

• Sentence Completion 2 Level 12

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. One of the goals of the Spanish conquistadores was to _____ the Native Americans to the Catholic faith, because the Spanish believed that natives who converted would have their souls saved from eternal punishment.

A. proselytize
B. hinder
C. suppress
D. prostrate
E. coerce
2. The criminal, having been found guilty, expected to be punished for her crimes, but she did not expect to be _____ and was shocked by how severe her sentence actually was.

A. scourged
B. exonerated
C. reproved
D. disciplined
E. lauded
3. Abraham Lincoln was famously known for his _____, which explains why he is often referred to as “Honest Abe.”

A. mendacity
B. humility
C. veracity
D. prevarications
E. piety
4. In making the decision on whether to drop the atomic bomb, President Truman attempted to _____ the weapon’s _____ effects, ultimately deciding that ending World War II outweighed the harmful consequences he imagined.

A. foresee ... benevolent
B. presage ... deleterious
C. prognosticate ... healthful
D. foreshadow ... innocuous
E. refute ... noxious
5. Sociopaths are unable to feel shame for their often heinous misdeeds, and as a result, they often shock people by their complete indifference to _____ and public outrage.

A. pride
B. veneration
C. admonishment
D. approbation
E. opprobrium
6. The reality show judge was known for his _____ comments; however, everyone who knew him recalled that he was never caustic in his personal dealings.

A. sycophantic
B. vituperative
C. calumniating
D. unctuous
E. punitive

Answers and Explanations

1) A

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “because,” which sets up a cause-and-effect relationship. This means that the fact that the Spanish thought that “natives who converted would” be saved relates to what the Spanish tried to do to the natives. The missing word describes what the Spanish tried to do, so it must mean convert. Because *proselytize* means to convert from one religious faith to another, choice **(A)** is correct.

(B) is incorrect because *hinder* means to delay or impede something. The prompt does not imply that the Spanish had a goal of impeding the natives from becoming Catholics.

(C) is incorrect because *suppress* means to put an end to the activities of someone or some organization. The prompt does not imply that the conquistadores’ goal was to put an end to the activities of the natives. Rather, the prompt merely implies that they tried to convert them.

(D) is incorrect because *prostrate* means to reduce to submission or weakness. Though the Spanish certainly did weaken the power of the natives, the prompt refers specifically to the conquistadores’ religious efforts, not to their general dominance over the natives. This word does not have a religious connotation, so it does not work.

(E) is incorrect because *coerce* means to compel by force. The prompt does not support the accusation that the conquistadores compelled the natives to the Catholic faith through force, although this may have actually been the case. The prompt does not offer enough information to support such a severe implication.

2) A

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “severe,” a word that, like the missing word, describes the criminal’s punishment. Thus, the missing word must mean severely punished. Choice **(A)** is the correct answer, because *scourged* means punished severely.

(B) is incorrect because *exonerated* means cleared of blame. This word does not work in context. The prompt makes it clear the criminal was not cleared of blame, as she was, instead, “found guilty.”

(C) is incorrect because *reproved* means gently criticized or corrected. The prompt implies that the criminal’s punishment was “severe,” not gentle, so this word does not work in context.

(D) is incorrect because *disciplined* means punished in order to instruct or correct. This word could work in context, but the prompt does not necessarily imply that the criminal was punished in order to instruct or correct her. This word also fails to relate back to the “severe” clue, as discipline can be either gentle or severe.

(E) is incorrect because *lauded* means praised. The prompt states that the criminal was punished, not praised. Lauded has, thus, the complete opposite meaning of the missing word.

3) C

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “honest,” and the missing word is used to explain why Lincoln was called honest. Thus, the missing word must also mean honesty, as only someone known for honesty would be called “honest.” Choice **(C)** is, therefore, correct, as *veracity* is habitual honesty or truthfulness.

(A) is incorrect because *mendacity* is a tendency to lie. It would not make sense to refer to someone as “honest” if he were known for lying.

(B) is incorrect because *humility* is modesty. The prompt does not suggest Lincoln was modest, as modesty and honesty are not necessarily related concepts.

(D) is incorrect because *prevarications* are lies. It would not make sense to refer to someone as “honest” if he were known for lying.

(E) is incorrect because *piety* is reverence for God or faith. Though one who is pious might also be honest, this word does not necessarily relate to honesty. Piety cannot be used to explain how Lincoln earned the nickname “Honest Abe.”

4) B

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, each missing word has its own keywords, and these keywords are indicated by the construction of the prompt. The first half of the sentence lines up perfectly with the last half, meaning the phrase “the harmful consequences he imagined” has the exact same meaning as the phrase that includes the missing words: both are indicative of the negative aspects of using the bomb that Truman considered before “ultimately deciding” to drop the bomb because it would end the war. The first missing word’s keyword is “imagined,” then, as both are verbs describing what Truman attempted to do, while the second missing word’s keyword is “harmful,” as both are adjectives describing the negative effects of the bomb. Choice **(B)** is, therefore, correct, since *presage* means to foretell or predict, while *deleterious* means harmful.

(A) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. *Foresee* means to predict and could work in context for the first word. However, *benevolent* means charitable, and the effects of a bomb could not possibly be described as charitable.

(C) is incorrect because only the first word works in context. *Prognosticate* means to predict and could work in context for the first word. However, *healthful* means conducive to good health, the opposite meaning of the word needed for the second missing word.

(D) is incorrect because neither word works in context. *Foreshadow* means to be a warning of a future event, though Truman “imagined” or was attempting to predict the effects of the bomb and was not himself an indicator of the effects. Likewise, *innocuous* means harmless, which would not work for the second missing word.

(E) is incorrect because only the second word works in context. *Refute* means to disprove or argue against and would not make sense in the prompt. However, *noxious* means harmful and, as such, would logically work in place of the second missing word.

5) E

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keywords are “unable to feel shame.” The missing word likewise describes something sociopaths cannot feel, so it must also mean shame. Since *opprobrium* is disgrace incurred for outrageously shameful behavior, choice (E) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because *pride* is a feeling of happiness over one’s accomplishments. The prompt does not say that sociopaths cannot feel pride, only that they cannot feel the opposite of pride, which is “shame.”

(B) is incorrect because *veneration* is a feeling of awe, respect, or reverence. The prompt only implies that sociopaths cannot feel “shame” and does not mention whether they can feel respect.

(C) is incorrect because *admonishment* is a warning or caution. The prompt states only that sociopaths cannot “feel shame” and does not provide enough information to suggest that they are “indifferent” to others’ warnings.

(D) is incorrect because *approbation* is approval, the very opposite of what the prompt claims sociopaths cannot feel. The prompt does not provide enough information to support the idea that sociopaths cannot feel approval.

6) B

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is “however,” which sets up a negative or opposite relationship. Thus, though the judge made certain kinds of comments on the show, off the show he was “never caustic.” The missing word describes his comments, so, the missing word must mean caustic or severely critical. Since *vituperative* means verbally abusive, choice (B) is correct.

(A) is incorrect because *sycophantic* means toadyish or fawning. As such, this word does not work in context. The prompt implies that the judge was not known for making positive statements.

(C) is incorrect because *calumniating* means making false and malicious statements. The prompt implies that the reality show judge was known for making “caustic” or critical comments, but it does not suggest these comments were false.

(D) is incorrect because *unctuous* means excessively smug. The prompt suggests that the judge was known for being “caustic,” but it does not suggest that he was necessarily arrogant or smug in his comments.

(E) is incorrect because *punitive* means inflicting punishment. Though the prompt suggests the judge was “caustic,” it does not imply that he had the power to inflict punishment on anyone.