• Sentence Completion 1  Level 7

Directions: Complete the sentence using the word or set of words for each blank that best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

1. Despite the unfavorable attention brought on by some critics, the press had ______ effect on the campaign overall.
   A. a beneficial
   B. a neutral
   C. an inert
   D. a destructive
   E. a harmful

2. Although Kate’s report on her scientific findings was lengthy, the presentation she held was rather ______.
   A. brief
   B. thorough
   C. mundane
   D. straightforward
   E. elaborate

3. The new building was expansive; its ______ foundation allowed for wider hallways than its predecessor.
   A. shallow
   B. small
   C. broad
   D. thin
   E. fancy

4. The famous pop singer tragically died at age thirty-two; it was an ______ event for all his many fans, but it was especially hard on his most ______ fans.
   A. unthinkable ... healthy
   B. amazing ... dubious
   C. appalling ... devoted
   D. appreciated ... strange
   E. emotional ... heavy

5. It is no secret that prison can be rather ______; grim conditions and severe treatment have been known to ______ even the most hardened criminals.
   A. cruel ... entertain
   B. harsh ... dishearten
   C. pleasant ... encourage
   D. awful ... satisfy
   E. horrendous ... soothe

6. Unlike the misleading television documentary, the biography was ______.
   A. interesting
   B. accurate
   C. fantastic
   D. phony
   E. false

7. According to clinicians, psychopaths are ______: that is, they are intentionally violent and mean.
   A. sympathetic
   B. timid
   C. polite
   D. vicious
   E. infrequent

8. The doctor takes note of any ______ marks on the patient’s skin, because such abnormalities often indicate the presence of skin cancer.
   A. irregular
   B. typical
   C. ordinary
   D. invisible
   E. common
Answers and Explanations

1) A
The main clue in this question is the word “although,” which means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. The correct choice will set up an opposite relationship between Kate’s lengthy report and her presentation. The missing word hinges on the word “but,” which sets up an opposite relationship between “all of his many fans” and the missing word. This means the m

2) A
The main clue in this question is the word “despite,” which means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. The correct choice will set up an opposite relationship with “unfavorable attention.” The word “unfavorable” is a negative word, so the correct choice must be something positive. Beneficial means favorable or resulting in good, so choice (A) is correct.

3) C
The main clue in this question is the semicolon (;), which combines two independent clauses that are close in meaning and progress logically from one another. This means that there will be a logical relationship between the expansive hallways and the foundation the missing word describes. The missing word must, therefore, mean expansive or large. Because broad means wide, choice (C) is correct.

4) C
Each missing word has its own clue in this sentence. The first missing word’s clue is the semicolon (;), which links independent clauses that state related information. This means there is a logical connection between the tragic death of the pop singer and the type of “event” it was for his fans; meaning the first missing word must relate to tragic. The second missing word hinges on the word “but,” which sets up an opposite relationship between “all of his many fans” and the missing word. This means the missing word must refer to a specific, rather than general, type of fan who would take the death “especially hard.” Appalling means awful or terrible, and devoted means loyal. In context, these words would imply that the tragic death was an awful event for all fans but especially for the singer’s most loyal ones. Therefore, choice (C) is correct.

(B) is incorrect because neither word works in context. Unthinkable means too terrible to be considered a possibility, while healthy means in good health or physically well. The prompt implies that the singer’s death was tragic but not that it was impossible. Furthermore, healthy or unhealthy fans would both take a tragic event in the same way.

(B) is incorrect because neither word works in context. Amazing means causing great surprise or wonder, while dubious means doubtful. Amazing is not the same as tragic, and doubtful fans would not take tragic news harder than would any other fans.
(D) is incorrect because neither word works in context. Appreciated means valued, while strange means odd or unusual. A tragic event would not be valued, and strange fans would not take the news of a tragic event any harder than would normal fans.

(E) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. Emotional means arousing great feelings, and a tragic death could certainly be an emotional event. However, heavy means of great weight or significance, and there is no reason that heavy fans would take the news harder than non-heavy fans would.

5) B
The main clue in this question is the semicolon (;), which combines two independent clauses that are close in meaning and progress logically from one another. This means that there will be a logical relationship between prison conditions and their effects on prisoners. The prompt states that prison is “grim” and “severe,” so the first missing word must also mean grim or severe. The second missing word must describe the process by which a hardened criminal becomes no longer hardened. Because harsh means severe or unpleasantly rough, while dishearten means to cause someone to lose confidence or determination, choice (B) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. Cruel means willfully causing pain, while entertain means to provide someone with amusement. Prison can be cruel, but it does not entertain criminals.

(C) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. Pleasant means enjoyable or pleasing, while encourage means to give someone confidence or support. The prompt implies that prison is the opposite of pleasant and does the opposite of encouraging hardened criminals.

(D) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. Awful means terrible or very bad, while satisfy means to meet someone’s expectations or bring pleasure. Prison can be awful, but it does not satisfy prisoners.

(E) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. Horrendous means very awful, while soothe means to relax or calm. Prison can be horrendous, but it does not soothe prisoners, since nothing horrendous would calm anyone.

6) B
The main clue in this question is the word “unlike,” which means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. The correct choice will set up an opposite relationship with “misleading.” If something is not misleading, then it is correct and factual. Because accurate means correct in all details, choice (B) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. Interesting means arousing curiosity or interest. There is no relationship between being “misleading” and being interesting.

(C) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. Fantastic means imaginative, which is not the opposite of “misleading.”

(D) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. Phony means not genuine. This is almost the same as “misleading,” not the opposite of it.

(E) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. False means not true. This is almost the same as “misleading,” not the opposite of it.

7) D
The main clue in this question is the phrase “unlike,” which means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. The correct choice will set up an opposite relationship with “misleading.” Because vicious means deliberately cruel and violent, choice (D) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because sympathetic means feeling sympathy or care for others. This is the opposite of what someone who is “intentionally violent and mean” would be described as.

(B) is incorrect because timid means lacking courage. This has no relationship to being “intentionally violent and mean.”

(C) is incorrect because polite means courteous and kind. This is the opposite of what someone who is “intentionally violent and mean” would be described as.

(E) is incorrect because infrequent means rare. This has no relationship to being “intentionally violent and mean.”

8) A
The main clue in this question is the word “because,” which links clauses that have a cause-and-effect relationship between them. This means that there is a relationship between the marks the doctor notes and those “abnormalities” that can indicate skin cancer. The missing word describes the “marks,” so it must mean abnormal in order for the sentence to make sense. Because irregular means abnormal or not typical, choice (A) is correct.
(B) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. *Typical* means normal or usual. A typical mark would not be described as an abnormality.

(C) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. *Ordinary* means usual or normal. An ordinary mark would not be described as an abnormality.

(D) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. *Invisible* means unable to be seen. An invisible mark would not be described as an abnormality, especially since it would not even be able to be seen.

(E) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. *Common* means ordinary. An ordinary mark would not be described as an abnormality.