



● Sentence Completion 5 *(low-advanced SAT level)*

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

1. In the 1970s, gas prices rose drastically because of _____ of oil entering the marketplace; as with any commodity, gas prices are impacted by the basic laws of supply and demand.
 - A. a zenith
 - B. a glut
 - C. a graft
 - D. an inundation
 - E. a modicum
2. Much of Molière's work was satirical in nature; in *Tartuffe*, for instance, he _____ much of French high society, including church leaders.
 - A. admonishes
 - B. lampoons
 - C. immortalizes
 - D. lionizes
 - E. ensconces
3. The coach was dismayed to find that his team was unable to get past its _____ start; rather than being _____ in the second half, the team remained lethargic throughout.
 - A. slipshod ... enumerated
 - B. slow ... enervated
 - C. slapdash ... endured
 - D. sluggish ... energized
 - E. slothful ... enamored
4. In *On the Road*, Jack Kerouac documented the _____ lifestyle he and other members of the Beat generation practiced; rather than settle down in one place, many of them would move around from coast to coast.
 - A. transient
 - B. myopic
 - C. pedestrian
 - D. untenable
 - E. orthodox
5. One of the most effective ways to resolve conflict is to seek an outside mediator, someone who can hear both sides of the argument and attempt to _____ the angered parties.
 - A. inflame
 - B. pacify
 - C. outwit
 - D. bolster
 - E. beseech
6. Once the District Attorney convinced the _____ star witness to testify, her once _____ case suddenly appeared more than sufficient.
 - A. obsolete ... scanty
 - B. ruthless ... sanguine
 - C. duplicitous ... illusory
 - D. reluctant ... flimsy
 - E. paltry ... obstinate

Answers and Explanations

1) **E**

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 “rose,” as the prompt explains that gas price rose because of the missing word. The prompt gives one other piece of key information, stating that supply and demand impacts gas prices. The basic law of supply and demand states that the smaller a supply of a product, the more it will cost, assuming nothing has impacted the demand. Since gas is something almost everyone needs, if its price rose, the supply likely decreased. Thus, the missing word here must mean something that implies a decrease. **(E)** provides the best choice, as *modicum* means limited quantity.

(A) is incorrect because *zenith* means peak or summit. It is the opposite of the word the prompt is looking for, as the prompt requires a word that implies a decrease in the amount of oil entering the marketplace.

(B) is incorrect because *glut* means overstock. It is the opposite of the word the prompt is looking for, as the prompt requires a word that implies a decrease in the amount of oil entering the marketplace.

(C) is incorrect because *graft* means a piece of transplanted tissue. It has absolutely no connection to anything else in the prompt.

(D) is incorrect because *inundation* means an overwhelming amount. It is the opposite of the word the prompt is looking for, as the prompt requires a word that implies a decrease in the amount of oil entering the marketplace.

2) **B**

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 “satirical,” as the prompt uses *Tartuffe* as an example of how Molière’s work is satirical. Thus, the missing word must mean something that implies that Molière satirized “French high society” in *Tartuffe*. Choice **(B)** provides a word that carries that implication: *lampoons* means ridicules.

(A) is incorrect because *admonishes* means warns and, thus, does not relate to the fact that Molière’s work is satirical.

(C) is incorrect because *immortalizes* means bestows unending fame upon, implying that Molière celebrated “French high society,” even though the prompt calls his work, not lauding, but satirical.

(D) is incorrect because *lionizes* means treats as a celebrity, implying that Molière celebrated “French high society,” even though the prompt calls his work, not lauding, but satirical.

(E) is incorrect because *ensconces* means settles comfortably. Thus, *ensconces* does not relate to the prompt at all.

3) **D**

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using key words from the prompt. The key word for the first missing word is “lethargic,” which means drowsy. As the team “remained lethargic throughout” the game, it must have had a lethargic start. The second missing word also hinges on lethargic but must have an opposite meaning, as the prompt makes it clear that the coach had hoped the team would overcome its lethargic start in the second half, though this did not happen. Thus, the second missing word must mean something like “not lethargic.” Thus, (D) is the best choice, as *sluggish* means lethargic or slow and *energized* means invigorated. One who is invigorated would not be likely to be lethargic.

(A) is incorrect because *slipshod* means untidy and *enumerated* means listed. Neither word relates to the prompt.

(B) is incorrect because only one of the words works in context. While *slow* is synonymous with lethargic, *enervated* means weakened and cannot work in place of the second missing word, as the second missing word has to mean the opposite of lethargic. An enervated team would be likely to remain lethargic.

(C) is incorrect because *slapdash* means haphazard and *endured* means lasted. Neither word really relates to the prompt.

(E) is incorrect because only one of the words works in context. *Slothful* means lazy and could work for the first missing word, as both relate to lethargy, but *enamored* means in love, a concept that does not relate to this prompt.

4) **A**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. Here, the definition of the missing word is basically given after the semicolon: the lifestyle was defined by “moving around from coast to coast.” Thus, the missing word must be something that means moving around.

(A) is correct, as it offers such a word: *transient* means staying for a short time.

(B) is incorrect because *myopic* means shortsighted, which is not defined by moving around a lot.

(C) is incorrect because *pedestrian* refers to walking. While most members of the Beat Generation probably were able to walk, the prompt discusses the lifestyle of moving around a lot, not just the ability to walk.

(D) is incorrect because *untenable* means indefensible, a word that is not defined by moving around a lot.

(E) is incorrect because *orthodox* means traditional, a word that would neither describe the Beat Generation nor one who moves from coast to coast.

5) **B**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. The keyword here is “resolve,” and the prompt makes it clear that the goal of a mediator is conflict resolution. Thus, the missing word must be a verb that would at least contribute to conflict resolution. Of the answer choices, only (B) provides such a word. *Pacify* means soothe or calm down, and angered parties would probably have to be soothed or calmed down before they could effectively resolve a conflict.

(A) is incorrect because *inflame* means anger or incite. This is the opposite of what a mediator is supposed to do in order to resolve a conflict.

(C) is incorrect because *outwit* means outsmart or trick, and it does not make sense that a mediator would attempt to trick the angered parties in an attempt to resolve their conflict.

(D) is incorrect because *bolster* means reinforce. If the mediator wants to resolve a conflict, it would not make sense for him/her to attempt to strengthen the angered parties, as reinforcing their anger would only make them more likely to continue fighting.

(E) is incorrect because *beseech* means beg. An effective mediator would not need to beg the angered parties to make up, and the prompt does not suggest that begging would lead to conflict resolution.

6) **D**

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using key words from the prompt. In this prompt, each missing word has its own key word. The first missing word’s keyword is “convinced,” which implies that the “star witness” needed to be talked into testifying. Thus, the missing word must mean something like “hesitant” or “in need of convincing.” The second missing word’s key words are in the phrase “more than sufficient.” Since it was “suddenly” more than sufficient but was once whatever the missing word is, the missing word must be something that means insufficient or weak. Of the answer choices, only (D) provides two words that work in context: *reluctant* means hesitant and *flimsy* means not sturdy.

(A) is incorrect because *obsolete* means fallen into disuse and *scanty* means insufficient. Of these, only *scanty* could work in context, as a star witness could not possibly be obsolete to the prosecutor.

(B) is incorrect because *ruthless* means cruel and *sanguine* means cheerful. Neither word would work in context in the prompt.

(C) is incorrect because *duplicitous* means deceitful and *illusory means* deceptive. These words, though related to each other, do not work in context for the missing words, as the two missing words do not have a synonymous relationship.

(E) is incorrect because *paltry* means insignificant and *obstinate* means stubborn. While these words might work for the opposite blanks, paltry would not be used to describe the star witness, and illusory would not be used to describe the case overall.