



Grade 9 Sentence Completion

Reading Comprehension Assessment

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Name _____
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• Grade 9 Sentence Completion

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. Anton felt disconnected from the world around him because he believed himself to be so much smarter than everyone else; he often felt as though everyone he encountered was _____ and incapable of saying anything that was not _____.
 - A. bright ... ingenious
 - B. unintelligent ... uninteresting
 - C. treacherous ... insufferable
 - D. brainless ... brave
 - E. mindless ... vapid

2. In mythology, Sisyphus was _____ for his greed and treachery by being forced to roll a boulder up a hill for all eternity; his disciplinary action was intensified by the fact that the boulder would automatically roll back down the hill when he got to the top.
 - A. punished
 - B. compensated
 - C. freed
 - D. tolerated
 - E. tyrannized

3. Because their job is _____, most sanitation workers get paid quite well; after all, there has to be some incentive for working in such foul conditions.
 - A. paramount
 - B. precarious
 - C. crucial
 - D. odious
 - E. rewarding

4. Though AIDS is _____, improvements in medication have made it possible to live a fairly comfortable life with the disease, even though one will never fully recover from it.
 - A. inexhaustible
 - B. incurable
 - C. intolerable
 - D. ineligible
 - E. indescribable

5. According to _____, Paul Bunyan dragged his axe behind him and carved the Mississippi River; of course, such tall tales and legends have no foundation in reality.
 - A. gospel
 - B. antiquity
 - C. lore
 - D. verity
 - E. fib

6. The police were certain that the man who was arrested was the person who killed Miss Nichols, but the detectives were having difficulty proving that the killing was _____, rather than accidental.
 - A. defensive
 - B. desperate
 - C. deplorable
 - D. delinquent
 - E. deliberate

1) E

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keywords are in the phrase "he believed himself to be so much smarter than everyone else." The first missing word describes "everyone" whom Anton encountered, and since Anton thought he was "so much smarter than everyone else," it would follow that he felt they were stupid. The first missing word must, therefore, mean stupid. The second missing word describes what people Anton met were "incapable of saying," but it is modified by the adjective "not," so it too must mean stupid, as stupid people would likely be incapable of saying anything that was not stupid. Thus, the correct choice will provide two words that both mean stupid or unintelligent. Choice **(E)** is the correct choice, then: mindless means lacking in intelligence or thoughtfulness, while vapid means offering nothing that is mentally stimulating or challenging. **(A)** is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of words with means related to stupidity. Bright means smart or emitting light, while ingenious means clever, original, or inventive. These words have no clear relationship to other people seeming stupid. **(B)** is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of words with related meanings. Unintelligent means not smart or bright, while uninteresting means dull. These words have no clear relationship, as something can be uninteresting while still being intellectual or smart. **(C)** is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of words with related meanings. Treacherous means deceitful or harmful, while insufferable means unbearably arrogant or conceited. These words have no clear relationship. **(D)** is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of words with related meanings. Brainless means stupid or unintelligent, while brave means courageous. These words have no clear relationship.

2) A

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the key phrase is "disciplinary action," which describes Sisyphus's fate. Since his fate involved a disciplinary action, the missing word must mean reprimanded and given some disciplinary action. Because punished means reprimanded and given some disciplinary action, choice **(A)** is correct. **(B)** is incorrect because compensated means given money for suffering or loss. No part of "being forced to roll a boulder up a hill for all eternity" involves money. **(C)** is incorrect because freed means cleared of blame and released. If Sisyphus had been cleared of blame, he probably would not have had to suffer a "punishment." **(D)** is incorrect because tolerated means accepted or endured something unpleasant. While Sisyphus may have tolerated his punishment, nothing in the prompt implies that Sisyphus himself was tolerated. Thus, this choice does not work in context. **(E)** is incorrect because tyrannized means treated cruelly. Though one might think that Sisyphus' punishment was particularly cruel, this word does not work in context, as the missing word should mean punished, and tyrannized is not synonymous with punished.

3) D

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is "in such foul conditions," a phrase that describes how sanitation workers work. The missing word describes "their job," so it must likewise mean foul or unpleasant. Because odious means extremely unpleasant, foul, or repulsive, choice **(D)** is correct. **(A)** is incorrect because paramount means more important than anything else. Though sanitation work is important to the world at large, nothing in the prompt implies that it is the most important thing in the world. **(B)** is incorrect because precarious means uncertain or dependent on chance. There will always be garbage to clean up, so sanitation workers' jobs are hardly precarious. Additionally, nothing in the prompt implies that sanitation is not a secure profession. **(C)** is incorrect because crucial means extremely important. Though sanitation work is important to the world at large, nothing in the prompt indicates that this is so. **(E)** is incorrect because rewarding means providing satisfaction. Nothing in the prompt implies that sanitation workers find satisfaction in their job.

4) B

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is "though," which sets up a negative or opposite relationship between the two parts of the sentence. This means that something about AIDS is the opposite of the fact that there have been "improvements in medication" that allow one to "live a fairly comfortable life." The prompt provides another hint in the phrase "even though one will never fully recover from it." These clues imply that AIDS cannot be eradicated or gotten rid of, so the missing word should describe this. Because incurable means unable to be cured or relieved completely of a disease, choice **(B)** is correct. **(A)** is incorrect because inexhaustible means persisting tirelessly. A disease can neither get tired nor be fully awake, so this choice does not make sense in context. **(C)** is incorrect because intolerable means unable to be endured. This is not correct because something that one has while being able to "live a fairly comfortable life" is tolerable, not intolerable. **(D)** is incorrect because ineligible means legally unable to be considered for something. This word has no relationship to anything in the prompt. **(E)** is incorrect because indescribable means impossible to put into words. This word has no relationship to anything in the prompt.

5) C

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keywords are "such tall tales and legends." This phrase describes the belief that Paul Bunyan carved the Mississippi, and the missing word describes the source of that belief. So, if that is a legend, then the missing word must likewise mean legend. Lore is a body of traditional knowledge, popular myths, and beliefs relating to a particular place or group of people, so choice **(C)** is correct. **(A)** is incorrect because gospel is a thing regarded as absolutely true. This is the opposite of a correct choice, since the prompt makes it clear that the belief about Paul Bunyan has "no foundation in reality." **(B)** is incorrect because antiquity is the ancient past. This does not work in context because antiquity is not the same as "tall tales and legends." **(D)** is incorrect because verity is truth. This is the opposite of a correct choice, since the prompt makes it clear that the belief about Paul Bunyan has "no foundation in reality." **(E)** is incorrect because fibs are lies. This does not work in context because lies are not the same as "tall tales and legends."

6) E

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is "rather," which indicates a negative or opposite relationship. This means that the missing word must have an opposite relationship to "accidental." Because deliberate means done intentionally and consciously, rather than accidentally or impulsively, choice **(E)** is correct. **(A)** is incorrect because defensive means intended as protection. Though a killing can be defensive, this word does not work in context because defensive is not the opposite of "accidental." **(B)** is incorrect because desperate means feeling a hopeless

sense that a situation is so bad that it is impossible to deal with. Though desperation might prompt someone to kill someone else, this word does not work in context, as it is not the opposite of "accidental." **(C)** is incorrect because deplorable means shockingly bad in quality. Though a murder can be deplorable, this word does not work in context because it is not the opposite of "accidental." **(D)** is incorrect because delinquent means having a tendency to commit minor crimes. This word does not work because it is usually used to describe people, not actions, and because a murder is far from a minor crime.

7) A

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is "but," which indicates a negative or opposite relationship between the clauses. This means that what "scientists hoped they would be able to" do was the opposite of what actually happened due to "production problems." This suggests that there is an opposite relationship between the missing words themselves, meaning the correct choice will provide a pair of opposites. Because expedite means to speed up, while delayed means to slow, choice **(A)** is correct. **(B)** is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites. Hasten means to be quick to do something, while promoted means encouraged or furthered the development of something. These words have no clear relationship. **(C)** is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites. Postpone means to cause something to take place at a later time than originally intended, while inhibited means hindered or prevented something from happening. These words have similar meanings in the context of this sentence. **(D)** is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites. Thwart means to prevent someone from accomplishing something, while endangered means put something at risk or in danger. These words have similar meanings, not opposite meanings. **(E)** is incorrect because it does not provide a pair of opposites appropriate in context. Obstruct means to prevent or hinder something, while accelerated means sped up. Though these would be opposites in context, they do not work because it would be illogical for "several production problems" to speed up the development of the rocket.

8) C

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is "and," which links parts of a sentence that state similar or related information. This means that what Bonaparte "earned" relates to "his newfound respect and clout," meaning the missing word must mean something similar to respect and clout. Because prestige is widespread respect and admiration felt for someone on the basis of his or her achievements, choice **(C)** is correct **(A)** is incorrect because a prejudice is an unjustified dislike or bias against something or someone. Nothing in the prompt implies that Bonaparte had a bias against anyone. **(B)** is incorrect because prosperity is the state of being rich and successful in material terms. Nothing in the prompt implies that Bonaparte was wealthy or rich. **(D)** is incorrect because a propensity is an inclination to behave a certain way. One does not "earn" a propensity, as a propensity is something natural. Thus, this choice is illogical in context. **(E)** is incorrect because prudence is care or cautiousness. Nothing in the prompt implies that Bonaparte was cautious.

9) D

To figure out what the missing words are, try to predict their definitions by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is "worried," which indicates a cause-and-effect relationship in this prompt. Thus, because the president was worried that one of his aides was doing something "to the press," he ordered White House staffers to "cease all communications with the press" and reminded them that "sensitive information needed to remain" a certain way. This means there is an opposite relationship between what one of his aides might have been doing and what the sensitive information needed to remain. Additionally, since the president asked staffers to not talk to the press, he must have been worried that one of his staffers was leaking secrets to the press, secretes that needed to remain secret. Because divulging means making private or secret information known, while classified means designated as officially secret, choice **(D)** is correct. **(A)** is incorrect because only one word works in context. Exposing means revealing something that was previously hidden or secret, while proclaimed means publicly announced. Though the president might have been worried that an aide was exposing secrets, he would not suggest that "sensitive information" remain publicly known. **(B)** is incorrect because only one word works in context. Publishing means printing something in a book or journal, while shrouded means covered so as to remain concealed from view. Nothing in the prompt implies that the president thought an aide was actually publishing something, though the president could have reminded the staff that "sensitive information needed to remain" covered up. **(C)** is incorrect because only one word works in context. Disclosing means making secret information known, while categorized means placed in a particular group. Though the president might have been worried that an aide was disclosing secrets, he would not suggest that "sensitive information" remain placed in categories. **(E)** is incorrect because neither word works in context. Delineating means describing something precisely, while contained means having or holding something within. Delineating is not the same as leaking secrets, and contained does not imply that something would be kept secret.

10) E

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is "similarly," which describes the missing word and implies that it has the same meaning as another word in the sentence. Since the first half of the sentence describes the narrator's regrets over not visiting Paris, it would follow that he or she wishes the reader to not "similarly" regret not visiting France. Because lamenting means regretting, choice **(E)** is correct. **(A)** is incorrect because destroying means damaging beyond repair. Nothing in the prompt implies that the narrator is afraid the reader will end up "similarly" destroying Paris, since nothing implies that the narrator destroyed Paris. **(B)** is incorrect because embellishing means making something more interesting by exaggerating it. Nothing in the prompt implies that the narrator exaggerated his or her own story, so it would not make sense for him or her to worry about the reader "similarly" embellishing his or her own trip to Paris. **(C)** is incorrect because extolling means greatly praising. This has no relationship to regretting something, so this choice does not work. **(D)** is incorrect because celebrating means honoring or praising publicly. This has no relationship to regretting something, so this choice does not work.

11) B

To figure out what the missing word is, try to predict its definition by using keywords from the prompt. Here, the keyword is "could not stand," a phrase that explains the neighbors' view of the house in question. If they could not stand the type of "decorations" put out, they must have had opposite tastes. The prompt states that they "considered their own muted houses to be very tasteful" which