the blank mean something like *resignation*. None of *vacillation*, *castigation*, *asceticism*, or *misanthropy* means *resignation*, so eliminate choices (B), (C), (D), and (E). *Abnegation* means *resignation of the throne*, so select choice (A).

**14. dogmatic and checking**

The first blank describes the thinking of scientists who *refused to* consider a process they can't explain, so a word like *rigid* or *limited* would make sense. Of the choices, only *dogmatic* matches the meaning you need. The second blank describes the result of such limited thinking on *the advancement of science*, so you need a word that means something like *slowing* or *stopping*. Of the choices, only *checking* fits the context.

**15. volatile, immutable, and unfettered**

The third blank must be consistent with the clue *free expression*. *Circumscribed* means *restricted* and would disagree with *free expression*. *Jingoistic* means *extremely nationalistic* and has a negative connotation. *Unfettered* means *without restriction*, making it the best choice for the third blank. If *America will always* have a particular characteristic, then that characteristic must be *always true*. *Egregious* means *extremely bad*, and *autonomous* means *self-governing*, so neither of those words is a good fit for the blank. *Immutable* means *unchanging* and is your best choice. The trigger *even in* tells you that the first blank must go in a different direction from the second blank, and that you need a word that indicates *changing*. *Arcadian* means *peacefully rustic*, and *idiosyncratic* means *strange*; neither of these words means *changing* and both choices can be eliminated. *Volatile* means *prone to change*, and is a good contrast to *immutable*.

## Drill 6

**1. C** Recycle the clue *remaining calm*. None of *impracticality*, *cynicism*, *zeal*, or *malevolence* means remaining calm, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (D), and (E). *Equanimity* means remaining calm, so select choice (C).

**2. B** The clue that Seth *did not enjoy activities that required effort to meet new people* requires that the blank mean something like *shy*. None of *extroverted*, *gregarious*, *lackluster*, or *jaded* mean *shy*, so eliminate choices (A), (C), (D), and (E). *Introverted* means *shy*, so select choice (B).

**3. oblivious and cognizant**

If Denise looks *distant*, it appears that she is *unaware* of her surroundings. *Truant* means *absent*, which makes no sense in this text, and *fetching* means *attractive*, which is also irrelevant. Her *distant look* makes her appear *oblivious*, or *unaware*. The word *actually* signals that the second blank must go in a different direction from the first, and must mean something such as *aware*. *Sedulous* means *hardworking*, which has nothing to do with being *aware*. *Insensible* means *unaware*, and is the opposite of what you're looking for. *Cognizant* means *aware*, and is the best fit for the second blank.

#### 4. iniquitous

The same-direction trigger *because* and the clue *sin* indicate that the blank means *sinful*. Of the choices, only *iniquitous* means *sinful* and is the best answer.

5. **A** The clue *ridiculed*, as well as the idea of eating snacks while working out, requires that the blank mean something like *foolish*. None of *pithy*, *indolent*, *precarious*, or *hackneyed* means *foolish*, so eliminate choices (B), (C), (D), and (E). *Fatuous* means *foolish*, so select choice (A).

#### 6. proliferate and imminent

The clue *the economy turned around* and the trigger word *and* dictate that the blank, which refers to what happened to *jobs*, must mean something like *increase* or *become more common*. Of the choices, only *proliferate* makes sense. Be careful with *aggrandize*—it means *to make something greater*, not to become more numerous. To agree with the clue *the good news would be quite transient*, the second blank has to mean something like *about to happen*. Of the choices, only *imminent* fits.

7. **D** You are told the subject is new and doesn't yet feel comfortable. For the blank, you need something to support the notion that she is new. *Tyro* means a beginner, so it fits nicely.

#### 8. fallacious, denotation, and distinct

Veeder thinks something about synonyms, words that mean the same thing. Meaning for him seems to depend upon context and connotation as much as an actual dictionary definition, which would make the notion of synonyms difficult since there would always be external circumstances to consider. Therefore, we need something negative for the first blank at least. That knocks out *veracious*. *Maladaptive* doesn't make sense since nothing is adapting, so *fallacious* must work. For the second blank we need things that contribute to the meanings of words. Only *denotation* works. And for the last blank, we need something that says that even synonyms are different. *Distinct* fits the bill.

#### 9. tout and injudicious

A politician *emphasizes* his virtues, and so the first blank must mean *emphasize*. To *enfeeble* is to *weaken*, the opposite of what you need. To *democratize* is to *make democratic*, and doesn't mean *emphasize*. To *tout* is to *emphasize the positive nature of something*, and is consistent with the context of the first blank. The clue after the colon refers to a negative consequence of the politicians' actions, so the second blank must be a negative word. *Apt* means *smart* and is a positive word you can eliminate. *Injudicious* and *jejune* are both negative words. *Injudicious* means *unwise* and *ostentatious* means *pretentiously showy*. *Injudicious* is a better fit for the blank: The problem with the politicians emphasizing their own virtues is that it is *ineffective and ill-advised*.

10. **D** The opposite-direction trigger *while* and the clue *might* require that the blank mean something like *inevitable*. None of *desultory*, *endemic*, *salient*, or *seminal* means *inevitable*, so eliminate choices (A), (B), (C), and (E). *Ineluctable* means *inevitable*, so select choice (D).

#### 11. erudite, paradigm, and menial

The first and third blanks have the clearest clues, so start with them. For the first blank, recycle the clue *well-educated*; of the choices, only *erudite* makes sense. For the third blank, recycle the clue *mundane*; of the choices, only *menial* fits. The second blank describes Dorothea, and if her marriage into a life of *mundane and menial needs* causes debate among Eliot scholars, then Dorothea must have been an example of a *well-educated, erudite* woman. Of the choices, only *paradigm* means *example*.

12. **A** Here is a guy who no one in the establishment takes seriously and yet has an exuberant following. His opinions must not match with the mainstream. *Iconoclastic* is the best fit.

#### 13. prodigious, precariously, and perilous

The clues are the same for the second and third blanks, so start there. The new bridge was an

*improvement in highway safety*, so the old bridge must have been a *danger*; of the choices, only *precariously* makes sense in the second blank, and only *perilous* makes sense in the third. The first blank describes the *improvement*; the old bridge had been *narrow*, and the new one was *relatively expansive*, so a word that means *big* would make sense. Of the choices, only *prodigious* means big.

**14. nascent and unbedizened**

The trigger word *unlike* and the clue *drawn with rich detail* require that the second blank means *lacking detail*. *Dynamic* and *fractious* do not mean *lacking detail*, and can be eliminated. *Unbedizened* means *unadorned* and is a good fit for this blank. For the first blank, the clue *years before the novel was complete* and the information later on indicate that the first blank means *incomplete*. *Parochial* means *narrow-minded* and *fallow* means *inactive*, so both can be eliminated. *Nascent* means *coming into existence* and is the best choice for the first blank.

**15. apocryphal, pusillanimous, and ingenuous**

Each blank is associated with the opposite direction trigger *or*. For the first blank, the clue *veritable* requires a word that means *untrue*. Of the choices, only *apocryphal* makes sense. For the second blank, the clue *mettle* requires a word that means *cowardly*. Of the choices, *pusillanimous* is the best fit. For the third blank, the clue *guile* requires a word meaning something such as *guileless*. Of the choices, only *ingenuous* means guileless.

## Drill 7

**1. A** The missing word refers to a *project*—in this case a screenwriter’s story—which consists of *little more than a few basic plot points*. Therefore, the missing word might mean something like *incomplete*, so you can immediately eliminate choice (B). There is not enough information to suggest that the story is *convoluted*, *prosaic*, or *tortuous*, so eliminate choices (C), (D), and (E). *Undeveloped* means *incomplete*, so choice (A) is the best answer.

**2. B** The blank describes the weather in San Francisco. Thanks to the trigger, we know it is not hot and sunny. We also know that it comes from opposing weather systems. We need something that is both bad and refers to opposition. *Adverse* works perfectly.

**3. E** From the clues in this sentence, you know that Singapore’s independence was *newly-granted* and that *industrialization and foreign investment* had not yet taken root. You need a word that means something like unstable or weak for the blank. Choices (A), (B), and (C) all go in the opposite direction of what you’re looking for, so eliminate them. *Fortuitous* doesn’t fit in the context of your clues, making *dubious* the best answer.

**4. advantage and rudimentary**

The clue to the second blank, *sophisticated weaponry that could easily overpower*, suggests a word that means *less sophisticated*. *Intricate* and *perilous* do not pertain to being *less sophisticated* and can be eliminated, leaving *rudimentary* as the correct answer. The northern nations could easily overpower the southern nations, and so they had an *upper hand*. *Advantage* is the only choice that means *upper hand* and is correct.

**5. C** While the *legislators claimed the Contagious Diseases Acts strengthened the nation*, the change- direction trigger *even though* shows that the social purists disagreed. You want a word similar to harm or weaken for the blank. *Hampered* is similar to harm and provides you with an equivalent sentence; *advanced* and *enhanced* go in the opposite direction, so eliminate choices (A) and (E). *Ameliorated* and *supplanted* don’t make sense in the context of the sentence, so eliminate choices (B) and (D) and select choice (C).

**6. C** The hall’s design was likely plain or functional, given the clue *minimalist influences*. Choices (A), (B), and (E) are easy eliminations, as they are clearly opposite in meaning. You can eliminate choice (D) if you know that *refulgent* is the opposite of *plain*. *Unadorned* is the best match.



**7. schematic, panoramic, and scrutinized**

Recycle the phrase *conceptual model* for the first blank. Of the choices, *schematic* is the best fit; both *epitome* and *quintessence* can mean model, but in the sense of a perfect example of something. The second blank describes the view, which allows *the guard to observe all*, so you need something that means *showing everything*; of the choices, only *panoramic*, which means *offering a wide view*, makes sense. The third blank describes what's being done to the prisoners, so recycle the clue *observed*. Of the choices, only *scrutinized* means *observed*.

**8. dependent on, repudiated, and specious**

Start with the last blank because it is the easiest. The clue tells you that *the plaintiff's case disintegrated*. Therefore, the claims must have been shown to be false. *Facetious*, though somewhat negative, does not mean *false* but does not go far enough. *Unerring* goes in the opposite direction. *Specious* is the best match. The first blank is the easiest one to attempt next. The case fell apart when something happened to the witnesses' credentials, so a good phrase for the first blank—which described the role of the witnesses in the plaintiff's case—is “based on.” *Dependent on* is the only match. If the plaintiff's claims were based on the witnesses, and the case fell apart, logically the witnesses must have been discredited somehow. A good word for the second blank—which describes what the court decided about the witnesses' credentials—is *denied*. *Vindicated* goes in the opposite direction. *Repudiated* is the best match.

**9. D** The sentence states that *increases in technology have led to increases in speed and power*. The blank, therefore, requires something along the lines of *similar* or *proportional*. Only *commensurate* fits. The answer is choice (D).

**10. D** Look for the clue in the strong adjective *electrifying*. The song must pump up the pitchers' fans. *Eviscerates* and *enervates* are the opposite of what you want, so eliminate choices (A) and (B). *Pervades* is unrelated to the clue, and *assuages* sounds like a possibility, but has nothing to do with excitement; eliminate choices (C) and (E). You're left with choice (D), *innervates*, which means *to pump up*.

**11. D** The blank refers to Emmet Ray's *paradoxical* character. The trigger *while* follows the clue, indicating that his *sophisticated musical artistry* is contrary to some other aspect of his personality. Look for a word that means unsophisticated, and use POE to eliminate choices (B) and (E). *Petulant* and *audacious* have appropriately negative meanings, but are unrelated to sophistication in the context of *artistry*. *Maladroit* means clumsy, so choice (D) is the best match.

**12. impugn, substantiated, and castrating**

The first blank refers to the intention of the editorial, which suggested a *preferable alternative* to the current administration; a good word to describe the editorial's intention toward the incumbents might be a word such as *attack* or *undermine*. Of the choices, only *impugn* means attack. The second blank refers to *claims made against* the group that the editorial was trying to support; the actions were inadvertent, so a good word for the blank might be something like *supported* or *proved*. Of the choices, the only word that makes sense is *substantiated*. Since the editorial ended up damaging the interests of the preferable alternative, a good word for the third blank might be something like *stopping*. *Castrating* matches this meaning.

**13. diurnal, gregarious, and camaraderie**

The clue for the first blank is *most of their activities during the day*, and so that blank must describe such a pattern. *Quotidian* means *common* and *circadian* patterns *occur once per day*, but not specifically during the daytime. *Diurnal* is the best fit because it means *during the daytime*. The second blank needs to be consistent with the clue *desire for company*. *Collaborative* means *enjoys working with others* but not a *desire for company*, but a

*gregarious* creature is *quite social* and seeks out company. *Egregious* means *extremely bad*, and does not match. The third blank must also describe something like *company*. *Litheness* means *grace and flexibility* and *fatuity* means *idiotic*, and neither one truly refers to having company. *Camaraderie* means *trusting friendship*, which is the most like *company* and makes it the best answer.

**14. haughtiness and sanction**

The first part of the sentence states that mathematicians should not be dismissive of theorems that seem beneath them. Someone who does this would be snobbish, so the first blank must mean something like *snobbishness*. *Puerility* means *immaturity* and *substantiation* means *proof*, so neither of those is a match, while *haughtiness* does mean *snobbishness*. If the *advanced degrees are not a license*, that means that they do not give someone permission to do something bad such as have arrogance or egotism. The second blank must mean something like *permit*. To *dispel* is to *push away*, which is almost the opposite of what you need here. To *cultivate* means to *foster*, which is not the same as *permit*. *Sanction* is the best answer because one of its standard definitions is *give permission*.

**15. exegesis and parochial**

Bettelheim has produced something that is *thorough* and *well-researched* concerning “Hansel and Gretel.” The first blank must then mean *scholarly study*. An *incantation* is a *magical spell* and *relish* could mean *enjoyment*, but neither word pertains to being scholarly. An *exegesis* is a *critical explanation*, or *scholarly study*, and is correct. Bettelheim’s focus is *severely constricted by his narrow worldview*, so it must be *narrow*. *Sweeping* can mean *vast*, the opposite of what you need. A *jaundiced* focus is one that is *affected by envy or bitterness*, and there is no support for this idea in the clues. *Parochial* means *provincial* or *narrow-minded*, making it a solid fit for the second blank.