

• **Sentence Completion 3** Level 10

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. Maria could not figure out which was more disgustingly humid: the sweltering Alabama air outside, or the _____ cellar in which she found herself during the tornado warning.
 - A. arid
 - B. cavernous
 - C. dank
 - D. subterranean
 - E. grimy

2. Almost every nation in the world has a holiday to _____ its birth, and the U.S. is no exception: every year, Americans celebrate the signing of their nation's Declaration of Independence, America's founding document, on July 4th.
 - A. disparage
 - B. sacrifice
 - C. malign
 - D. worship
 - E. observe

3. To fully understand _____ work such as George Orwell's *Animal Farm*, one must be able to differentiate _____ events of the plot from the abundant extended metaphors.
 - A. an allegorical ... literal
 - B. a parabolic ... figurative
 - C. a satirical ... emblematic
 - D. a straightforward ... comic
 - E. a tragic ... superficial

4. When the AFL and CIO unions merged in 1955, the _____ resulted in the largest and most powerful labor union in America.
 - A. dissociation
 - B. amalgamation
 - C. agreement
 - D. concord
 - E. estrangement

5. Although Dorian Grey's _____ ultimately leads to his undoing, many readers forget that he is _____ at the beginning of the novel, before the novel's events change him.
 - A. malevolence ... spiteful
 - B. enmity ... hostile
 - C. rancor ... arrogant
 - D. conceit ... humble
 - E. modesty ... unpretentious

6. Lenny Bruce's fans enjoyed his crass humor, but eventually his _____ jokes were deemed obscene by the general public, and he was blacklisted from performing at many nightclubs.
 - A. scatological
 - B. genteel
 - C. esoteric
 - D. decorous
 - E. vulgar

Answers and Explanations

1) **C**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “humid.” The prompt makes clear that Megan feels that two things are quite humid: the outside air and the cellar. The missing word describes the cellar, and the only other word in the sentence that describes the cellar is “humid,” so the missing word must also mean humid. Therefore, choice **(C)** is correct, as *dank* means unpleasantly moist or humid.

(A) is incorrect because *arid* means dry, the very opposite of humid.

(B) is incorrect because *cavernous* means hollow and large. While it could describe a cellar, the prompt does not provide enough information to describe the size of the cellar. The only information given about the cellar is that it is humid.

(D) is incorrect because *subterranean* means existing below the surface. This word can describe literally all cellars, since cellars are underground. Therefore, this word would be redundant in context.

(E) is incorrect because *grimy* means dirty. This word could describe a cellar, though the prompt does not provide any indication that it could describe this particular cellar.

2) **E**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definitions by using clues from the prompt. Here, the main clue is the colon, which is used to separate explanatory information from the rest of the sentence. This means that the fact that Americans celebrate their nation’s birth explains the fact that the United States “is no exception” to the principle established in the first clause. The first clause explains that most nations have a “holiday” relating to their “birth,” and the missing word describes what the holiday does. Since the example given is how Americans “celebrate” the 4th of July, the missing word must likewise mean celebrate. Because the secondary definition of *observe* means to celebrate or acknowledge an important date, choice **(E)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because *disparage* means to belittle and, as such, does not describe what most nations do to commemorate their births. The sentence only provides examples of a nation celebrating its history, not belittling it.

(B) is incorrect because *sacrifice* means to offer or kill something for religious purposes. The prompt only states that nations “celebrate” their births, not that they kill anyone or anything as part of a ritual.

(C) is incorrect because *malign* means to slander or defame. This word does not describe what most nations do their births, given that the sentence only provides examples of a nation celebrating its history.

(D) is incorrect because *worship* means to deify or treat with the reverence of a holy spirit. This word is too extreme for this prompt. While the prompt suggests that every nation celebrates its birth, it does not go so far as to suggest that most nations have turned its founders or leaders into gods.

3) **A**

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords from the prompt. In this prompt, each missing word has its own keywords. The first missing word’s keywords are at the end of the sentence, where the prompt gives the definition of the missing word as a work that involves “abundant extended metaphors.” The second missing word is contrary to “abundant extended metaphors” and describes the “plot” of the work. Thus, the first missing word describes a type of work that uses metaphors, and the second missing word implies the opposite of this figurative language. Therefore, the best choice is **(A)**: *allegorical* means involving a figurative or metaphorical treatment of a literal subject, while *literal* means not figurative or not metaphorical.

(B) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. *Parabolic* means pertaining to a parable, a short work that conveys meaning in an indirect manner. This word could be used for the first missing word. However, *figurative* means metaphorical and could not be used to refer to the part of a work that does not contain “abundant extended metaphors.”

(C) is incorrect because neither word works in context. *Satirical* means ironic or sarcastic, while *emblematic* means symbolic. The prompt does not suggest that the works in question are sarcastic. Moreover, symbolic would not be used to refer to the part of a work that does not use “abundant extended metaphors,” since metaphors are symbolic.

(D) is incorrect because neither word works in context. *Straightforward* means exact or precise. This does not describe a text that makes heavy use of metaphors or other figurative language. *Comic*, on the other hand, means humorous. There is no evidence in the prompt that works such as *Animal Farm* are intended to be humorous.

(E) is incorrect because only the second word works in context. *Tragic* means somber or depressing, though the prompt does not imply that the types of work in question are necessarily sad. However, *superficial* means pertaining to the surface and, as such, could work to describe the opposite of “abundant extended metaphors.”

4) **B**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “merged,” a verb that describes what the two unions did. The missing word describes the result of what the unions did. Thus, the

missing word must mean merger or combination. An *amalgamation* is the process of blending or merging into one, so choice **(B)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because dissociation is a separation, the exact opposite of what occurred between the AFL and CIO unions in 1955.

(C) is incorrect because an *agreement* is the state of being in accord. While the prompt implies that the two unions likely were in agreement, the prompt takes it further by saying the unions “merged.” Thus, this choice is not specific enough to work in context.

(D) is incorrect because a *concord* is an agreement between groups. While the prompt implies that the two unions likely were in agreement, the prompt takes it further by saying the unions “merged.” Thus, this choice is not specific enough to work in context.

(E) is incorrect because an *estrangement* is a separation, the exact opposite of what occurred between the AFL and CIO unions in 1955.

5) **D**

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords from the prompt. The keywords in this prompt are the phrase “before the novel’s events change him.” This phrase makes it clear that Dorian was one way before he became another way. The prompt provides another indication that this is so: it uses the word “although,” which sets up an opposite relationship. Thus, the correct choice will provide two antonyms, one describing what Dorian became and one describing what he was “at the beginning of the novel.” *Conceit* is excessive pride in oneself or arrogance, while *humble* means modest. These words are opposites, so choice **(D)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of antonyms. *Malevolence* is malice or hatred, while *spiteful* means caused by malice. As such, these words are similar in meaning, not the opposite of each other.

(B) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of antonyms. *Enmity* is the state of being hostile toward someone, while *hostile* means unfriendly or antagonistic. As such, these words are similar in meaning, not the opposite of each other.

(C) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of antonyms. *Rancor* is bitterness or resentfulness, while *arrogant* means having an exaggerated sense of one’s self-importance. These words have no clear relationship.

(E) is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of antonyms. *Modesty* is humility or a lack of arrogance, while *unpretentious* means lacking pretentiousness or arrogance. As such, these words are similar in meaning, not the opposite of each other.

6) **E**

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “crass,” which describes Bruce’s “humor.” Humor is nearly synonymous with the “jokes” the missing word describes. Moreover, the jokes were “deemed obscene,” so the missing word that describes them must mean obscene as well as crass. Because *vulgar* means indecent or obscene, choice **(E)** is correct.

(A) is incorrect because *scatological* means referring to excrement. While the prompt makes it clear that Bruce’s jokes were “crass” and “obscene,” it does not imply that they only focused on human waste.

(B) is incorrect because *genteel* means belonging to polite society. This word describes the opposite of Lenny Bruce’s jokes.

(C) is incorrect because *esoteric* means intended for a specific audience with a select interest or knowledge base. The prompt does imply that Bruce’s humor was not something everyone enjoyed, since it was “deemed obscene.” However, the prompt does not suggest that his jokes were targeted at a small group with a shared knowledge base.

(D) is incorrect because *decorous* means characterized by dignity and propriety. This describes the opposite of Lenny Bruce’s jokes.