

## Sentence Equivalence

Example: *Select the **two** answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole **and** produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.*

Her \_\_\_\_\_ should not be confused with miserliness; as long as I have known her, she has always been willing to assist those who are in need.

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|---------------|-----------------|
| A) stinginess | D) illiberality |
| B) diffidence | E) intolerance  |
| C) frugality  | F) thrift       |

- ❖ Read the sentence. Before you even look at the answers, look for words or phrases that indicate the passage's general topic and tone.
- ❖ Look at structure. How many parts does the passage have? What's the relationship between those parts? Is the sentence saying the same thing in several ways? Is it talking about two opposites? Note trigger words like:

but	despite	indeed	consequently
although	unfortunately	since	likewise
yet	by contrast	also	similarly
- ❖ Try to guess the correct answer **before** you look at answer choices. If you can't, try to figure out whether the blank should be filled by a word with positive or negative connotations. Should it be a positive example of an earlier positive statement? A negative contrast to a later positive statement?
- ❖ Choose the two answers that are closest to your prediction.
- ❖ Remember that many words can have several different meanings. An answer may be based on a secondary meaning of a word, one which doesn't come to your mind right away (catholic, wide-ranging). A word used as a noun (bear) may have a different meaning when used as a verb (bear).
- ❖ Note any common prefixes (pro-/con-, pre-/post, in-/ex-) that appear in the stem word and answer choices; these may give you some clue to their relationship.
- ❖ Reread both your completed sentences to make sure they sound right and mean the same thing.

## Text Completion

Example: *For each blank, select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.*

There has been much hand-wringing about how unprepared American students are for college. Graff reverses this perspective, suggesting that colleges are unprepared for students. In his analysis, the university culture is largely (i)\_\_\_\_\_ entering students because academic culture fails to make connections to the kinds of arguments and cultural references that students grasp. Understandably, many students view academic life as (ii)\_\_\_\_\_ ritual.

Blank (i)

- a. primed for
- b. opaque to
- c. essential for

Blank (ii)

- d. an arcane
- e. a laudable
- f. a painstaking

- ❖ Read the passage. Before you even look at the answers, look for words or phrases that indicate the passage's general topic and tone.
- ❖ Look at structure. How many parts does the passage have? What's the relationship between those parts? Note any trigger words.
- ❖ Multiple-blank questions are harder than one-blank questions only if you try to fill in all blanks at the same time. Instead, work on one blank at a time, beginning with the easiest one. The easier blank is not always the first.
- ❖ Once you've see the relationship between the different parts of the sentence, try to figure out whether the blank you've chosen should be filled by a word with positive or negative connotations.
- ❖ Guess the correct answer **before** you look at answer choices. If you can't, establishing its connotations should at least help you eliminate.
- ❖ Choose the answer that's closest to your prediction. When you're unfamiliar with a word, try turning it into different forms: for example, *lucid*, *lucidly*, or even *Lucite*. Are any of these more familiar?
- ❖ Reread the sentence with your answer in it to be sure it makes sense.
- ❖ When all else fails, choose the answer option containing the hardest words.

### Practice Test: Sentence Equivalence

For the following questions, select the **two** answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole **and** produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

1. It is truly paradoxical that the Amazon, the lushest of all rainforests, is rooted in the most \_\_\_\_\_ of all soils.  
A. acidic  
B. coarse  
C. stark  
D. impoverished  
E. infertile  
F. austere
2. Cynics believe that people who \_\_\_\_\_ compliments do so in order to be praised twice.  
A. conjure up  
B. covet  
C. deflect  
D. grasp  
E. shrug off  
F. understand
3. A restaurant's menu is generally reflected in its decor; however, despite this restaurant's \_\_\_\_\_ appearance it is pedestrian in the menu it offers.  
A. elegant  
B. tawdry  
C. modern  
D. traditional  
E. conventional  
F. chic
4. International financial issues are typically \_\_\_\_\_ by the United States media because they are too technical to make snappy headlines and too inaccessible to people who lack a background in economics.  
A. neglected  
B. slighted  
C. overrated  
D. hidden  
E. criticized  
F. repudiated

5. While in many ways their personalities could not have been more different — she was ebullient where he was glum, relaxed where he was awkward, garrulous where he was \_\_\_\_\_ — they were surprisingly well suited.

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|---------------|---------------|
| A. solicitous | D. laconic    |
| B. munificent | E. fastidious |
| C. irresolute | F. taciturn   |

6. Because mercury has a variety of innocuous uses, including in thermometers and dental fillings, few people realize that it is one of the most \_\_\_\_\_ substances on the planet.

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|---------------|-----------------|
| A. acidic     | D. deleterious  |
| B. irritating | E. disagreeable |
| C. mundane    | F. pernicious   |

7. Robert's outwardly amiable disposition belied his \_\_\_\_\_ nature; he was more than willing to badmouth a colleague's work or spread gossip if he thought it would help him advance his career.

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|---------------|-------------|
| A. innocuous  | D. insipid  |
| B. malicious  | E. affable  |
| C. gregarious | F. churlish |

8. Possessed of an insatiable sweet tooth, Jim enjoyed all kinds of candy, but he had a special \_\_\_\_\_ for gumdrops, his absolute favorite.

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|--------------|-----------------|
| A. container | D. nature       |
| B. affinity  | E. disregard    |
| C. odium     | F. predilection |

### Practice Test: Text Completion

For each blank, select one entry from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

9. Voters have become so inured to the fickle nature of politicians that they responded to the levy of a new tax with \_\_\_\_\_.
- |              |               |                 |
|--------------|---------------|-----------------|
| a. amazement | c. alarm      | e. exasperation |
| b. stolidity | d. perplexity |                 |
10. Murray, whose show of recent paintings and drawings is her best in many years, has been eminent hereabouts for a quarter century, although often regarded with (i) \_\_\_\_\_, but the most (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ of these paintings (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ all doubts.
- |                |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. Blank (i)   | 3. Blank (ii)  | 4. Blank (iii) |
| a. partiality  | d. problematic | g. exculpate   |
| b. credulity   | e. successful  | h. assuage     |
| c. ambivalence | f. disparaged  | i. whet        |
11. The (i) \_\_\_\_\_ nature of classical tragedy in Athens belies the modern image of tragedy: in the modern view tragedy is austere and stripped down, its representations of ideological and emotional conflicts so superbly compressed that there's nothing (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ for time to erode.
- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 5. Blank (i)    | 6. Blank (ii)  |
| a. unadorned    | d. inalienable |
| b. harmonious   | e. exigent     |
| c. multifaceted | f. extraneous  |
12. Robert Ingersoll, although virtually unknown today, was the \_\_\_\_\_ orator of the nineteenth century; people travelled hundreds of miles to hear his eloquent speeches.
- |                |                 |                    |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| a. domineering | c. conventional | e. unobjectionable |
| b. consummate  | d. execrable    |                    |

13. New technologies often begin by (i) \_\_\_\_\_ what has gone before, and they change the world later. Think how long it took power-using companies to recognize that with electricity they did not need to cluster their machinery around the power source, as in the days of steam. Instead, power could be (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ their processes. In that sense, many of today's computer networks are still in the steam age. Their full potential remains unrealized.

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|---------------|------------------------|
| 7. Blank (i)  | 8. Blank (ii)          |
| a. uprooting  | d. transmitted to      |
| b. dismissing | e. consolidated around |
| c. mimicking  | f. incorporated into   |

14. For a philosopher of the analytic tradition, Williams' approach is somewhat (i) \_\_\_\_\_. Unlike most analytic philosophers, Williams has not kept himself (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ the rest of the humanities; in fact, he wishes to address colleagues in other fields in terms that will make sense to them. In particular, he objects to the (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ character of analytic philosophy: the amount it tries to accomplish by conceptual analysis and a priori argument alone. Williams is convinced that philosophy must use history, including historical imagination, to understand and defend values of any kind.

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|---------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 8. Blank (i)  | 9. Blank (ii)      | 10. Blank (iii)           |
| a. oracular   | d. aloof from      | g. meticulously inclusive |
| b. unorthodox | e. conversant with | h. strongly ahistorical   |
| c. bland      | f. exposed to      | i. overly contentious     |

15. Most artists maintain an attitude of (i) \_\_\_\_\_ toward their own work. They know, better than any critic would know, how their art (ii) \_\_\_\_\_ their ambitions. The artist would demand of his admirer, *Do you really think this is the best I am capable of?* Henri Cartier-Bresson's dismissal of his life's work in photography, however, is (iii) \_\_\_\_\_ : it seems almost contempt, or even hatred, not just for his achievement but for the medium itself.

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|-------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Blank (i)            | 2. Blank (ii)            | 3. Blank (iii)                  |
| a. extraordinary hubris | d. falls far short of    | g. entirely comprehensible      |
| b. irremediable disdain | e. eventually transcends | h. at another level altogether  |
| c. healthy disrespect   | f. subtly realizes       | i. at odds with his achievement |