



● Sentence Completion 30 *(low-advanced SAT level)*

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

1. Critics felt that the activist movement would be more effective if the protesters could rally around a single cause or issue rather than the _____ of complaints that they cited.
 - A. docket
 - B. elucidation
 - C. synopsis
 - D. litany
 - E. cartulary
2. In addition to commissioning his later works, the Medici family financed Michelangelo's early education; without the family's _____, it is possible that Michelangelo never would have become such a renowned artist.
 - A. aversion
 - B. scurrility
 - C. esteem
 - D. praise
 - E. auspices
3. Voltaire's *Candide* tells the story of a once _____ lad whose sheltered life is disrupted, forcing the titular character's naiveté and optimism to give way to cynicism.
 - A. ingenuous
 - B. pessimistic
 - C. leery
 - D. sophisticated
 - E. misanthropic
4. In addition to cheating during the general election by buying votes, Joseph Kennedy attempted to _____ voters by paying a man with the same name as his son's opponent to put his name on the ballot, making it impossible for voters to know which Joseph Russo they were selecting.
 - A. convince
 - B. entice
 - C. cozen
 - D. dissuade
 - E. cajole
5. When it comes to writing, the old adage "too many cooks spoil the broth" holds true: because each writer has a unique voice, a _____ of voices and styles can ruin the cohesion of a story or screenplay.
 - A. diminution
 - B. dearth
 - C. modicum
 - D. multiplicity
 - E. homogeneity
6. At the end of the Spanish American War, the expansionist U.S. state Senator Albert J. Beveridge made impassioned speeches in favor of _____ the Philippines and making the island nation an American territory.
 - A. manumitting
 - B. abandoning
 - C. liberating
 - D. relinquishing
 - E. annexing

Answers and Explanations

1) D

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. Here, the key words are in the phrase “a single cause or issue.” The prompt’s structure suggests that the missing word is something contrary to this idea, given the use of the word “rather.” Thus, while one complaint would have been preferred, the actual number of complaints must have been rather large. Therefore, the missing word must reflect that there was a large number of complaints. Choice **(D)** is best, then, since a *litany* is a tedious recital or repetitive series.

(A) is incorrect because a *docket* is a list of cases up for trial or items on an agenda. While this word implies that the protesters had many complaints, this word is too specific for this prompt. The prompt does not suggest that the protesters’ complaints are in any sort of organized order on an agenda.

(B) is incorrect because an *elucidation* is something that makes a fact or idea clear. Critics would like an elucidation of the protesters’ purpose or cause. However, the missing word refers to what the protesters actually presented, not the clear, “single cause” that the movement’s critics desired.

(C) is incorrect because a *synopsis* is a brief summary. Critics would like a summary of the protesters’ purposes or causes boiled down to one core issue. However, the missing word refers to what the protesters actually presented, not the clear, “single cause” that the movement’s critics desired.

(E) is incorrect because a *cartulary* is a list of charters or title deeds. While this word implies that the protesters had many complaints, this word is too specific for the prompt. The prompt does not suggest that the protesters are complaining about title deeds.

2) E

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. This sentence hinges on a semicolon. Semicolons are used to separate related but independent clauses. Thus, everything after the semicolon here, including the missing word, elaborates on what is stated before the semicolon. The missing word describes what the Medici family offered Michelangelo. Two other words are used to describe the missing word: “commissioned” and “financed.” Thus, the missing word must refer to financial support. Choice **(E)** provides such a word: *auspices* are patronage or support.

(A) is incorrect because *aversion* is strong dislike or opposition, the very opposite of what the Medici family provided to Michelangelo.

(B) is incorrect because *scurrility* is gross abuse, the very opposite of what the prompt says the Medici family provided to Michelangelo.

(C) is incorrect because *esteem* is respect or regard. While this could describe the Medici family's feelings toward Michelangelo, this is not as strong a choice as is (E). Choice (E) is more directly related to the idea of the Medici family's financial support.

(D) is incorrect because *praise* is an expression of admiration or support. While the Medici family probably praised Michelangelo, this is not as strong a choice as is (E). Choice (E) is more directly related to the idea of the Medici family's financial support.

3) **A**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. Here, the key words are "sheltered" and "naiveté," two words that, like the missing word, describe Candide at the beginning of the book. Thus, the missing word must mean sheltered or naïve. Choice **(A)** is correct, as *ingenuous* means naïve, inexperienced, or unworldly.

(B) is incorrect because *pessimistic* means the opposite of optimistic (in other words: negative, doubtful, or gloomy). This word would describe Candide at novel's end but not at novel's beginning. The missing word must describe Candide at the beginning of the novel.

(C) is incorrect because *leery* means wary or suspicious. This word would describe Candide at novel's end but not at novel's beginning. The missing word must describe Candide at the beginning of the novel.

(D) is incorrect because *sophisticated* means cultured. This word cannot describe a youth who has lived a "sheltered life" characterized by "naiveté."

(E) is incorrect because *misanthropic* means hating humankind, though nothing in the prompt implies that Candide hates anyone.

4) **C**

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 "cheating," and the missing word describes something Kennedy did "in addition to" cheating. Thus, the missing word must also mean cheat, since the use of "in addition" requires a pair of synonymous or related actions. Choice **(C)** is the best choice, then, as *cozen* means cheat or deceive.

(A) is incorrect because *convince* means move by argument to belief. If Kennedy convinced voters to vote for his son, this would imply that he won over voters

legitimately. However, the prompt states that Joseph Kennedy cheated. He did not legitimately convince voters to choose his son.

(B) is incorrect because *entice* means convince or lead on using excitement. If Kennedy enticed voters to vote for his son, this would imply that he won over voters legitimately by making them excited about his son's candidacy. However, the prompt states that Joseph Kennedy cheated. He did not legitimately entice voters to choose his son.

(D) is incorrect because *dissuade* means deter. Since Kennedy attempted to sway the election, it would not make sense to say that he sought to deter voters from voting for his son.

(E) is incorrect because *cajole* means to convince through flattery. While the prompt makes it clear that Kennedy deceived voters, it does not suggest that he did so through flattery.

5) **D**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. In this prompt, the key words are in the phrase "too many cooks." The prompt hinges on a colon, which separates explanatory information from the rest of the sentence. Everything before the colon is explained by what is stated after the colon, so the missing word helps to explain why the "old adage" "holds true." The missing word describes what "can ruin the cohesion" of a piece of writing in the same way that the earlier part of the sentence explains what can ruin a meal. In both cases, the problem is too many participants or too many voices, so the missing word means many participants or voices. Therefore, choice **(D)** is correct, as a *multiplicity* is a large number or variety.

(A) is incorrect because *diminution* is the process of lessening something in size. This does not work in context. The prompt suggests that lessening the number of "voices and styles" would improve pieces of writing, not "ruin" them.

(B) is incorrect because *a dearth* is an inadequate supply. The prompt does not imply that there can ever be too few voices or styles for writing.

(C) is incorrect because a *modicum* is a moderate or small amount. This does not work in context. The prompt suggests that a small number of "voices and styles" would improve pieces of writing, not "ruin" them.

(E) is incorrect because *homogeneity* is sameness. This does not work in context. The prompt suggests that similarity in "voices and styles" would improve pieces of writing, not "ruin" them.

6) **E**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using key words from the prompt. Here, the key words are found in the phrase “making the island nation an American territory,” a phrase that, like the missing word, explains what Beveridge supported. Moreover, as Beveridge is described as “expansionist,” the prompt makes it clear that he wished to add the Philippines to the United States. Thus, the missing word is one that means adding or combining. Thus, choice **(E)** is correct, as *annexing* means attaching something to something else that is larger and more important.

(A) is incorrect because *manumitting* means releasing from slavery. The prompt neither implies that the Philippines was an enslaved nation nor that the “expansionist” Beveridge sought to free the island nation.

(B) is incorrect because *abandoning* means leaving completely. This word does not work in context. Beveridge could not possibly argue that the US should both simultaneously leave the Philippines and make it an American territory.

(C) is incorrect because *liberating* means freeing, though the prompt implies that Beveridge actually argued the US should not free the Philippines. Beveridge argued that the US should instead “make the island nation an American territory.”

(D) is incorrect because *relinquishing* means surrendering or turning over. This word does not work in context. Beveridge could not possibly argue that the US should both simultaneously give up the Philippines and make it an American territory.