



● Sentence Completion 7 *(low-advanced SAT level)*

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

1. One of Thoreau's favorite aspects of living in solitude on Walden Pond was the \_\_\_\_\_ that the peaceful, natural environment allowed him, a tranquility he knew he could not find in any city.
  - A. quietude
  - B. cacophony
  - C. constraint
  - D. verisimilitude
  - E. remorse
2. The dirge the band played captured perfectly the \_\_\_\_\_ air of the funeral: it was \_\_\_\_\_ and brought anyone who was not already crying to tears.
  - A. mournful ... restive
  - B. plaintive ... lugubrious
  - C. opulent ... luxurious
  - D. carefree ... jaunty
  - E. mirthful ... sorrowful
3. As something of a chocolate aficionado, my interest in the dessert was \_\_\_\_\_ by the menu's description of it as "a decadent blend of five varieties of chocolate."
  - A. plagued
  - B. gratified
  - C. depressed
  - D. polarized
  - E. piqued
4. Though the teacher at first thought Eric was \_\_\_\_\_ and had pulled the childish prank, she changed her mind after another student's confession \_\_\_\_\_ him.
  - A. perfunctory ... incited
  - B. malevolent ... indicted
  - C. innocent ... cleared
  - D. culpable ... exonerated
  - E. guilty ... exhumed
5. In an effort to maintain secrecy, the protagonists in spy movies often have to elude pursuers before arriving at \_\_\_\_\_ meetings.
  - A. clandestine
  - B. cursory
  - C. equitable
  - D. austere
  - E. public
6. Imagine being a Native American at the \_\_\_\_\_ of the first European ships, watching a previously unknown group of people arriving from a previously unknown land.
  - A. destruction
  - B. accord
  - C. advent
  - D. equinox
  - E. indignity

## Answers and Explanations

### 1) **A**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words in the prompt. The key word here is “tranquility,” and the prompt’s organization suggests that it is synonymous with the missing word, as tranquility is used as part of a clause that describes the missing word. Tranquility means peacefulness, so the correct answer would be a word that means tranquility or peacefulness. Choice **(A)** provides such a word: *quietude* means tranquility.

**(B)** is incorrect because *cacophony* means a harsh, discordant noise. Since the environment near Walden Pond was “peaceful” and “natural,” nothing in the prompt implies that Thoreau heard any noises, let alone harsh ones.

**(C)** is incorrect because *constraint* means repression of feelings. The prompt implies that Walden Pond was peaceful and resulted in tranquility, but it does not suggest that Thoreau repressed his feelings while he was there.

**(D)** is incorrect because *verisimilitude* means the appearance of truth. Nothing in the prompt suggests anything about either truth or the lack thereof at Walden Pond.

**(E)** is incorrect because *remorse* means guilt. Nothing in the prompt indicates that Thoreau felt guilt or even had anything to feel guilty about.

### 2) **B**

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using key words from the prompt. There are several key words to choose from here: “dirge,” “funeral,” and the phrase “brought anyone... to tears.” All of these words imply sadness, and both missing words must also describe sadness, as the construction of the prompt hinges on a colon, and colons are used to separate explanatory information from the rest of the sentence. Thus, the second part of this sentence is used to elaborate on the first part, so both words describe the “air of the funeral,” an air that has to be sad. Choice **(B)** is the only choice that provides two words that mean sad: *plaintive* and *lugubrious* both mean mournful or extremely sad.

**(A)** is incorrect because only one of the words works in context. *Mournful* means sad, and would work for the first missing word, but *restive* means impatient, a word that would not describe a dirge or a funeral.

**(C)** is incorrect because neither word works in context. Though the two words presented in **(C)** are synonymous, neither describes something sad. Both *opulent* and *luxurious* mean characterized by wealth.

**(D)** is incorrect because neither word works in context. Though the two words presented in **(D)** are synonymous, neither describes something sad. Both *carefree* and *jaunty* actually imply the opposite, as both words mean lighthearted.

**(E)** is incorrect because only the second word works in context. *Sorrowful* means sad, but *mirthful* means full of merriment and is not an adjective that would describe a funeral.

### 3) **E**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words in the prompt. Here, the key words are found in the phrase “chocolate aficionado,” a phrase that implies that the narrator is a chocolate enthusiast or lover of chocolates. The prompt has something of a cause-and-effect relationship, as the missing word is the result of the facts presented in the prompt. Thus, the author’s interest must have risen, since he or she loves chocolate and the dessert in question contains lots of chocolate. Therefore, choice **(E)** is the best choice, as *piqued* means aroused or excited.

**(A)** is incorrect because *plagued* means annoyed. There is no reason for a chocolate lover to be annoyed by a dessert containing lots of chocolate. (Also, an “interest” cannot logically be annoyed.)

**(B)** is incorrect because *gratified* means satisfied fully. Gratified could work to describe the narrator of the prompt after eating the dessert, but it is not the best choice for describing the narrator’s reaction to reading a description of the dessert. If the narrator described him or herself as “something of a description aficionado,” then a description could gratify him or her fully.

**(C)** is incorrect because *depressed* means sad or unexcited. There is no reason for a chocolate lover to be saddened or unexcited by a dessert containing lots of chocolate.

**(D)** is incorrect because *polarized* means split into opposite extremes. In order for this word to work in context, the prompt would have to describe the reaction of a chocolate hater as well as that of a chocolate lover.

### 4) **D**

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using key words from the prompt. The prompt hinges on the word “confession,” and the construction of the prompt implies that the two missing words are opposites of each other, since the prompt states that the teacher “changed her mind” after the confession. Since a confession implies an admission of guilt, the teacher must have first thought Eric was guilty of the prank until the confession of another student proved that Eric was not guilty. The correct answer choice would provide a word meaning guilty to replace the first missing word and a word meaning

cleared of guilt for the second missing word. Choice **(D)** provides such words: *culpable* means deserving blame, while *exonerated* means cleared of blame.

**(A)** is incorrect because *perfunctory* means not thorough and *incited* means started. Thus, neither word works in context, since neither word has anything to do with guilt or confessions.

**(B)** is incorrect because *malevolent* means wishing evil and *indict* means charge with a crime. While it's theoretically possible that the teacher thought Eric was evil (though the prompt does not fully imply this), the confession of the other student must have freed Eric of the teacher's suspicions, not caused her to charge him with the prank.

**(C)** is incorrect because only one of the words works in context. *Cleared* could work for the second missing word, because it implies that Eric would have been freed of blame. However, *innocent* also means free of blame. It does not work for the first missing word, since the two missing words have to be somewhat antithetical.

**(E)** is incorrect because only one of the words works in context. *Guilty* means committed an offense and works for the first missing word, but *exhumed* means dug out of the ground. Nothing in the prompt implies that Eric was ever in the ground, let alone dug out of it.

## 5) **A**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words in the prompt. The key word here is "secrecy," since the elusion (which means evasion) of pursuers has the purpose of maintaining secrecy before arriving at meetings. Thus, the missing word must mean secret as well. *Clandestine* means secret, so choice **(A)** is the best choice.

**(B)** is incorrect because *cursorily* means casual or not thoroughly done. Nothing in the prompt implies that the meetings are casual. If the meetings were casual, then it would not make sense for the protagonists to try to elude pursuers.

**(C)** is incorrect because *equitable* means impartial. The prompt only implies that the meetings are secret and does not mention anything about how fair or unfair they are.

**(D)** is incorrect because *austere* means stern. Nothing in the prompt implies that the meetings are stern, as the only thing stated is that the protagonists wish to maintain secrecy.

**(E)** is incorrect because *public* means open to everyone. If the meetings were open to everyone, the protagonists would not care if they were pursued or not and would not be likely to try to elude others.

6) **C**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words in the prompt. Here the key word is “arriving.” The prompt describes being present at the first arrival of European ships and the wonder thereof. Thus, the missing word must be one that means arrival. Choice **(C)** provides such a word: *advent* means arrival.

**(A)** is incorrect because *destruction* means ruin. The prompt suggests how amazing it would be to be a Native American when European ships first arrived, not when they were destroyed.

**(B)** is incorrect because *accord* means agreement. The prompt suggests how amazing it would be to be a Native American when European ships first arrived, not when they first made some sort of agreement.

**(D)** is incorrect because an *equinox* is a 24-hour period of equal daylight and darkness, as at the beginning of autumn or spring. This word has absolutely no connection to anything in the prompt.

**(E)** is incorrect because *indignity* means offensive treatment. While history shows that Europeans did not treat Native Americans well, this prompt suggests how amazing it would be to be a Native American when European ships first arrived and does not delve into the events that happened after the arrival of Europeans.