●Sentence Completion 12 *(high-advanced GRE level)*

Directions: *Choose the best word(s) to complete each sentence.*

1. His heirs realized just how _____ Rockefeller was at the time of his death when they learned he had _____ a huge portion of his fortune to various charities.

   A. beneficent … reneged
   B. miserly … apportioned
   C. avaricious … bestowed
   D. magnanimous … compressed
   E. munificent … bequeathed

2. The accomplished chef prepared a veritable smorgasbord for the royal family; none of the diners could remember seeing such a _____ of foods before.

   A. panorama
   B. paraphernalia
   C. panoply
   D. litany
   E. menu

3. Ryan's _____ response to Diane's question about quantum physics only served to confuse her more; as a result, the subject continued to be _____ to her.

   A. nonplussing…opaque
   B. oblique…comprehensible
   C. fuliginous…limpid
   D. obfuscated…lucid
   E. turbid…diaphanous

4. Many scholars say that Iago is the most _____ character in all of Shakespeare's plays; on the other hand, a case could be made for Aaron the Moor from *Titus Andronicus*, since all of the tragic actions of that play derives from Aaron's vile deceptions.

   A. artless
   B. insidious
   C. disingenuous
   D. clandestine
   E. iniquitous

5. Elliot Ness's _____ pursuit of gangsters such as Al Capone was immortalized on the television show *The Untouchables*, in which Robert Stack accurately portrayed Ness as a relentless crime-fighting investigator.

   A. pliant
   B. dogged
   C. enervated
   D. recalcitrant
   E. lackadaisical

6. Jen's mother was a _____ her entire life; similarly, Jen herself became obsessive about literature as a young reader.

   A. savant
   B. habitué
   C. scholar
   D. bibliophile
   E. votarist

Answers and Explanations

1) **E**

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their meanings by using key words from the prompt. Here, the key words are "at the time of his death," "fortune," and "various charities." These words and phrases imply that Rockefeller left a large portion of his wealth to charities when he died. The first missing word describes or modifies "Rockefeller." The second missing word details what his actions or what he did with "a huge portion of his fortune." Choice **(E)** is correct, since someone who is *munificent* is generous and would therefore donate or *bequeath* money in his or her will.

(A) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. *Beneficent* means charitable, but this does not form a logical relationship with *reneged*, which means went back on one's word.

(B) is incorrect because only the second word works in context. *Miserly* means stingy. This word would not describe someone who gave "a huge portion of his fortune to various charities." It does not form a logical relationship with *apportioned*, which means distributed or allocated proportionately.

(C) is incorrect because only the second word works in context. *Avaricious* means greedy. This word would not describe someone who gave "a huge portion of his fortune to various charities." It does not form the proper relationship with *bestowed*, which means gave as a gift.

(D) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. *Magnanimous* is extremely generous. This does not form any kind of relationship with *compressed*, which means reduced or squeezed.

2) **C**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. Here, the key word is "smorgasbord," which refers to what the chef "prepared." The missing word likewise describes what was served and is modified by the prepositional phrase "of foods." Since a smorgasbord is a large assortment "of foods," the missing word must also mean a large assortment. Choice **(C)** is the right answer, because *panoply* means an impressive array.

(A) is incorrect because a *panorama* is a comprehensive survey of a subject, especially referring to a large pictorial representation. Thus, while it refers to something vast in size and breadth, it does not necessarily work for describing various "foods."

(B) is incorrect because *paraphernalia* is the various equipment needed for an activity. This would not refer to the amount or variety of "foods," though it could refer to the equipment needed to prepare or consume these foods.

(D) is incorrect because a *litany* is a tedious recital or repetitive series. While this would correctly imply that there was a vast array "of foods," it does not work in context. The prompt does not imply that the "smorgasbord" was tedious or repetitive.

(E) is incorrect because a *menu* is a list of food items. It could certainly refer to the "smorgasbord" in question, but it is not the best choice. A "menu" does not imply anything about the wide variety of the "foods" that were offered. A menu could have any number of items on it.

3) **A**
To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using key words from the prompt. Here, both missing words revolve around the same key word: "confuse." The first missing word describes the type of "response" Ryan gave, which led to Diane being more confused. The second missing word describes what "the subject," referring to "quantum physics," remained to her. Thus, both missing words must mean confusing, since a confusing response would serve to "confuse her more" and would result in the subject remaining confusing to her. Thus, choice **(A)** is the correct answer, since *nonplussing* means utterly puzzling, while *opaque* means difficult to understand.

(B) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. *Oblique* means indirect or evasive. This could describe Ryan's "response," since an oblique answer could "confuse" someone. However, *comprehensible* means understandable. The prompt makes it clear that Diane was still confused about quantum physics and did not understand it.

(C) is incorrect because neither word works well in context. *Fuliginous* could be twisted to work in context, since it means smoky or sooty. It could therefore imply that Ryan's "response" was unclear. However, *limpid* means clear or translucent and would not be used to suggest that "[quantum physics] continued to be" confusing to Diane.

(D) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. *Obfuscated* means confused or obscure. This could describe the type of "response" that would further "confuse" Diane. However, "lucid" means clear or intelligible. This would not work for describing how Diane viewed quantum physics after being confused.

(E) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. *Turbid* means muddled or confused. This could describe the type of "response" that would further "confuse" Diane. However, *diaphanous* means very light. This would not work for describing how Diane viewed quantum physics after being confused.

4) **B**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. In this prompt, the key words are "vile deceptions," a phrase that describes Aaron's actions. The missing word is used to describe Iago, a character the prompt implies is similar to Aaron, since both are competing for the same description. Thus, Iago must likewise carry out "vile" or evil actions. Both characters must be among the most devious or vile characters in "Shakespeare's plays." The missing word must mean devious or evil, so choice **(B)** is correct: *insidious* means slyly treacherous.

(A) is incorrect because *artless* means open and honest, the very opposite of someone who makes "vile deceptions."

(C) is incorrect because *disingenuous* means insincere. This word would correctly describe a villainous character like Iago or Aaron. However, the prompt implies both characters are not only insincere but also evil, since both make "vile deceptions." This word is not strong enough to be the best answer choice.

(D) is incorrect because *clandestine* means done in secret. "Deceptions" are usually planned secretly (since one cannot be deceived if he or she knows of the deception ahead of time). However, the prompt implies both characters not only secretly deceive others but are also evil, since both make "vile deceptions." This word is not strong enough to be the best answer choice.

(E) is incorrect because *iniquitous* means wicked or sinful. This would correctly describe a villainous character like Iago or Aaron. However, the prompt implies both characters are not merely wicked but that they are also deceptive. One can be deceptive without being wicked and vice versa.

5) **B**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. The key word here is "relentless," an adjective used to describe the type of "crime-fighting investigator" Elliot Ness was. The missing word describes Ness's "pursuit of gangsters," a pursuit that was "immortalized" by Stack's television portrayal of him. The real-life Ness relentlessly pursued criminals, so the missing word must likewise mean relentless. Choice **(B)** is the correct answer, since *dogged* means persistent.

(A) is incorrect because *pliant* means pliable or yielding. This would not be used to describe the "pursuit of gangsters" carried out by a "relentless crime-fighting investigator," since pliant is almost completely antithetical to relentless.

(C) is incorrect because *enervated* means weakened or lessened in strength. This is the exact opposite of the "pursuit of gangsters" carried out by a "relentless crime-fighting investigator."

(D) is incorrect because *illustrious* means famous or renowned. Though Ness was made famous by a television show about him, this answer choice does not work. The missing word describes Ness's "pursuit of gangsters" and refers to the portrayal of "Ness as a relentless crime-fighting investigator," not a famous one.

(E) is incorrect because *lackadaisical* means idle or lazy. This is the exact opposite of the "pursuit of gangsters" carried out by a "relentless crime-fighting investigator."

6) **D**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. In this prompt, the key words are all in the phrase "Jen herself became obsessive about literature." This phrase is used to compare Jen to her mother, who apparently was "similarly" obsessed with literature. Thus, the missing word must mean obsessed or deeply in love with literature. Therefore, choice **(D)** is correct: a *bibliophile* is a book lover.

(A) is incorrect because a *savant* is a person of profound or extensive learning, not someone who is necessarily a devoted reader. Even though many associate voracious reading with scholarship, there is not enough information in the prompt to support this answer choice.

(B) is incorrect because a *habitué* is a habitual visitor to a certain place. Since "literature" cannot literally be visited, this could not refer to "Jen's Mother."

(C) is incorrect because a *scholar* is learned person, not someone who is necessarily a devoted reader. Even though many associate voracious reading with scholarship, there is not enough information in the prompt to support this answer choice.

(E) is incorrect because a *votarist* is someone who is obsessed with or addicted to a particular subject. While this correctly describes Jen's mother's relationship with books, it does not refer to an obsession with "literature" specifically. This word is too broad to be used in context.