

• Sentence Completion 1 Level 9

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. Athens is remembered by historians as a peaceful society known for its philosophers and scientists, while its neighbor, Sparta, is remembered for its _____ people and focus.
A. chivalrous
B. contentious
C. controversial
D. inflammatory
E. martial
2. The storm _____ our efforts to hold a company picnic in the park last weekend, because it was impossible to stay outdoors in such a _____.
A. destroyed ... squalor
B. bolstered ... torrent
C. thwarted ... downpour
D. increased ... monsoon
E. ruined ... tragedy
3. The two rich cousins were very similar to each other in their _____ lifestyles: both spent money freely and ostentatiously displayed the _____ of their homes to their less wealthy neighbors.
A. lavish ... opulence
B. frugal ... misery
C. stingy ... sumptuousness
D. austere ... grandeur
E. luxurious ... deficiency
4. Tim was such a worthless and lazy contributor to the group that his inclusion in it served as _____, rather than an advantage, to the group's progress.
A. a hindrance
B. a positive
C. an onus
D. a cancer
E. a boon
5. Many critics worry that technological devices are becoming _____ too soon these days; they contend that humans are becoming too obsessed with progress and that the proliferation of outdated and outmoded technology underscores this obsession.
A. empowered
B. electronic
C. obsolete
D. updated
E. reconfigured
6. Far from being harmful as was thought to be the case, running on bare feet is _____ at worst and beneficial at best.
A. innocuous
B. detrimental
C. profitable
D. ambivalent
E. injurious

Answers and Explanations

1) E

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its meaning by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “while,” which sets up an opposite relationship between Athens and Sparta. Thus, if Athens is “peaceful,” Sparta must be the opposite of peaceful. *Martial* means warlike or inclined to war, making it the opposite of peaceful, so choice (E) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because *chivalrous* means having the qualities of chivalry, namely bravery, courtesy, and loyalty. This does not set up the necessary opposite relationship with “peaceful,” since chivalrous is not the same as warlike or hostile.

(B) is incorrect because *contentious* means controversial. This does not set up the necessary opposite relationship with “peaceful,” since contentious is not the same as warlike or hostile.

(C) is incorrect because *controversial* means giving rise to public disagreement. This does not set up the necessary opposite relationship with “peaceful,” since controversial is not the same as warlike or hostile.

(D) is incorrect because *inflammatory* means intended to arouse anger or violent feelings. This does not set up the necessary opposite relationship with “peaceful,” since inflammatory is not the same as warlike or hostile.

2) C

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, each missing word has its own set of keywords. The first missing word’s keyword is “because,” which indicates a cause-and-effect relationship between the two clauses of the sentence and explains what the storm did to the picnic efforts. Since “it was impossible to stay outdoors,” the storm must have made it impossible to hold the picnic in the park. The second missing word’s keyword is the “storm,” since the second missing word refers to what it was impossible to stay outdoors in. The correct choice will provide one word that implies that the storm hurt efforts and one word that means storm. Because *thwarted* means prevented someone from accomplishing something, and a *downpour* is a heavy rainfall, choice (C) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because only the first word could work in context. *Destroyed* means ruined something, while *squalor* is a state of being extremely dirty and unpleasant. Though the storm could have destroyed “efforts to hold a company picnic” outside, squalor is not related to a storm.

(B) is incorrect because only the second word could work in context. *Bolstered* means strengthened or supported, while a *torrent* is a sudden, violent, and copious outpouring of something, including rain. A storm could be referred to as “such a torrent,” but a storm would not improve the efforts to hold a picnic outside.

(D) is incorrect because only the second word could work in context. *Increased* means made greater or larger, while a *monsoon* is a persistent wind that may be accompanied with rain in Southeast Asia. The “storm” in the prompt could be a monsoon if the prompt took place in Southeast Asia, but “efforts to hold a company picnic” outside would not be increased by a storm.

(E) is incorrect because only the first word could work in context. *Ruined* means reduced to a state of decay or collapse, while a *tragedy* is an event causing great suffering. Though the storm could have destroyed “efforts to hold a company picnic” outside, a storm is not necessarily a tragedy.

3) A

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their meanings by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keywords are in the clause “both spent money freely and ostentatiously.” Since the cousins are “similar to each other” and spent money freely, the two missing words must both relate to being “rich” and loose with money. Thus, the correct choice will provide a pair of words with similar meanings, both of which relate to being rich. *Lavish* means very extravagant or rich, while *opulence* is great wealth or luxuriousness, so choice (A) is correct.

(B) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of words with similar meanings. *Frugal* means sparing or economical with regard to money, while *misery* is a state of great distress or discomfort. These words have no clear relationship. Additionally, people who “spent money freely” would not be said to live frugal lifestyles.

(C) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of words with similar meanings. *Stingy* means cheap or miserly, while *sumptuousness* is the state of being splendid and expensive-looking. These words are opposites, not synonyms.

(D) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of words with similar meanings. *Austere* means severe or strict in manner, while *grandeur* is splendor and impressiveness. These words are opposites, not synonyms.

(E) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of words with similar meanings. *Luxurious* means extremely comfortable in an expensive way, while *deficiency* is a failing or shortcoming. These words are opposites, not synonyms.

4) A

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its meaning by using keywords from the prompt. Here the keywords are “rather than,” which sets up an opposite relationship between what Tim was and “an advantage.” The opposite of an advantage is a deficit or something that hurts something else, so the missing word must refer to something negative that would describe a

person who is “a worthless and lazy contributor.” A lazy contributor would not help his group. Since a *hindrance* is an obstacle or thing that provides delay or obstruction to the progress of something, choice **(A)** is correct.

(B) is incorrect because a *positive* is something good. This is the opposite of a correct choice, since a correct choice would be a word that is the opposite of “an advantage.”

(C) is incorrect because an *onus* is a difficult obligation or burden. This does not work in context because nothing in the prompt implies that Tim was himself an obligation, as nothing implies that Tim was required to be in the group.

(D) is incorrect because a *cancer* is an evil condition or thing that spreads destructively. Nothing in the prompt implies that Tim’s worthlessness and laziness were spreading to other members of the group, so this choice does not work in context.

(E) is incorrect because a *boon* is a blessing or something that is helpful. This is the opposite of a correct choice, since a correct choice would be a word that is the opposite of “an advantage.”

5) C

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its meaning by using clues from the prompt. Here, the main clue is the semicolon, which is used to link independent clauses that are logically related. This means there is a relationship between what “technological devices are becoming” and “the proliferation of outdated and outmoded technology.” The missing word refers to what the devices are becoming, so it must likewise mean outdated or outmoded. Because *obsolete* means out of date or no longer in use, so choice **(C)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because *empowered* means given authority or power. Technological devices cannot be given authority or power, since technological devices cannot rule a society. Therefore, this choice is illogical.

(B) is incorrect because *electronic* means powered by electricity. Any technological device can be electronic regardless of whether or not it is “outdated” or “outmoded,” since being outdated has no connection to being electronic or non-electronic.

(D) is incorrect because *updated* means made more modern or up to date. This is the opposite of a correct choice, since the prompt implies that the “technological devices” in question are becoming “outdated and outmoded,” not updated.

(E) is incorrect because *reconfigured* means remodeled, remade, or restructured. This is the opposite of a correct choice, since the prompt implies that the “technological devices” in question are becoming “outdated and outmoded,” not remodeled.

6) A

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its meaning by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keywords are the phrase “far from being,” a phrase that implies a negative or opposite relationship. This means that “running on bare feet” is the opposite of “harmful,” so the missing word must likewise mean the opposite of harmful. Because *innocuous* means harmless or inoffensive, choice **(A)** is correct.

(B) is incorrect because *detrimental* means harmful. This does not set up the necessary opposite relationship with “harmful.”

(C) is incorrect because *profitable* means beneficial or useful. This does not work because the prompt implies that “running on bare feet” can be “beneficial at best” and something else “at worst.” It would be illogical to say that it is profitable at worst and beneficial at best, since profitable is synonymous with beneficial.

(D) is incorrect because *ambivalent* means having mixed feelings about someone or something. This cannot work in context because ambivalent can only logically describe a person and not an action such as “running on bare feet.”

(E) is incorrect because *injurious* means harmful. This does not set up the necessary opposite relationship with “harmful.”