



● **Sentence Completion 3** (*high-intermediate level*)

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

1. Considering he cheated on the most important exam of the year, receiving an automatic zero seems _____ punishment.
A. a brutal
B. an unfair
C. an appropriate
D. a useless
E. an unthinkable
2. Due to the _____ of hurricanes near the coast, a beach house must have _____ walls to prevent it from collapsing.
A. lack ... weak
B. scarcity ... normal
C. amount ... high
D. prevalence ... sturdy
E. abundance ... flimsy
3. After his _____ in the election, the new mayor adopted an aura of _____ that displeased many of the voters; he was too proud to listen to the citizens anymore.
A. speech ... humility
B. win ... meekness
C. campaign ... annoyance
D. loss ... sadness
E. victory ... arrogance
4. Trina's parents are concerned with how _____ she has become summer. They are trying to find more activities to occupy her time.
A. fit
B. idle
C. active
D. productive
E. employed
5. After Jose and Wendy get married, they are going to open a _____ bank account so that they can share expenses.
A. individual
B. separate
C. joint
D. independent
E. secret
6. Despite his remarkably _____ range of interests, the idea of becoming a bottle cap manufacturer seemed rather _____ to him.
A. diverse ... odd
B. narrow ... exotic
C. strange ... typical
D. regular ... unusual
E. simple ... selfish
7. Cindy's date proved to be a _____ gentleman; he opened doors, paid for dinner, and even called her a taxi ride home.
A. questionable
B. genuine
C. happy
D. comical
E. shady
8. Unlike the _____ hair of her dog, Sam's horse has _____ hair, making it easier to groom.
A. rough ... brown
B. thick ... rough
C. curly ... straight
D. smooth ... uneven
E. firm ... strong

Answers and Explanations

1) **C**

Cheating on a test is a very serious offense. Many teachers will give cheaters an automatic failing grade. If someone cheats on the most important exam of the year, most people would think that an automatic zero would be (C) an appropriate punishment. (C) is the correct answer.

People need to be punished for their wrongdoings. Punishing a student who cheats on an exam is not (A) brutal, (B) unfair, (D) useless, or (E) unthinkable. These characteristics describe a punishment that someone does *not* deserve, but students who get caught cheating *do* deserve to be punished. Therefore, these answer choices are incorrect.

2) **D**

When something is prevalent, it is very common. Hurricanes are very common on the Atlantic coast, so they have a high (D) prevalence. Because they are so common, any house built on the coast needs to have (D) sturdy walls in order to withstand the hurricane's force. "Sturdy" is another way of saying "strong" or "tough." Only very sturdy walls have a chance to withstand a hurricane. The correct answer is (D).

There is no (A) lack or (B) scarcity of hurricanes on the coast. These words mean that there is not a lot of something, but there are a lot of hurricanes on the coast every year. We can ignore these answer choices right away. (C) High or (E) flimsy walls will not necessarily withstand hurricane-force winds. Only sturdy walls can withstand a hurricane. Therefore, these answer choices are also incorrect.

3) **E**

The main clue in this question is "too proud." Remember that the semicolon (;) combines two independent clauses that logically progress from one another. This means that there is a relationship between the outcome of the election and the mayor's new attitude. We know from the question that he became "too proud," so we know that he became arrogant. (E) Arrogance is a characteristic that involves being too proud, confident, or stuck-up. If the mayor experienced a (E) victory in the election, then he won the election. He probably felt very powerful after winning, so he became arrogant. The correct answer is (E).

(A) Humility, (B) weakness, and (D) sadness are unrelated to being proud. In fact, "humility" is the opposite of "arrogance." We can ignore these answer choices right away. The mayor might have felt (C) annoyance at having to listen to the citizens' complaints all day, but this is not directly related to being proud, either. Therefore, this is not the best answer choice.

4) **B**

If you need more activities to fill up your time, then you probably have too much free time on your hands at the moment. Sometimes when people have too much free time, they become (B) idle. This means that they are lazy and bored, and they don't achieve or accomplish very much. The correct answer is (B).

The other answer choices do form logical relationships with the idea that Trina needs activities to occupy her time. If she is (A) fit or (C) active, then she spends her time exercising or playing sports. If she is (D) productive or (E) employed, then she spends her time working. None of these characteristics imply that Trina needs to occupy more of her time with new activities. Therefore, these answer choices are incorrect.

5) **C**

The main clue in this question is “so they can share expenses.” Many married couples believe that they should combine the money they earn and share their expenses so that one spouse does not have more money than the other. A (C) joint bank account helps couples do this, because they deposit and withdraw money from the same account. The correct answer is (C).

(A) Individual, (B) separate, or (D) independent bank accounts are accounts that belong to only one spouse. These are accounts that the other spouse cannot access. A (E) secret bank account would be an account that no one knows about, so we can assume it would not be used for sharing within a married couple. These answer choices are incorrect.

6) **A**

The word “despite” means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. The correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship with a man's interests and his impressions of being a bottle cap manufacturer. If someone has a (A) diverse range of interests, this means that he or she is interested in lots of different things. However, if that person thinks that being a bottle cap manufacturer is (A) odd, then he or she is probably not very interested in bottle cap manufacturing. This is the opposite of how that person views most other jobs or hobbies. The correct answer is (A).

The other answer choices do not set up opposite relationships. If the man in the question has a (B) narrow range of interests, then he is not interested in many things. He probably sees bottle cap manufacturing as (B) exotic because it is unusual. There is no contradiction or opposite relationship here. Similarly, there is no opposite relationship between having a (C) strange range of interests and thinking that bottle cap manufacturing is (C) typical, or having a (D) regular range of interests and thinking that it is (D) unusual. Nothing in the question relates to being (E) selfish, so we can ignore this answer choice.

7) **B**

“Gentleman” usually refers to a man who is very polite and treats women in a respectful manner. If Cindy’s date did lots of nice things for her, then he is a (B) genuine gentleman. This means that he truly acts like a gentleman, and he was not trying to be rude or behave badly. The correct answer is (B).

You cannot apply the words (A) questionable or (E) shady to a gentleman. These are negative words used to describe people who do bad things, but gentlemen are supposed to be polite and good. We do not know from the question if Cindy’s date was (C) happy or (D) comical. We only know that he did nice things for her, so we only know that he is a genuine gentleman.

8) **C**

The word “unlike” means that two things are related in a negative or opposite way. The correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship between Sam’s dog’s hair and her horse’s hair. The only answer choice that involve opposites is (C) curly ... straight. Straight hair is often easier to groom than curly hair. The correct answer is (C).

The other answer choices do not set up opposite relationships, and they do not all relate to how easy or difficult it is to groom an animal. (A) Rough and (A) brown are not opposites, and it is not easier to groom brown hair than it is to groom any other color of hair. Similarly, there is no opposite relationship between hair that is (B) thick and (B) rough, (D) smooth and (D) uneven, or (E) firm and (E) strong. Therefore, these answer choices are incorrect.