● Sentence Completion 18 (low-intermediate level)

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

1. Despite _____ in sales, the company’s profits _____.
   A. an improvement ... grew
   B. a decrease ... went down
   C. an incline ... enlarged
   D. an increase ... declined

2. Baby lion cubs are not _____ enough to hunt with the adults.
   A. smart
   B. hungry
   C. mature
   D. passionate

3. Margot was not sick. She was just _____ to be sick so she would not have to go to school.
   A. pretending
   B. expecting
   C. trying
   D. wanting

4. Unlike her _____ brother, Ginny is very _____.
   A. outgoing ... talkative
   B. shy ... social
   C. uneducated ... friendly
   D. serious ... intense

5. Nostradamus was able to make amazing _____. Many of the events he envisioned came true in the future.
   A. predictions
   B. announcements
   C. ideas
   D. potions

6. The decision _____ the president his career. Nevertheless, he felt that he made the right choice.
   A. won
   B. earned
   C. cost
   D. got

7. After committing such _____ crime, many people thought it would be _____ if the criminal received the harshest penalty.
   A. a terrible ... wrong
   B. an insignificant ... reasonable
   C. an unimportant ... understandable
   D. a horrible ... fair

8. My grandmother thinks it’s wrong for women to wear pants. As a result, she only wears _____.
   A. skirts
   B. shoes
   C. shirts
   D. gloves

9. The _____ suit does not fit the _____ man.
   A. wool ... elderly
   B. tight ... skinny
   C. small ... overweight
   D. elegant ... rich

10. Although it is _____, the coral snake is very _____.
    A. quick ... slow
    B. colorful ... fancy
    C. small ... dangerous
    D. uncommon ... rare
Answers and Explanations

1) D
The word “despite” means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. This means that the correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship between a company’s sales and profits. If the company experienced an increase in sales, but profits declined, then sales and profits moved in opposite directions. Choice (D) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If there was an improvement in sales and profits grew, then both sales and profits increased, so there is no opposite relationship.

(B) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If there was an incline in sales and enlarged profits, then both sales and profits increased, so there is no opposite relationship.

(C) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If there was a decrease in sales and profits went down, then both sales and profits moved in a negative direction, so there is no opposite relationship.

2) C
The main clues in this question are the phrase “baby lion cubs” and the word “adults.” This means that the correct answer choice will deal with the main difference between baby cubs and adult lions. In addition to age, cubs and adults differ in maturity. Baby cubs are not mature enough to hunt with adults. They are physically too small, and they are not mentally prepared or experienced enough to hunt. Choice (C) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not refer to the difference in age or level of development between the cubs and the adults. Baby lion cubs may be smart, but we cannot tell from the question. We only know that there is a difference between babies and adults with respect to age and development.

(B) is incorrect because it does not refer to the difference in age or level of development between the cubs and the adults. Baby lion cubs may be hungry, but we cannot tell from the question. We only know that there is a difference between babies and adults with respect to age and development.

(D) is incorrect because it does not refer to the difference in age or level of development between the cubs and the adults. Baby lion cubs may be passionate, but we cannot tell from the question. We only know that there is a difference between babies and adults with respect to age and development.

3) A
The main clues in this question are “Margot was not sick” and “so she would not have to go to school.” If you are not sick but you do not want to go to school, you can pretend to be sick. This means that you tell others that you are sick and act like you are sick. If others believe you, then they will not make you go to school. This is not the right thing to do, because it involves lying, but it is still the correct answer choice. Choice (A) is correct.

(B) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. expecting to be sick does not result in staying home from school.

(C) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. Trying to be sick does not result in staying home from school.

(D) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship. Wanting to be sick does not result in staying home from school.

4) B
The word “unlike” means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. This means that the correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship between Ginny and her brother. If Ginny’s brother is shy but she is social, then they have opposite characteristics. Choice (B) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If Ginny’s brother is outgoing and Ginny is talkative, then they have similar personalities. They cannot be opposites.

(C) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If Ginny’s brother is uneducated and Ginny is friendly, their personalities are not related. These characteristics cannot be opposites because they have no relationship at all.

(D) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If Ginny’s brother is serious and Ginny is intense, they have similar personalities. They cannot be opposites.

5) A
The main clue in this question is the phrase “Many of the events he envisioned came true in the future.” This means that Nostradamus envisioned events before they happened. Another way to say this is that he made predictions. A prediction is a guess about what will happen in the future. Choice (A) is correct.

(B) is incorrect because it does not refer to the fact that Nostradamus envisioned events before they happened. It is possible that Nostradamus made amazing announcements, but we cannot tell from the question, because announcements do not anticipate future events.
(C) is incorrect because it does not refer to the fact that Nostradamus envisioned events before they happened. It is possible that Nostradamus had amazing ideas, but we do not know from the question. Ideas are thoughts created by an individual and do not anticipate future events.

(D) is incorrect because it does not refer to the fact that Nostradamus envisioned events before they happened. It is possible that Nostradamus made amazing potions, but we cannot tell from the question. Potions are mixtures of chemicals; they have nothing to do with telling the future.

6) C
The word “nevertheless” means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. This means that the correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship between two characteristics of the president’s decision. If the president feels that he made the right choice, this is a positive characteristic. The other characteristic must therefore be negative. If the decision cost the president his career, this means that he lost his job over the decision. This is a negative characteristic, and it sets up an opposite relationship with the fact that he felt it was the right choice. Choice (C) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If the decision won the president his career, it means that the decision helped him become president. However, this is a positive outcome, and the question calls for a negative one.

(B) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If the decision earned the president his career, it means that the decision helped him become president. However, this is a positive outcome, and the question calls for a negative one.

(D) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If the decision got the president his career, it means that the decision helped him become president. However, this is a positive outcome, and the question calls for a negative one.

7) D
The main clue in this question is the phrase “harshest penalty.” This means that there will be a logical relationship between a crime and the criminal’s harsh penalty. Usually, the severity of a penalty depends on the severity of the crime. The harshest penalties are reserved for the worst crimes. If the criminal committed a horrible crime, it would be fair for him to receive the harshest penalty. Choice (D) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship between the crime and the penalty. It would not be wrong to pay a harsh penalty after committing a terrible crime; it would be fair.
(B) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship between the crime and the penalty. It would not be reasonable to pay a harsh penalty after committing an insignificant crime; it would be very unfair.

(C) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship between the crime and the penalty. It would not be understandable to pay a harsh penalty after committing an unimportant crime; it would be unfair.

8) A
The phrase “as a result” means that two things progress in a logical way. This means that there will be a logical, cause-and-effect relationship between what my Grandmother wears and the fact that my Grandmother thinks it's wrong for women to wear pants. My Grandmother is a woman who thinks that women should not wear pants, so she must not wear pants. She must wear something else to cover herself from the waist down. A skirt can cover a person’s body from the waist down. If my Grandma does not wear pants, she might wear skirts. Choice (A) is correct.

(B) is incorrect because shoes do not cover a person’s body from the waist down, and therefore cannot be substituted for pants. We are looking for a piece of clothing that can be worn instead of pants.

(C) is incorrect because shirts do not cover a person’s body from the waist down, and therefore cannot be substituted for pants. We are looking for a piece of clothing that can be worn instead of pants.

(D) is incorrect because gloves do not cover a person’s body from the waist down, and therefore cannot be substituted for pants. We are looking for a piece of clothing that can be worn instead of pants.

9) C
The main clue in this question is the phrase “does not fit.” This means that a characteristic of the suit and a characteristic of the man are in conflict, resulting in the fact that the suit does not fit him. If the man is overweight, he will not fit in a small suit. He would need a large suit, because he is a large man. Choice (C) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship between a characteristic of the suit and a characteristic of the man. An elderly man can wear a wool suit. Wool suits are for everyone, regardless of age.

(B) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship between a characteristic of the suit and a characteristic of the man. A skinny man can fit in a tight suit, because both of these characteristics relate to being small.
(D) is incorrect because it does not set up a logical relationship between a characteristic of the suit and a characteristic of the man. A rich man can fit into an elegant suit; the elegance of the suit does not prevent a rich man from wearing it.

10) C
The word “although” means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. This means that the correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship between two characteristics of a snake. If the snake is small, you might not expect it to be dangerous. If it is dangerous and small, this is the opposite of what you expect. Choice (C) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up an appropriate opposite relationship between the characteristics of the snake. It is impossible to be quick and slow at the same time. Even though these words are opposites, they do not set up a logical relationship because the completely contradict each other.

(B) is incorrect because it does not set up an appropriate opposite relationship between the characteristics of the snake. A snake can be both colorful and fancy without defying expectations; these characteristics are not opposites.

(D) is incorrect because it does not set up an appropriate opposite relationship between the characteristics of the snake. Uncommon and rare mean the same thing. They both mean that this kind of snake is not seen very often and is hard to find. These words are not opposites.