



● **Sentence Completion 16** (*low-intermediate level*)

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

1. Although the puzzle seemed _____ at first, it was _____ to complete.
A. fun ... interesting
B. complicated ... easy
C. confusing ... hard
D. difficult ... lengthy
2. Even though trees, flowers, and bushes may look different, they are actually very _____.
A. distinct
B. similar
C. unique
D. original
3. The job was _____; it only took one day to finish.
A. impossible
B. boring
C. simple
D. exciting
4. Unlike the _____ water conditions common at northern beaches, southern beaches are relatively _____.
A. pure ... clean
B. salty ... cool
C. windy ... shallow
D. violent ... calm
5. The fragile sculpture is neither _____ nor _____.
A. light ... heavy
B. sturdy ... strong
C. tall ... short
D. safe ... attractive
6. Nina usually gets good grades, but her score on the last test was _____.
A. common
B. competitive
C. excellent
D. poor
7. The house was built using _____ materials: wood, steel, concrete, brick, stone, and tile.
A. cheap
B. a variety of
C. very few
D. weak
8. Some plants need full sunlight, while others _____ partial exposure to the sun.
A. require
B. choose
C. obtain
D. prefer
9. The _____ book in the series contains the story's long-awaited _____.
A. first ... plot
B. best ... conflict
C. longest ... hero
D. final ... conclusion
10. Erin has many friends at school. She is very _____.
A. popular
B. intelligent
C. busy
D. talkative

Answers and Explanations

1) **B**

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 how the puzzle seemed and how it actually was. If the puzzle seemed *complicated* at first, you expect it to be difficult and to take a long time to complete. If it were actually *easy* to complete, then this is the opposite of what is expected. Choice **(B)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. If a puzzle seems *fun* and it is actually *interesting*, there is no opposite relationship between how the puzzle seems and how it is. Both of these words describe the puzzle in a positive way.

(C) is incorrect because if a puzzle seems *confusing* and it is actually *hard*, there is no opposite relationship between how the puzzle seems and how it is. It is possible for a puzzle to be both confusing and hard at the same time, because these two words can be very close in meaning.

(D) is incorrect because if a puzzle seems *difficult* and it is actually *lengthy*, there is no opposite relationship between how the puzzle seems and how it is. A difficult puzzle would most likely take a long time to complete, so it can be both difficult and lengthy at the same time.

2) **B**

The phrase “even though” means that two or more things are related in a negative or opposite way. This means that the correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship between the fact that various plants seem to be “different” and how they actually are. *Similar* is the only answer choice that sets up an opposite relationship. The opposite of “different” is “similar.” Choice **(B)** is correct

(A) is incorrect because if something is *distinct*, then it is different enough to stand out from other things. This word has a very similar meaning to the question’s key word of “different.” It fails to set up an opposite relationship.

(C) is incorrect because if something is *unique*, that means that there is nothing else like it in the world. It is “different” from everything else in the world. This word fails to set up an opposite relationship.

(D) is incorrect because if something is *original*, it is the first of its kind. It is “different” because it is unlike anything that has come before it. This word does not set up an opposite relationship.

3) **C**

This punctuation mark (;) is called a semicolon. Semicolons combine two complete sentences that are logically related without using a joining word (conjunction) like “and” or “but.” This means that there will be a logical relationship between a characteristic of the job and how long it took to finish the job. If the job is *simple*, then it is not difficult, and it can be completed easily. A simple job can be completed in a short amount of time, such as a day. Choice **(C)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because if the job is *impossible*, then it cannot be done in one day. In fact, it cannot be done at all.

(B) is incorrect because if the job is *boring*, then we do not know if it can be finished in one day or not. There is no relationship between how boring a job is and how quickly it can be completed. Some boring jobs are short and others are long.

(D) is incorrect because if the job is *exciting*, then we do not know if it can be finished in one day or not. There is no relationship between how exciting a job is and how quickly it can be completed. Some exciting jobs are short and others are long.

4) **D**

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 the conditions at northern and southern beaches. *Violent* and *calm* set up an opposite relationship. Choice **(D)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because *pure* and *clean* are close in meaning. Water that is pure is also clean. These words do not set up an opposite relationship.

(B) is incorrect because *salty* and *cool* are unrelated. They do not set up any relationship at all.

(C) is incorrect because *windy* and *shallow* are unrelated. They do not set up any relationship at all.

5) **B**

The words “neither” and “nor” are used to express characteristics that a person, place, or thing does not have. This means that the correct answer choice will include two characteristics that a fragile statue does not have. Since “fragile” means “easily broken,” we know that the statue can be easily broken. This means that the statue is not *sturdy* or *strong*. Something that is sturdy and strong cannot be broken easily. Therefore, a fragile statue can be neither sturdy nor strong. Choice **(B)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because the statue might be *heavy* or *light*, but we cannot tell from the question. We only know from the question that the statue is “fragile.” We do not know anything about its weight.

(C) is incorrect because the statue might be *tall* or *short*, but we cannot tell from the question. We only know from the question that the statue is “fragile.” We do not know anything about its height.

(D) is incorrect because the statue might be *safe* or *attractive*, but we cannot tell from the question. We only know from the question that the statue is “fragile.” We do not know anything about its appearance or how safe it is.

6) **D**

The word “but” 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 Nina’s good grades and her score on the last test. If Nina’s score on the test was *poor*, this is the opposite of how good her scores usually are. Choice (D) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not set up an opposite relationship. For Nina, a *common* score would be a high score, because she usually gets good grades.

(B) is incorrect because a *competitive* score usually means a high score. When someone gets a competitive score on a test, it means that that person’s grades can compete against other people’s grades and probably beat them. This does not set up an opposite relationship with the fact that Nina usually gets high score.

(C) is incorrect because an *excellent* score would be a high score. This is a positive way of describing a score. This does not set up an opposite relationship with the fact that Nina usually gets high score.

7) **B**

The main clue in this question is the list of materials used to build the house. Six materials are named in the list. Therefore, the house was built with *a variety of* materials. This means that several different kinds of materials were used to construct the house. Choice (B) is correct

(A) is incorrect because we cannot tell from the question if the materials used to build the house were *cheap*. We know that the house was built from many different kinds of materials, but we don’t know the price of the materials.

(C) is incorrect because we know that the house was not build using *very few* materials, because the list of materials in the question is fairly long. If the house were constructed with very few materials, there would only be two or three items included on the list, but there are six.

(D) is incorrect because we cannot tell from the question if the materials used to build the house were *weak*. We know that the house was built from many different kinds of materials, but we don't know the strength of the materials.

8) A

The word "while" can mean 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 plants that need full sunlight and plants that need partial exposure to sunlight. The opposite relationship between full and partial sun exposure is already set up in the wording of the question. We actually need to choose the answer choice that is most similar in meaning to "need" in order to complete the sentence. *Require* and "need" are very close in meaning. Choice (A) is correct

(B) is incorrect because plants cannot make choices or judgments. They cannot *choose* full or partial sunlight.

(C) is incorrect because there is no direct relationship between whether or not the plants *obtain* partial sunlight exposure and whether they need partial sunlight exposure. It is possible that they can obtain more or less sunlight than they need.

(D) is incorrect because plants cannot make choices or judgments. They cannot *prefer* full or partial sunlight.

9) D

The main clue in this question is the phrase "long-awaited." This means that readers have been waiting for this part of the story for a long time. They have probably been waiting to see how the story will end. Whenever a story is divided into more than one book, the *final* book is the one that contains the ending, which is also called the resolution or *conclusion*. Choice (D) is correct

(A) is incorrect because the *first* book in a series would not be "long-awaited." Readers do not have to wait to see how a story begins, but they do have to wait to see how it ends.

(B) is incorrect because the main *conflict* in a story is usually established towards the beginning. Readers would not have to wait to understand the main conflict in a story.

(D) is incorrect because the *hero* of a story is usually introduced towards the beginning. Readers would not have to wait to be introduced to the hero of a story.

10)A

The main clue in this question is “many friends.” The correct answer choice will set up a logical relationship between one of Erin’s characteristics and the fact that she has many friends. If Erin has many friends, then she is *popular*. Popular people have many friends. Choice **(A)** is correct.

(B) is incorrect because although Erin may be *intelligent*, we cannot tell from the question. We only know from the question that Erin has many friends. We do not know anything about her intelligence.

(C) is incorrect because although Erin may be *busy*, we cannot tell from the question. We only know from the question that Erin has many friends. We do not know anything about her schedule or workload.

(D) is incorrect because although Erin may be *talkative*, we cannot tell from the question. We only know from the question that Erin has many friends. We do not know anything about whether she talks a lot.