

## Sentence Completion Answers & Explanations

**C.** Although is the clue word. Choice A may have confused you if you mistook unanimity with anonymity. This is an example of 2 words that are similar in appearance and enunciation, but vastly different in meaning. This is also another reason you should examine all 5 answer choices in the SAT's sentence completion sections.

2. **D.** Did you notice the negative in "Don't"? If you missed this, you probably selected choice C (rejoice). Choice B may have appeared inviting if you confused the meaning of the verb "temper" with its meaning as a noun. (As a verb, it means to make less extreme.)
  
3. **A.** The clue word was "While". Solace means relief. The other answer choices simply do not work. Hopefully, you didn't waste any time trying to determine why they didn't work. It's a simple fact of life that many of the choices you will see on the SAT just do not make any sense and it's not worth losing sleep over.
  
4. **(B)** "Paradoxically" (or, in other words, "contrary to what one would expect"), children of creative and unorthodox parents grow up to be something other than creative and unorthodox. We need a word that contrasts with "creative and unorthodox" but goes along with "tame." (B) is the best choice: "Conformists" are people who follow established norms and customs without challenging anything or anyone.
  
5. **(B)** "For" means "since" here, indicating that what follows is an explanation or clarification. What can be clarified by a statement that a newborn infant "cannot discern images more than ten inches from its face"? The statement that the infant's ability to see things has not fully evolved. In other words, a newborn's "visual" skills are not fully developed.
  
6. **(C)** The clue words *because of* signal an explanation. If the play "received poor reviews" and was canceled because of something about the lead actor's performance, that performance must have been quite bad. (C), "overwrought"—overdone, or excessively agitated—is one of two negative words in the answer choices, and the only one that could logically describe a performance.
  
7. Choice (B) is correct. "Resist" means to withstand the force or effect of. If one were to insert this term into the text, the sentence would read "Architects define a physical structure as a set of materials arranged in such a way that these materials can resist the downward pull of gravity." The

## Sentence Completion Answers & Explanations

term "resist" logically completes this sentence because a building that cannot withstand gravitational force will collapse.

8. Choice (C) is correct. "Tempered by" means softened by the addition of something. "Jocularly" refers to a playful, joking manner. If one were to insert these terms into the text, the sentence would read "It is said that as a legal team Charles Houston and Thurgood Marshall complemented each other thoroughly: Houston's sedate manner was tempered by Marshall's jocularly." In this context, the terms "complemented" and "tempered" indicate that the sentence will describe two different traits that balance each other. It makes sense that one person's playfulness could balance another person's "sedateness," or seriousness.
9. Choice (B) is correct. "Rebelliousness" means defiance, and "suppressed" means put down by authority or force. If one were to insert these terms into the text, the sentence would read "In a society that abhors rebelliousness, the nonconformist is persistently suppressed." A "nonconformist" is someone who defies rules, so it makes sense that a society that "abhors," or hates, defiance would "suppress" such an individual.
10. **D** is the correct answer because this sentence asks you to look for a word that describes how the ravens behave. The information after the comma restates and defines the meaning of the missing word.
11. Choice (D) is correct. "Focused" means concentrated. "Expansive" means broad or unrestrained. If one were to insert these terms into the text, the sentence would read "Alice Walker's *The Temple of My Familiar*, far from being a tight, focused narrative, is instead an expansive novel that roams freely and imaginatively over a half-million years." The word "instead" indicates that the two missing terms will provide a contrast. An "expansive" novel covering a half-million years certainly contrasts with a "tight," concentrated narrative.
12. Choice (C) is correct. "Capture" in this context means to gain through effort. "Shift" means to change direction. If one were to insert these terms into the text, the sentence would read "Just when the senator's opponent had captured the lead in popularity polls, public opinion shifted; as a result, the incumbent senator regained her front-runner position." The second half of the sentence holds the clues for determining which words best complete the first half of the sentence. The term "regained" implies that the incumbent senator's opponent had "captured" the lead in the polls at one point, but that the incumbent moved ahead again when public opinion "shifted."
13. Choice (D) is correct. "Disgruntled" means dissatisfied, and "suspended" means stopped temporarily. If one were to insert these terms into the text,

## Sentence Completion Answers & Explanations

the sentence would read "The board members, accustomed to the luxury of being chauffeured to corporate meetings in company limousines, were predictably disgruntled when they learned that this service had been suspended." The term "accustomed to" indicates that the board members were used to being chauffeured, and the phrase "they learned that this service had been" indicates that the limousine service was altered in some way. It makes sense that the temporary stoppage of an expected luxury would leave the board members dissatisfied.

14. Choice (C) is correct. "Create" means to produce. "Eliminated" means done away with. If one were to insert these terms into the text, the sentence would read "Only if business continues to expand can it create enough new jobs to make up for those that will be eliminated by automation." The phrase "make up for" indicates that the action expressed by the first missing term must counter the effect of the action described by the second term. This sentence makes sense because producing new jobs would counter the effect of doing away with jobs.
15. Choice (B) is correct. Something that is "therapeutic" has healing qualities, and "alleviate" means to lessen. If one were to substitute these terms into the text, the sentence would read "Many people find Stanley Jordan's music not only entertaining but also therapeutic; listening to it helps them to relax and to alleviate the tensions they feel at the end of a trying day." It is logical that Stanley Jordan's music would be considered "therapeutic" if it has the power to lessen tensions.
16. Choice (B) is correct. "Identical" means exactly the same. If one were to insert this term into the text, the sentence would read "The spacecraft has two identical sets of electronic components; if one fails, its duplicate will still function." The information following the semicolon helps to identify the missing term. The fact that one of the sets of electrical components has a "duplicate," or exact copy, indicates that the two sets are "identical."
17. Choice (C) is correct. "Convergence" means a move by multiple things toward the same point. If one were to insert this term into the text, the sentence would read "The theory of the convergence of cultures argues that all societies with highly developed technologies will evolve similar social institutions." The idea that all technologically advanced societies will experience "similar" social evolution suggests that these societies are moving toward the same point.
18. Choice (D) is correct. "Divergent" means proceeding from one point in different directions. If one were to insert this term into the text, the sentence would read "The two travelers may have chosen divergent routes across the continent, but the starting point was the same for each." The phrase "may have" and the term "but" sets up a contrast between the two clauses of the sentence. The fact that the travelers took distinctly different

## Sentence Completion Answers & Explanations

trips is contrasted with the fact that they left from the same place.

19. Choice (A) is correct. "Decried" means attacked or condemned; "adulation" means extreme admiration. If one were to insert these terms into the text, the sentence would read "He decried the practices of aggressive autograph seekers, arguing that anyone distinguished enough to merit such adulation also deserved to be treated courteously." The speaker "argued" in defense of people who are harassed by autograph seekers, so it makes sense to say that he "decried" autograph-seekers, whose aggressive actions stem from "adulation," or admiration.

20. The correct answer is D. In this sentence, you are looking for two words that describe Wilson. One of the words has to mean that he "seldom spoke" and the other that he "never spent money." The correct answer is "taciturn.. miserly." Taciturn means "shy, unwilling to talk." Miserly means "like a miser, extremely stingy."