



● Sentence Completion 2 *(low-advanced SAT level)*

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

1. Despite her reputation for being a particularly \_\_\_\_\_ artist, her new work seemed to be \_\_\_\_\_ other artists and appears completely unoriginal.  
A. talented ... copies of  
B. skillful ... facsimiles of  
C. bland ... descendents of  
D. innovative ... derivative of  
E. original ... unlike
2. Although the crime scene investigator searched for fingerprints, he was unable to find any, suggesting that the culprit was \_\_\_\_\_ and had worn gloves while committing the crime.  
A. cautious  
B. lazy  
C. inattentive  
D. neglectful  
E. carefree
3. The late author J. D. Salinger was known for being \_\_\_\_\_, as he was unseen by the public for decades at a time.  
A. adversarial  
B. gregarious  
C. adulated  
D. sociable  
E. reclusive
4. My coworker is known for being a \_\_\_\_\_, as he always brownnoses and lauds the decisions of our boss in an attempt to gain his favor.  
A. sycophant  
B. usurper  
C. fanatic  
D. skeptic  
E. zealot
5. The famously \_\_\_\_\_ coach was known for being succinct and erring on the side of brevity when it came to giving post-game interviews.  
A. loquacious  
B. terse  
C. innovative  
D. insightful  
E. intrepid
6. The otherwise \_\_\_\_\_ employee surprised everyone when she was extremely \_\_\_\_\_ in meeting a deadline.  
A. exquisite ... gorgeous  
B. adept ... vulgar  
C. skillful ... calculating  
D. helpful ... pragmatic  
E. punctual ... late
7. So-called snake oil salesmen earned reputations as \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ merchandise, unnecessary wares, and tonics advertised as panegyrics that actually did nothing for those who consumed them.  
A. distributors ... medicinal  
B. hucksters ... shoddy  
C. catalogers ... sufficient  
D. misers ... dilapidated  
E. educators ... innovative
8. The Three Musketeers were known above all else for their unwavering loyalty to each other. Even the worst of situations, they never broke their \_\_\_\_\_ each other.  
A. submission to  
B. kindness toward  
C. allegiance to  
D. affinity for  
E. animosity toward

## Answers and Explanations

1) **D**

The word “despite” sets up a negative or opposite relationship. This means that the artist’s new work will contradict her existing reputation. If the work is **(D)** *derivative of* other artists, then her new work is very reminiscent of art that others have already done, and it may even seem like she is simply copying them. This would contradict her reputation of being *innovative*. Innovative artists are always doing brand new things that have never been done before. They do not simply copy existing work.

**(A)** is incorrect because although *copies of* other artists’ work would certainly be “completely unoriginal,” this doesn’t contradict the fact that she might be very *talented*. Sometimes talented artists copy existing works in order to practice; this does not make them untalented. Reproducing art can simply be a way of understanding other artists’ skills and perspectives.

**(B)** is incorrect because making *facsimiles of (copies of)* others’ works would not make her less *skillful*. This answer choice is similar to **(A)** and is incorrect for the same reasons.

**(C)** is incorrect because *descendents of* others’ works would most likely involve variations inspired by the originals. This would not necessarily mean that the artist is *bland*.

**(E)** is incorrect because if her work were *unlike* the things that others have created before, this does not contradict her reputation for being *original*. This would actually reinforce her reputation for being original.

2) **A**

The police often search for fingerprints when they are investigating a crime. Therefore, many criminals who wish to avoid getting caught by the police will wear gloves while committing their crimes. This prevents their fingerprints from making contact with any surfaces, so the police cannot find the prints and use them as evidence. Criminals who wear gloves are very **(A)** *cautious*. They know what sort of evidence the police will look for, and they take caution to avoid leaving such evidence.

**(B)** is incorrect because if the criminal were *lazy*, he or she would not have used gloves. A lazy criminal would not have been careful or forward-thinking enough to eliminate any source of evidence.

**(C)** is incorrect because an *inattentive* criminal would not have the forethought to wear gloves and prevent leaving evidence behind.

(D) is incorrect because a *neglectful* criminal would not have the forethought to wear gloves and prevent leaving evidence behind. This is similar to answer choice (C) and is incorrect for the same reasons.

(E) is incorrect because a *carefree* criminal would not have the forethought to wear gloves and prevent leaving evidence behind. This is similar to answer choice (C) and is incorrect for the same reasons.

### 3) E

The main clue in this question is “unseen by the public for decades.” This means that Salinger was a very private person who did not make many public appearances. People who do not like to go out in public are often referred to as (E) *reclusive*. Reclusive people withdraw from society and lead very private lives.

(A) is incorrect because *adversarial* people like to cause conflict and fight with others. However, nothing in the question leads us to believe that Salinger was adversarial. We only know from the question that he was not often seen in public.

(B) is incorrect because if Salinger had been *sociable*, then he would have gone out in public quite often in order to socialize. We know from the question that Salinger was the exact opposite, so we can ignore this answer choice.

(C) is incorrect because the question provides no evidence that Salinger was ever *adulated* (highly praised). Although his works were very well-respected in real life, we cannot tell this from the question because this information is unrelated to his lack of public appearances.

(D) is incorrect because if Salinger had been *gregarious*, then he would have gone out in public quite often in order to socialize. This is very similar to answer choice (B) and is incorrect for the same reasons..

### 4) A

The main clue in this question is “brown noses and lauds the decisions of our boss.” Some people treat their superiors in this way in order to gain their appreciation and favor. They think that making the boss feel good will result in their boss’s preferential treatment. Someone who does this can be considered a (A) *sycophant*. A sycophant is someone who flatters others to gain prestige of their own.

(B) is incorrect because a *usurper* is someone who takes power by force without truly being the rightful ruler or superior. This does not describe the behavior of my coworker.

(C) is incorrect because a *fanatic* is someone who very strongly supports an ideal. My coworker, however, only shows support for my boss because my

coworker himself wants to gain the boss's favor, not because he is truly fanatical about my boss.

**(D)** is incorrect because a *skeptic* is someone who exhibits a lack of belief, but nothing in the question indicates that my coworker disbelieves anything in particular.

**(E)** is incorrect because a *zealot* is someone who holds strong beliefs similar to those of a *fanatic*. This answer choice is similar to **(C)** and is incorrect for the same reasons.

5) **B**

The key words in this question are "succinct" and "brevity." This means that the coach has a reputation for speaking very little. When someone speaks very little, that person can be described as **(B)** *terse*. If the coach gives succinct (short and to the point) comments and having a tendency towards being brief when speaking, then he or she could be described as terse.

**(A)** is incorrect because *loquacious* and "talkative" are very close in meaning. We can ignore this answer choice right away, because we know the coach is the opposite of talkative.

**(C)** is incorrect because the coach may be *innovative*, but we cannot tell this from the question. Someone who is innovative comes up with many new ideas, but there is nothing in the question that indicates that the coach comes up with original ideas very often.

**(D)** is incorrect because there is nothing in the question to indicate that the coach is *insightful*. Insightful people provide meaningful commentary that can help clarify facts or situations to others. However, this is unrelated to the fact that the coach speaks very little.

**(E)** is incorrect because there is nothing in the question to indicate that the coach is *intrepid* (bold or brave). This characteristic does not relate to the fact that the coach only speaks very little.

6) **E**

The main clues in this sentence are "otherwise" and "surprised everyone." Since people are usually only surprised when something out of the ordinary happens, this means that the employee acted in a way that was contrary to how she normally acts. The correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship. Someone who is usually **(E)** *punctual* would surprise others by being *late* for anything. "Punctual" means "on time." If the employee misses a deadline, this is the opposite of her usual, punctual behavior.

(A) is incorrect because there is no contradiction between being *exquisite* and *gorgeous*. These are both positive characteristics, and neither one relates to meeting a deadline, so we can ignore these answer choices.

(B) is incorrect because there is no opposite relationship between being *adept* (skillful, confident) and being *vulgar* (rude, coarse). Adept has a positive connotation and vulgar is negative, but these words are still unrelated to one another. It is possible to be adept and vulgar at the same time.

(C) is incorrect because there is no opposite relationship between being *skillful* and *calculating* (precisely controlling). It is possible to be both at the same time.

(D) is incorrect because there is no opposite relationship between being both *helpful* and *pragmatic* (practical, realistic). It is possible to be both at the same time.

7) **B**

The main clues in this sentence are “unnecessary” and “actually did nothing.” This means that snake-oil salesmen sold things that were useless and ineffective. This would earn them a negative reputation. (B) *Huckster* is another word for “salesman” that has a negative connotation. *Shoddy* is a descriptive word that means “inferior” or “poor quality.” Both of these words have negative connotations to describe both the salesmen and what they sold.

(A) is incorrect because snake-oil salesmen were, in fact, *distributors* of tonics that had advertised *medicinal* purposes, but these tonics were often worthless. This is why the question says the tonics “actually did nothing for those who purchased them.” This is not the best answer choice.

(C) is incorrect because the salesmen may have been *catalogers* of the things they sold, but these wares were not *sufficient* in any way. They were inferior goods insufficient for any need.

(D) is incorrect because there is no reason to believe that the salesmen were *misers* (mean people who are stingy with money). This is unrelated to the clues in the question, so we can ignore this answer choice right away.

(E) is incorrect because there is no reason to believe that the salesmen were *educators* (teachers). This is unrelated to the clues in the question, so we can ignore this answer choice right away.

8) **C**

The main clue in this question is “unwavering loyalty.” Loyalty is a positive quality that refers to staying true or devoted to one’s companions or beliefs.

“Unwavering” loyalty refers to loyalty that cannot be challenged or betrayed. If the

Musketeers showed unwavering loyalty to one another, then they never broke their **(C)** *allegiance to* one another. “Allegiance” is very similar in meaning to “loyalty.”

**(A)** is incorrect because *submission* involves a power-based relationship of followers submitting to leaders, or inferiors submitting to superiors. Loyalty can certainly exist in a submissive relationship, but nothing in the question indicates that the Musketeers submitted to one another.

**(B)** is incorrect because the Musketeers most likely showed a lot of *kindness toward* one another, but kindness does not have as strong of a connotation as loyalty. They are positive words, but they do not relate to the deep sense of trust that accompanies loyalty or allegiance.

**(D)** is incorrect because the Musketeers most likely showed a lot of *affinity* (positive, affectionate feelings) for one another, affinity does not have a strong connotation, either. This is similar to answer choice **(B)** and is incorrect for the same reasons.

**(E)** is incorrect because The Musketeers could not have held *animosity toward* one another. Animosity refers to negative, hateful feelings that would harm the sense of loyalty that the Musketeers shared. We can ignore this answer choice, because the Musketeers most likely had the opposite kind of feelings for one another.