

PART 3

Sentence Completion Questions

Overview

Sentence completion questions are the first critical reading questions you encounter as you take the SAT. These questions test your ability to use your vocabulary and to recognize how the different parts of a sentence fit together to make sense.

The sentence completion questions ask you to choose the best way to complete a sentence from which one or two words have been omitted. You must be able to recognize the logic, style, and tone of the sentence, so that you will be able to choose the answer that makes sense in this context. You must also be able to recognize the different ways in which words are normally defined. At some time or another, you have probably had a vocabulary assignment in which you were asked to define a word and use it in a sentence. In questions of this type, you have to fit words into sentences. Once you understand the implications of a sentence, you should be able to choose the answer that will make the sentence clear, logical, and consistent in style and tone.

The subject matter of these sentences comes from a wide variety of fields—music, art, science, literature, history. However, you are not being tested on your general knowledge. Though at times your knowledge of a particular fact may guide you in choosing the correct answer, you should be able to handle any of the sentences using your understanding of the English language.

Tips on Handling Sentence Completion Questions

Before You Look at the Answer Choices, Think of a Word That Makes Sense

Your first step in answering a sentence completion question is, without looking at the answer choices, to try to come up with a word that fits in the blank. The word you think of may not be the exact word that appears in any of the answer choices, but it will probably be similar in meaning to the right answer. Then, when you turn to the answer choices, you'll have an idea of what you're looking for.

Try going through the sentence substituting the word blank for each missing word. Doing this will give you a feel for what the sentence means.

Example:

Unlike her gabby brother Bruce, Bea seldom blanks .

Just from looking at the sentence, you know the answer must be chatters, talks, or a synonym.

At this point, look at the answer choices. If the word you thought of is one of the five choices, select it as your answer. If the word you thought of is not a choice, look for a synonym of that word.

See how the process works in dealing with a more complex sentence.

The psychologist set up the experiment to test the rat's ____; he wished to see how well the rat adjusted to the changing conditions it had to face.



Did You Notice?

The sentence above is actually two statements linked by a semicolon (;). The punctuation mark is your clue that the two statements support each other.

A semicolon signals you that the second statement develops the idea expressed in the first statement.

Statement 1:	The psychologist set up the experiment to test the rat's adaptability.
Why?	
Statement 2:	He wished to see how well the rat adjusted to the changing conditions it had to face.

Even before you look at the answer choices, you can figure out what the answer should be.

Look at the sentence. A psychologist is trying to test some particular quality or characteristic of a rat. What quality? How do you get the answer?

Note how the part of the sentence following the semicolon (the second clause, in technical terms) is being used to define or clarify what the psychologist is trying to test. He is trying to see how well the rat adjusts. What words does this suggest to you? Either flexibility or adaptability could complete the sentence's thought.

Here are the five answer choices given:

- (A) reflexes
- (B) communicability
- (C) stamina
- (D) sociability
- (E) adaptability

The answer clearly is adaptability, (E).

Be sure to check out all five answer choices before you make your final choice. Don't leap at the first word that seems to fit. You are looking for the word that best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole. In order to be sure you have not been hasty in making your decision, substitute each of the answer choices for the missing word. That way you can satisfy yourself that you have come up with the answer that best fits.

Spot Clues in the Sentence: Signal Words

Writers use transitions to link their ideas logically. These transitions or signal words are clues that can help you figure out what the sentence actually means.

Support Signals

Look for words or phrases that indicate that the omitted portion of the sentence continues a thought developed elsewhere in the sentence. Examples are and, moreover, in addition, and furthermore. In such cases, a synonym or near-synonym should provide the correct answer.

Here is an example of a sentence completion question in which a support signal provides a helpful clue.

He was habitually so docile and ____ that his friends could not understand his sudden outburst against his employers.

- (A) submissive
- (B) incorrigible
- (C) contemptuous
- (D) erratic
- (E) hasty

The signal word and is your clue that the writer is trying to reinforce the notion of docility introduced in the sentence. Not only is this person docile, he is also blank. Look through the answer choices for a synonym or near-synonym of docile or obedient. You find one immediately: (A),submissive. Check through the other answer choices. Nothing else makes sense. The correct answer is (A).

Contrast Signals

Look for words or phrases that indicate a contrast between one idea and another. Examples are but, although, nevertheless, despite, however, even though, and on the other hand. In such cases, an antonym or near-antonym for another word in the sentence should provide the correct answer.

Here is an example of a sentence completion question in which a contrast signal pinpoints the correct answer for you.

We expected her to be jubilant over her victory, but she was ____ instead.

- (A) triumphant
- (B) adult
- (C) morose
- (D) loquacious
- (E) culpable

The signal word but suggests that the winner's expected reaction contrasts with her actual one. Instead of being "jubilant" (extremely joyful), she is sad. Look through the answer choices to find a word that is the opposite of jubilant. The correct answer is (C), morose or gloomy.

Cause and Effect Signals

Look for words or phrases that indicate that one thing causes another. Examples are because, since, therefore, consequently, accordingly, hence, thus, and as a result.

Here is an example of a sentence completion question in which a cause and effect signal should prove helpful to you.

Because his delivery was ____, the effect of his speech on the voters was nonexistent.

- (A) plausible
- (B) moving
- (C) audible

(D) halting

(E) respectable

What sort of delivery would cause a speech to have no effect?

A plausible (superficially pleasing and persuasive) delivery would probably have some effect on the voters. A moving or eloquent delivery certainly would.

An audible delivery, one the audience could hear, would be more likely to have an effect than an inaudible one would. A respectable, appropriate delivery probably would have some impact as well. Only a halting or stumbling delivery would mar the voters' appreciation of the speech and cause it to have little or no effect on them. Thus, the correct answer is (D).

Notice Negatives

Watch out for negative words and words with negative prefixes: no, not, none; non, un-, in-. These negative words and word parts are killers, especially in combination.

The damage to the car was insignificant.

("Don't worry about it—it's just a scratch.")

The damage to the car was not insignificant.

("Oh, no, Bart! We totaled Mom's car!")

In particular, watch out for not : it's easy to overlook, but it's a key word, as the following sentence clearly illustrates.

Madison was not ___ person and thus made few public addresses; but those he made were memorable, filled with noble phrases.

(A) a reticent

(B) a stately

(C) an inspiring

(D) an introspective

(E) a communicative

What would happen if you overlooked not in this question? Probably you'd wind up choosing (A): Madison was a reticent (quiet; reserved) man. For this reason he made few public addresses.

Unfortunately, you'd have gotten things backward. The sentence isn't telling you what Madison was like. It's telling you what he was not like. And he was not

a communicative person; he didn't express himself freely. However, when he did get around to speaking, he had some good things to say.

Try the Plus or Minus Test



Work out whether the missing word is positive (+) or negative (-). Then test the answer choices for their positive or negative sense. Eliminate those that don't work.

Words Have Many Meanings: Stay Alert

Watch out for words that have more than one meaning. Before you rule out an answer choice, consider whether the word has any secondary meanings. Lie, for example, can mean recline. It can also mean fib. Similarly, the adjective partial means incomplete, as in "a partial list of contributors." It can also mean biased, as in "too partial to be fair to both sides," or having a liking for, as in "I am highly partial to chocolate."

Be on the lookout for familiar-looking words defined in unfamiliar ways. Try this example:

The political climate today is extremely ____: no one can predict what the electorate will do next.

- (A) malevolent
- (B) pertinent
- (C) claustrophobic
- (D) lethargic
- (E) volatile

Before you can answer this question, you need to think of a word that makes sense in the context. If no one can predict what the voters will do, then the political climate must be unpredictable. The correct answer is a synonym for unpredictable or changeable.

Now consider the answer choices. Malevolent (wicked; malicious) is not a synonym for unpredictable. Pertinent (relevant; applicable) is not a synonym

for unpredictable. Claustrophobic (afraid of closed-in places) is not a synonym for unpredictable. Lethargic (sluggish; drowsily dull) is not a synonym for unpredictable. Only volatile is left.

Did You Notice?



The sentence above is actually two statements linked by a colon (:). The punctuation mark is your clue that the two statements support each other.

A colon signals you that the second statement serves to explain or clarify the first. It gives examples, or it defines terms.

Statement 1: The political climate today is extremely volatile.

What does volatile mean?

Statement 2: No one can predict what the electorate will do next.

Volatile means unpredictable. To be volatile is to do things no one can predict.

If you have seen the word volatile only in the context of science class (“Acetone is an extremely volatile liquid: it evaporates instantly”), you may not realize that it can be used to describe moods as well as chemicals. A volatile political climate is a changeable, unstable one. The correct choice is (E).

Break Down Unfamiliar Words, Looking for Familiar Word Parts

To determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word, either in a sentence or among the answer choices, use what you know about word parts, the building blocks of our language: prefixes, suffixes, and most important of all, roots.

(A list of word parts appears later on in the book.)

Consider the following sentence:

Interviewing the flood victims on her show, Oprah Winfrey was wholly _____: she appeared to feel their loss as if it had been her own.

Note how the part of the sentence following the colon (the second clause) is being used to clarify Winfrey’s attitude or behavior. She appeared to feel the victims’ loss. The correct answer must have something to do with feeling.

Here are the five answer choices:

- (A) self-possessed
- (B) empathetic
- (C) obsessive
- (D) perceptive
- (E) theoretical

From your study of word parts, you know that the root path means feeling or disease. Antipathy is a hostile feeling; sympathy, a kindly one. Empathy is an understanding of and identification with the feelings of another person. In identifying with the feelings of the flood victims, Winfrey was empathetic.



More Signals to Spot!

Look for signals that indicate a word is being defined—phrases such as in other words, that is, or which means, and special punctuation clues. Commas, hyphens, and parentheses all are used to set off definitions.

Take One Blank at a Time

Dealing with double-blank sentences can be tricky. Testing the first word of each answer pair helps you narrow things down.

Here's how to do it. Read through the entire sentence. Then insert the first word of each answer pair in the sentence's first blank. Ask yourself whether this particular word makes sense in this blank. If the initial word of an answer pair makes no sense in the sentence, you can eliminate the entire pair.

Next, check out the second word of each of the answer pairs that you haven't ruled out. Be careful. Remember: just as each word of the correct answer pair must make sense in its individual context, both words must make sense when used together.

Try this question to practice working with double-blank sentences.

The opossum is ___ the venom of snakes in the rattlesnake subfamily and thus views the reptiles not as ___ enemies but as a food source.

- (A) vulnerable to...natural

(B) indicative of...mortal

(C) impervious to...lethal

(D) injurious to...deadly

(E) defenseless against...potential

Your first job is to eliminate any answer choices you can on the basis of their first word.

- Opossums might be vulnerable to snake poison. Keep (A).
- Opossums are unlikely to be indicative or suggestive of snake poison. Cross out (B).
- Opossums could be impervious to (unaffected by; immune to) snake poison. Keep (C).
- Opossums couldn't be injurious or harmful to snake poison. Cross out (D).
- Opossums could be defenseless against snake poison. Keep (E).

Now examine the second half of the sentence. Opossums look on rattlesnakes as a food source. They can eat rattlers for a reason. Why? Is it because opossums are vulnerable to or defenseless against the poison? No. It's because they're impervious to the poison (that is, unharmed by it). That's the reason they can treat the rattlesnake as a potential source of food and not as a lethal, or deadly, enemy. The correct answer is (C).

Note the cause-and-effect signal thus. The nature of the opossum's response to the venom explains why it can look on a dangerous snake as a possible prey.

Sentence Completion Exercises

To develop your ability to handle sentence completion questions, work your way through the following three series of exercises. Warning: These series of exercises are graded in difficulty. The further you go, the harder the going gets, just as on a video game. Go all the way. Even if you do less well on Level C than you did on Level A, look on every error as an opportunity to learn. Study all the sentences that you found difficult. Review all the vocabulary words that you didn't know. Remember: these are all college-level sentences, set up to test your knowledge of college-level words.

After completing each exercise, see how many questions you answered correctly. (The correct answers are given at the end of the sentence completion exercises.)

Then read the answer explanations for questions you answered incorrectly, questions you omitted, and questions you answered correctly but found difficult.

Level A

You should feel reasonably comfortable answering most of the sentence completion questions on this level of difficulty. Consider the four practice exercises that follow to be a warm-up for the harder questions to come.

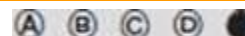
Note: Whether you are working on Level A, Level B, or Level C, each section of the following practice exercises will begin with one or two relatively easy questions; each will also include some challenging vocabulary words. Do not expect to answer every question correctly.

Each of the following sentences contains one or two blanks; each blank indicates that a word or set of words has been left out. Below the sentence are five words or phrases, lettered A through E. Select the word or set of words that best completes the sentence.

Example:

Fame is ----; today's rising star is all too soon tomorrow's washed-up has-been.

(A) rewarding	(B) gradual
(C) essential	(D) spontaneous
(E) transitory	



EXERCISE 1

1. The Cabinet member's resignation was not a total ____: rumors of his imminent departure had been making the rounds in Washington for a week.

- (A) withdrawal
- (B) success
- (C) shock
- (D) eclipse
- (E) pretense

2. The wagon train leaders chose to ____ their route when they realized that the heavy rains had made fording the river too ____ a task.

- (A) question...uncomplicated
- (B) disregard...common
- (C) abandon...legitimate
- (D) alter...impracticable
- (E) follow...elusive

3. It is possible to analyze a literary work to death, ____ what should be a living experience as if it were a laboratory specimen.

- (A) questioning
- (B) dissecting
- (C) amending
- (D) nurturing
- (E) reviving

4. Anthropologists traditionally argue that the male-female division of labor in hunter-gatherer societies arose because it ____ the nuclear family's joint interests and thereby represented a sound, ____ strategy.

- (A) impaired...collaborative
- (B) respected...divisive
- (C) ignored...disinterested
- (D) restricted...provisional
- (E) promoted...cooperative

5. Because of its strength, adhesiveness, and invaluable qualities as a nest-building material, many species of birds ____ silk into their nests.

- (A) smuggle
- (B) jettison
- (C) incorporate
- (D) entice
- (E) dissolve

6. The recruit was ____ by the sergeant's scathing rebuke; nobody had ever ____ him like that before.

- (A) flattered...honored
- (B) touched...noticed
- (C) stung...reprimanded
- (D) astonished...questioned
- (E) discouraged...intrigued

7. Her memoirs are quite unlike those of her predecessors, for she is bold and aggressive where they are ____ and conventional.

- (A) audacious
- (B) exuberant
- (C) reticent
- (D) brazen
- (E) contentious

8. The report was relentlessly ____ to the scientist, interpreting one complex event after another to his ____.

- (A) generous...dismay
- (B) disparaging...initiative
- (C) complex...indifference
- (D) hostile...discredit
- (E) polite...detriment

9. People who don't outgrow their colleges often don't grow in other ways; there remained in Forster's life and imagination a ____ of the undergraduate, clever but ____.

- (A) dislike...talented
- (B) touch...judicious
- (C) trace...immature

(D) fear...dormant

(E) vestige...sincere

10. She ___ recognition and fame, yet she felt a deep suspicion and ___ for the world in which recognition and fame are granted, the world of money and opinion and power.

(A) mistrusted...antagonism

(B) worked for...respect

(C) endured...veneration

(D) shunned...enmity

(E) yearned for...contempt

11. Unfortunately, excessive care in choosing one's words often results in a loss of ____.

(A) precision

(B) atmosphere

(C) selectivity

(D) spontaneity

(E) credibility

12. Just as the earliest stone tools left by humans may seem nothing more than rock fragments to a layperson, so a lot of fossils require a trained eye to ___ them.

(A) excavate

(B) appreciate

(C) disseminate

(D) antedate

(E) educate

13. According to a noted art critic, one would have to be completely immune to the sensuous pleasures of painting to be ___ Lucien Freud's mesmerizing art.

(A) drawn to

(B) overcome by

- (C) enamored of
- (D) unaffected by
- (E) consistent about

14. Skulls are the Rosetta stones of anthropology because they bear unique features that let scientists ____ whether two fossil samples come from the same type of creature.

- (A) determine
- (B) prophesy
- (C) disregard
- (D) initiate
- (E) recollect

15. For years no one could make this particular therapy work in animals larger than rodents, but now two research groups have demonstrated its ____ in dogs.

- (A) efficacy
- (B) defects
- (C) variability
- (D) origin
- (E) virulence

16. Thanks to the emerging technology of active noise control, automakers may soon be able to ____ noise inside a car and create the long-promised “quiet ride.”

- (A) mute
- (B) endure
- (C) undertake
- (D) concentrate
- (E) augment

17. Despite her father's ____ that “a woman's place is in the home” and a ____ reception from her professors and fellow graduate students, Marian Cleeves went on to become the first woman to receive a doctorate in anatomy from the University of California at Berkeley.

- (A) warning...gratifying
- (B) reprimand...lavish
- (C) encouragement...respectful
- (D) admonition...cool
- (E) maxim...hospitable

18. John Keats, Dylan Thomas, Arthur Rimbaud—all these were poets who had to be poets, whom no one or nothing short of death could have ____ their courses.

- (A) confirmed in
- (B) derailed from
- (C) lauded for
- (D) interested in
- (E) convinced of

19. By arguing that much of what scientists think they know about the focusing mechanism of the eye is untrue, this radical scholar has gained a reputation as ____ in the field.

- (A) a fugitive
- (B) a convert
- (C) an artisan
- (D) a maverick
- (E) a peacemaker

20. The philosopher Auguste Comte ____ the term altruism to ____ unselfish regard for the welfare of others.

- (A) avoided...rationalize
- (B) coined...denote
- (C) applied...lessen
- (D) explained...refute
- (E) understood...terminate

EXERCISE 2

1. Given the ability of modern technology to ____ the environment, it is clear that, if we are not careful, the human race may soon be as extinct as the dinosaur.

- (A) enhance
- (B) destroy
- (C) analyze
- (D) repair
- (E) nurture

2. As founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, Marian Wright Edelman has ensured that, even though the young cannot vote or make campaign contributions, they are nevertheless not ____ in Washington.

- (A) represented
- (B) distrusted
- (C) ignored
- (D) committed
- (E) welcome

3. Using novel concepts and techniques previously unknown in commercial advertising, the ____ advertising campaign broke new ground in the field of marketing.

- (A) questionable
- (B) interminable
- (C) imitative
- (D) inadequate
- (E) innovative

4. The attorney's vibrant voice and ____ sense of timing were as useful to him as his prodigious preparation, attention to detail, and ____ of the law.

- (A) deficient...conception
- (B) excellent...ignorance
- (C) shaky...command

- (D) outstanding...mastery
- (E) impeccable...deprecation

5. By putting the entire Woolf archive on microfilm, the project directors hope to make the contents of the manuscripts more ____ to scholars.

- (A) accessible
- (B) objective
- (C) appealing
- (D) implicit
- (E) relevant

6. Some spiderwebs are sheets or tangles of threads that delay the ____ of prey, allowing the spider, ____ by vibrations that travel through the threads, time to make its way over to the entangled victim.

- (A) escape...alerted
- (B) consumption...frightened
- (C) capture...thwarted
- (D) pursuit...soothed
- (E) sighting...irritated

7. Janet Malcolm depicts the biographer as a nosy, intrusive figure, ____ his subject's private papers.

- (A) protecting
- (B) restoring
- (C) invading
- (D) acknowledging
- (E) compiling

8. Because fruit juice fills babies' small stomachs and ruins their appetite for foods that contain nutrients they ____, consuming large quantities can actually prove ____ to babies less than 24 months old.

- (A) prefer...beneficial

- (B) choose...counterproductive
- (C) require...helpful
- (D) need...detrimental
- (E) ingest...advantageous

9. Telling gripping tales about a central character engaged in a mighty struggle with events, modern biographies satisfy the American appetite for ____ narratives.

- (A) brief
- (B) colloquial
- (C) digressive
- (D) undemanding
- (E) epic

10. According to poet John Berryman, there were so many ways to ____ a poem that it was quite amazing good ones ever got written.

- (A) dedicate
- (B) begin
- (C) ruin
- (D) recite
- (E) categorize

11. Musk oxen survived in isolated arctic habitats, but in the nineteenth century they declined rapidly even there, their numbers ____ by the armed enthusiasm of explorers, whalers, fur traders, and Eskimo.

- (A) swelled
- (B) augmented
- (C) devastated
- (D) underestimated
- (E) calculated

12. The aorta is like a tree trunk from which other major arteries ____.

- (A) escape

- (B) subtract
- (C) clamber down
- (D) branch off
- (E) strip away

13. He loved his friends, but he held people in general in ____ and maintained that human virtues were unworthy of comparison with a dog's devotion.

- (A) reverence
- (B) abeyance
- (C) contempt
- (D) affection
- (E) honor

14. Rejecting Professor Marian Diamond's work showing that rat-brain structure can increase by 5 to 7 percent, one ____ neuroanatomist stated flatly, "Young lady, that brain cannot ____!"

- (A) astounded...function
- (B) aghast...deteriorate
- (C) dumbfounded...think
- (D) skeptical...grow
- (E) finicky...die

15. For all his protestations of ____, Judge Learned Hand had been deeply ____ at being passed over for the United States Supreme Court, where Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Benjamin Cardozo, and countless others said he belonged.

- (A) innocence...embarrassed
- (B) disbelief...enervated
- (C) indifference...disappointed
- (D) despondency...frustrated
- (E) affection...commiserated

16. Always trying to look on the bright side of every situation, she is a born ____.

- (A) opportunist
- (B) antagonist
- (C) optimist
- (D) maverick
- (E) zealot

17. The most crucial issue for wildlife in this arid land is unimpeded ____ water.

- (A) passage through
- (B) freedom from
- (C) access to
- (D) saturation in
- (E) overflow of

18. According to Lionel Trilling, the paradox of liberalism is that in its quest for freedom it must move toward greater organization, stricter legislation, and increasing ____.

- (A) anarchy
- (B) self-realization
- (C) stagnation
- (D) control
- (E) levity

19. Our mood swings about the economy grow more extreme: when things go well, we become ____; when things go poorly, ____ descends.

- (A) restive...anxiety
- (B) euphoric...gloom
- (C) prudent...benevolence
- (D) ascetic...misery
- (E) ambivalence...optimism

20. Abandoning the moral principles of his youth, the aging emperor Tiberius led a ____, wanton life.

- (A) celibate
- (B) rudimentary
- (C) dissipated
- (D) circumspect
- (E) peripatetic

EXERCISE 3

1. Although a few of her contemporaries ____ her book, most either ignored it or mocked it.

- (A) dismissed
- (B) disregarded
- (C) deprecated
- (D) misconstrued
- (E) appreciated

2. All critics have agreed that the opera's score is ____, but, curiously, no two critics have agreed which passages to praise and which to damn.

- (A) intolerable
- (B) melodious
- (C) unsurpassed
- (D) conventional
- (E) uneven

3. A man incapable of ____ action, he never had an opinion about something that he had not worked up beforehand, fashioning it with lengthy care.

- (A) premeditated
- (B) coherent
- (C) spontaneous
- (D) calculated
- (E) self-conscious

4. Even as the local climate changed from humid to arid and back—a change that caused other animals to become extinct—our almost-human ancestors ____ by learning how to use the new flora.

- (A) anticipated
- (B) survived
- (C) diverged
- (D) deteriorated
- (E) migrated

5. Marketing specialists have begun ____ what had once been a ____ audience into innumerable segments based on age, sex, income, and a host of pop sociological categories.

- (A) carving up...mass
- (B) bringing together...fragmented
- (C) tearing apart...sophisticated
- (D) unifying...distinct
- (E) transforming...responsive

6. Like a balloon that is ____, aneurysms (swellings in the walls of arteries) sometimes enlarge so much that they ____.

- (A) expanding...contract
- (B) punctured...dilate
- (C) elastic...stratify
- (D) weightless...stretch
- (E) overinflated...burst

7. Critics ____ the ____ in developing the new weather satellite to unexpected problems in manufacturing and testing its components.

- (A) credit...timeliness
- (B) impute...success
- (C) attribute...delay

(D) assign...importance

(E) deny...threat

8. As former Supreme Court Justice Warren Burger was fond of pointing out, many lawyers are not legal hotshots; they often come to court ___ and ___ professional skills.

(A) ill prepared...lacking

(B) hot-tempered...criticizing

(C) reluctant...demonstrating

(D) argumentative...manifesting

(E) conservative...excelling

9. A hypothesis must not only account for what we already know, but must also be ___ by continued observation.

(A) refuted

(B) interrupted

(C) verified

(D) discredited

(E) outmoded

10. Elizabeth Gaskell: A Habit of Stories is a considerable ___, superseding Winifred Gerin's learned biography of the English novelist.

(A) failure

(B) rationalization

(C) accomplishment

(D) recollection

(E) muddle

11. Boccherini was a good and interesting composer whose reputation has not sufficiently ___ the decline into which it fell after his death.

(A) contributed to

(B) benefited from

(C) recovered from

(D) conflicted with

(E) derived from

12. Having billed himself as “Mr. Clean,” Hosokawa could not ____ the ____ of a major financial scandal.

(A) survive...acclaim

(B) withstand...notoriety

(C) identify...exposure

(D) resist...charms

(E) censure...temptation

13. A curious ____ of Florence’s history is that this great center of Italian ____ should time and again have been home to acts of appalling savagery and inhumanity.

(A) example...conflict

(B) paradox...civilization

(C) result...brutality

(D) convention...culture

(E) distinction...quality

14. Illness can be ____ as how disease feels, the experience of being sick: at once a physical or natural condition and a social and cultural one.

(A) cured

(B) survived

(C) acclaimed

(D) defined

(E) deprecated

15. Lamenting that something horrid had recently befallen the craft of biography, biographer Arthur Schlesinger ____ the glut of gossipy new lives on the market.

(A) deplored

(B) forgot

- (C) acclaimed
- (D) composed
- (E) abridged

16. Instead of taking exaggerated precautions against touching or tipping or jarring the bottle of wine, the waitress handled it quite ____, being careful only to use a napkin to keep her hands from the cool bottle itself.

- (A) fastidiously
- (B) reverently
- (C) nonchalantly
- (D) tentatively
- (E) ambivalently

17. The eighteenth century was a kind of golden age in deaf history because, with the establishment of schools for the deaf, these people emerged from ____ and began to appear in positions of eminence and ____—as writers, engineers, philosophers, and intellectuals.

- (A) retirement...ambiguity
- (B) seclusion...compromise
- (C) obscurity...responsibility
- (D) hiding...ignominy
- (E) solicitude...disrepute

18. The crisis is not ____; it will not affect us for years to come.

- (A) specious
- (B) fleeting
- (C) meaningless
- (D) minute
- (E) imminent

19. When Dorothy and her friends realized that, despite his claims, the Wizard of Oz didn't know how to get them back to Kansas, they were sure they'd been ____ by a ____.

- (A) befriended...philanthropist
- (B) succored...magician
- (C) captured...genius
- (D) duped...charlatan
- (E) delayed...miser

20. Now better known for its racetrack, Saratoga Springs first gained attention for the ____ qualities of its famous "healing waters."

- (A) diagnostic
- (B) commercial
- (C) therapeutic
- (D) overlooked
- (E) experimental

EXERCISE 4

1. Repeat offenders who continue to drive under the influence of alcohol face having their drivers' licenses permanently ____.

- (A) issued
- (B) recorded
- (C) authorized
- (D) revoked
- (E) disregarded

2. Excited and unafraid, the ____ child examined the stranger with bright-eyed curiosity.

- (A) apathetic
- (B) drowsy
- (C) timorous
- (D) inquisitive
- (E) hesitant

3. Though masterminded by the Metropolitan Museum's Guy Bauman, this survey of Flemish paintings in America was clearly a ____ operation, aided by scholars throughout North America.

- (A) marginal
- (B) derivative
- (C) worthwhile
- (D) circuitous
- (E) collective

4. I am seeking an ____ solution to this dispute, one that will be fair and acceptable to both sides.

- (A) equivocal
- (B) infamous
- (C) equitable
- (D) idiosyncratic
- (E) overrated

5. A New World lizard, the basilisk, occasionally does something that seems to ____ physics: it runs across the surface of water for distances of up to 30 feet.

- (A) defy
- (B) quantify
- (C) assess
- (D) exemplify
- (E) corroborate

6. The most consistent qualities of Forster's novels are the human isolation and passivity in them; his principal characters stand slightly apart and ____, but rarely ____.

- (A) sneer...collapse
- (B) interact...adapt
- (C) mourn...recollect

(D) observe...act

(E) domineer...participate

7. Far from being distracted or immobilized by his inner conflicts, Keynes was ____ by them into becoming one of the most productive, effective, and buoyant personalities of the twentieth century.

(A) neutralized

(B) energized

(C) incapacitated

(D) enervated

(E) inhibited

8. A born teller of tales, Olsen used her impressive ____ skills to advantage in her story "I Stand Here Ironing."

(A) domestic

(B) metaphysical

(C) narrative

(D) diagnostic

(E) argumentative

9. Waving broadly at the still-applauding crowd, the speaker was highly ____ by the ____ response to her talk.

(A) exasperated...vehement

(B) gratified...enthusiastic

(C) bewildered...profound

(D) intimidated...sincere

(E) delighted....skeptical

10. As a scientific document, the book should stand for several years until further ____ again make revision ____.

(A) developments...impossible

(B) obstacles...optional

(C) attempts...undesirable

(D) failures...detrimental

(E) advances...necessary

11. The jazz musician cannot play well if he is completely ____, as if lying half asleep in a Jacuzzi.

(A) untruthful

(B) autonomous

(C) sincere

(D) relaxed

(E) talented

12. Why do some plant stems develop a protective bark that enables them to survive the winter, while others ____ at the first frost?

(A) blossom

(B) adapt

(C) shrivel

(D) mature

(E) wake

13. Salvador Dali's tendency to fabricate events makes it difficult for the biographer to tell the story of his life with any degree of ____.

(A) vividness

(B) accuracy

(C) solemnity

(D) spontaneity

(E) artistry

14. If Amelia Earhart's acceptance was by no means ____, her fame was unusually widespread and her popularity long-lived.

(A) universal

(B) ambiguous

(C) expedient

(D) partial

(E) genuine

15. Throughout his career he demonstrated strong belief in individual faith but powerful ___ about the organized church.

(A) modesty

(B) skepticism

(C) devotion

(D) discernment

(E) ambition

16. The text abounds with details, but there are no overarching theses to ___ them.

(A) specify

(B) exaggerate

(C) confound

(D) unify

(E) modify

17. The senator contended that, rather than being a ___ concern, global warming is a critical problem that imperils not just Americans but all life on Earth.

(A) significant

(B) hazardous

(C) strategic

(D) planetary

(E) peripheral

18. It would be beneficial if someone so radical could be brought to believe that old customs need not necessarily be ___ and that change may possibly be ___.

(A) defensible...premature

(B) outdated...required

- (C) evil...salutary
- (D) invaluable...temporary
- (E) worthless...inadvisable

19. T. S. Eliot, famous for his ____, nevertheless accepted posterity's interest in his life, ____ that his correspondence with his lady friends eventually would be read.

- (A) reticence...assuming
- (B) modesty...prohibiting
- (C) boastfulness...remembering
- (D) vanity...intimating
- (E) curiosity...regretting

20. Waiting impatiently in line to see Santa Claus, even the best-behaved children grow ____ and start to fret.

- (A) fidgety
- (B) noisome
- (C) sonorous
- (D) pungent
- (E) ambivalent

Level B

Most high school students have some difficulty answering sentence completion questions on this level. Consider the four practice exercises that follow to be a good sample of the mid-range sentence completion questions you will face on the SAT.

Each of the following sentences contains one or two blanks; each blank indicates that a word or set of words has been left out. Below the sentence are five words or phrases, lettered A through E. Select the word or set of words that best completes the sentence.

Example:

Fame is ----; today's rising star is all too soon tomorrow's washed-up has-been.

(A) rewarding	(B) gradual
(C) essential	(D) spontaneous
(E) transitory	



EXERCISE 1

1. In the 1920s Hollywood became a magnet for men and women on the cutting edge—___ artists genuinely excited by the possibilities of the up-and-coming film medium.

- (A) impecunious
- (B) innovative
- (C) unprepossessing
- (D) impenitent
- (E) apathetic

2. A leading philosopher of our time, Ludwig Wittgenstein, laid down a ___ to which good historians ___: “Of that of which nothing is known nothing can be said.”

- (A) burden...protest
- (B) law...amend
- (C) rule...adhere
- (D) maxim...succumb
- (E) weapon...surrender

3. One by one, she ___ almost all of her supporters until, at the end, only a handful of her closest allies really wanted her to stay in office.

- (A) promoted
- (B) alienated
- (C) represented
- (D) exaggerated
- (E) liberated

4. The banquet had ____ effect on the overfed guests: they began to nod off in their seats.

- (A) a soporific
- (B) a cumulative
- (C) an immoderate
- (D) an invigorating
- (E) a negligible

5. Thomas Jefferson called The Federalist papers “the best commentaries on the principles of government ever written,” and two centuries later they still ____ as the most ____ statements of American political philosophy.

- (A) stand...derivative
- (B) rate...abstruse
- (C) rank...impressive
- (D) fascinate...ambiguous
- (E) compete...underrated

6. Left to endure a penniless old age, the ____ man lived to regret his ____ youth.

- (A) miserly...friendless
- (B) reclusive...affable
- (C) eccentric...fleeting
- (D) egotistical...frugal
- (E) improvident...prodigal

7. Peter has a bad habit of making ____ remarks that wander so far off topic that we forget the gist of what he is saying.

- (A) awkward
- (B) pertinent
- (C) digressive
- (D) telling
- (E) tentative

8. Though set in a mythical South American country, Isabel Allende's novel is ____ the tragic history of Chile.

- (A) irrelevant to
- (B) rooted in
- (C) inconsistent with
- (D) exceeded by
- (E) indifferent to

9. The marketers' ____ in donating the new basketball backboards to the school system are not solely ____; they plan to sell advertising space on the backboards, turning them into miniature billboards.

- (A) losses...obvious
- (B) expectations...peculiar
- (C) aims...mercenary
- (D) reasons...sensitive
- (E) motivations...philanthropic

10. Justice Harry Blackmun's retirement, while unlikely to bring about a drastic change in the Supreme Court, will remove a distinctly ____ voice from the Court's often featureless mix.

- (A) bland
- (B) personal
- (C) moderate
- (D) neutral
- (E) derivative

11. Having just published his fourth novel in an almost 40-year career, Gaddis describes himself, with some ____, as a writer who has never been in a ____ to get into print.

- (A) expectation...mood
- (B) impatience...technique
- (C) understatement...rush

(D) indecision...position

(E) exaggeration...school

12. Actors fade out of view with depressing frequency; the theater is a ____ profession at best.

(A) romantic

(B) demanding

(C) precarious

(D) disinterested

(E) degenerate

13. Though Phil had expected to feel overawed when he met Joe Montana, he found the world-famous quarterback friendly and ____.

(A) querulous

(B) acerbic

(C) domineering

(D) unintimidating

(E) taciturn

14. Flying in the face of ____, the writer George Sand shocked her contemporaries by taking lovers and by wearing men's clothes.

(A) immodesty

(B) reconciliation

(C) emancipation

(D) convention

(E) modernism

15. In the poem "Annabel Lee," the speaker reveals that he is not ____ to the death of his beloved; on the contrary, he is ____.

(A) indifferent...apathetic

(B) reconciled...acquiescent

(C) resigned...inconsolable

(D) accustomed...inured

(E) relevant...responsive

16. The artists of the Chinese avant-garde have used Western styles ____ and meaningfully to accomplish artistic ends of their own.

(A) obsequiously

(B) shamefully

(C) cannily

(D) indifferently

(E) problematically

17. Despite the poem's archaic and tortuous language, the thrust of the poet's argument is surprisingly ____.

(A) vapid

(B) dated

(C) blunted

(D) intelligible

(E) idiosyncratic

18. Splitting the country into conflicting factions, pitting brother against brother, the Civil War was ____ experience for the American people.

(A) an ephemeral

(B) a divisive

(C) a peripheral

(D) an illuminating

(E) a salutary

19. Because of the trauma they have experienced, survivors of a major catastrophe are likely to exhibit ____ of behavior and may require the aid of competent therapists.

(A) concessions

(B) diminutions

(C) aberrations

(D) restrictions

(E) altercations

20. The reader has the happy impression of watching an extraordinarily inventive and intellectually ____ novelist working at the ____ of her powers.

(A) dishonest...apex

(B) creative...eclipse

(C) fecund...height

(D) effete...limits

(E) amenable...diminution

EXERCISE 2

1. While some Southern writers see the past as a heavy burden, others see it as a subject for ____ reflection.

(A) gloomy

(B) wearisome

(C) interminable

(D) nostalgic

(E) bleak

2. One of Detroit's great success stories was Lee Iacocca's revitalization of the moribund Chrysler Corporation, turning it into a ____ competitor.

(A) vigorous

(B) tentative

(C) marginal

(D) negligent

(E) superficial

3. A journalist rather than a scholar, Mr. Cose seems nevertheless to be ____ most of the serious studies relevant to his topic.

(A) overawed by

(B) ignorant of

(C) associated with

(D) wearied by

(E) familiar with

4. Egocentric, at times vindictive when he believed his authority was being questioned, White could also be kind, gracious, and even ____ when the circumstances seemed to require it.

(A) self-deprecating

(B) authoritarian

(C) provocative

(D) taciturn

(E) disdainful

5. Far from being in the ____ condition promised by the realtor, the condo was shabby and dilapidated.

(A) vacant

(B) indifferent

(C) pristine

(D) marginal

(E) euphoric

6. Polls indicate that many prospective voters in the next presidential election are ____ about the outcome; they do not seem to care who wins.

(A) enthusiastic

(B) inadequate

(C) antagonistic

(D) apathetic

(E) suspicious

7. If you need car parts that the dealers no longer stock, try ____ for odd bits and pieces at the auto wreckers' yards.

(A) waiting

- (B) bantering
- (C) scavenging
- (D) riveting
- (E) insuring

8. Grateful as we are for these splendid books, they remain isolated examples of excellence in a literature of ____.

- (A) competition
- (B) distinction
- (C) grandeur
- (D) mediocrity
- (E) affirmation

9. Despite the ____ discussions of recent months, observers say that the administration and the developer have made progress in their negotiations and are close to ____ on a purchase price.

- (A) amicable...haggling
- (B) acrimonious...defaulting
- (C) heated...agreeing
- (D) fruitful...settling
- (E) constructive...compromising

10. People expected Winston Churchill to take his painting lightly, but Churchill, no ____, regarded his artistic efforts most seriously indeed.

- (A) virtuoso
- (B) zealot
- (C) dilettante
- (D) altruist
- (E) renegade

11. Aimed at curbing European attempts to seize territory in the Americas, the Monroe Doctrine was a warning to ____ foreign powers.

- (A) magnanimous
- (B) credulous
- (C) reticent
- (D) predatory
- (E) allied

12. It is a spotty sort of book, with many pages that, if not exactly ____, are less than ____.

- (A) bland...tedious
- (B) pretentious...conventional
- (C) dull...exciting
- (D) eventful...newsworthy
- (E) murky...obscure

13. Although Miss Watson never joined the temperance movement, she was a strict teetotaler and would not ____ drinking alcohol.

- (A) recall
- (B) rebuke
- (C) condone
- (D) evade
- (E) relinquish

14. In discussing Rothko's art, Breslin is ____ in keeping to the facts and resisting the ____ of fanciful interpretation.

- (A) scrupulous...temptation
- (B) meticulous...integrity
- (C) ungainly...reward
- (D) uninterested...echo
- (E) inept...bias

15. Burdened by debt, Lydgate abandons his dreams of reforming medicine to take a conventional but ____ practice in London.

- (A) lucrative
- (B) ordinary
- (C) innovative
- (D) intangible
- (E) exotic

16. Numerous studies have found that people who choose to represent themselves in court on the whole exercise pretty good judgment—they seem to have a ____ sense of when they need a lawyer and when they don't.

- (A) faulty
- (B) capricious
- (C) reliable
- (D) transient
- (E) drastic

17. When I listened to her cogent arguments, all my ____ were ____ and I was forced to agree with her point of view.

- (A) senses...stimulated
- (B) opinions...confirmed
- (C) preconceptions...substantiated
- (D) questions...interpolated
- (E) doubts...dispelled

18. What made Ann such a fine counselor was her ____, her ability to put herself in her client's place and feel his emotions as if they were her own.

- (A) integrity
- (B) empathy
- (C) tenacity
- (D) impartiality
- (E) aloofness

19. Samuel Johnson gave more than ____ cooperation to his biographer, James Boswell; he made himself available to Boswell night after night, furnished Boswell with correspondence, even read his biographer's notes.

- (A) innocuous
- (B) collusive
- (C) tacit
- (D) edifying
- (E) diplomatic

20. Where lesser scholars would have been ____ by the vast collection of unpublished letters, rough drafts, and journals left by Henry James, Leon Edel was emboldened by its discovery and began to plan an ambitious series of studies on the life and works of the novelist.

- (A) intrigued
- (B) encouraged
- (C) incensed
- (D) taxed
- (E) daunted

EXERCISE 3

1. In their determination to discover ways to ____ human life, doctors fail to take into account that longer lives are not always happier ones.

- (A) ease
- (B) prolong
- (C) eradicate
- (D) recuperate
- (E) dissect

2. In this survey of Revolutionary America, the author finds a remarkable homogeneity of opinion from Massachusetts to Georgia; the differences between the sections are ____, almost always explainable by differences in climate or topography.

- (A) sharp

- (B) nonexistent
- (C) irreconcilable
- (D) superficial
- (E) enormous

3. Halls and audiences for lieder recitals tend to be smaller than those for opera and thus more ____ the intimacy and sense of close involvement, which is the recital's particular charm.

- (A) inauspicious for
- (B) destructive of
- (C) conducive to
- (D) compromised by
- (E) indifferent to

4. Despite their reputations as soothing love songs sung by mothers to lull fretful infants to sleep, many lullabies are of a dark, even ____ nature.

- (A) soporific
- (B) manipulative
- (C) threatening
- (D) auspicious
- (E) innocuous

5. The mayor and school superintendent let their dispute over budget cuts ____ to ugly and destructive proportions.

- (A) escalate
- (B) automate
- (C) stagnate
- (D) condense
- (E) dwindle

6. Wherever Lao Li travels, he makes slides of contemporary works of art; his archives ____ every meaningful artistic effort in modern China.

- (A) deride
- (B) ignore
- (C) perpetrate
- (D) document
- (E) abridge

7. Contrary to her customary ____ behavior, Susan began leaving parties early to seek the solitude of her room.

- (A) reclusive
- (B) circumspect
- (C) decorous
- (D) gregarious
- (E) altruistic

8. Science is always ____, expecting that modifications of its present theories will sooner or later be found necessary.

- (A) conclusive
- (B) irrefutable
- (C) original
- (D) tentative
- (E) inflexible

9. One of the great killers until barely 50 years ago, tuberculosis (“consumption” as it was then named) seemed a scourge or ____ rather than the long-term ____ illness it was.

- (A) plague...chronic
- (B) detriment...ominous
- (C) antiseptic...prevalent
- (D) vestige...contemporary
- (E) epidemic...salutary

10. Gaddis is a formidably talented writer whose work has been, unhappily, more likely to intimidate or ____ his readers than to lure them into his fictional world.

- (A) entice
- (B) strengthen
- (C) invigorate
- (D) transform
- (E) repel

11. Compared with the ostentatious glamour of opera, classical song (increasingly called lieder everywhere) is a more ____ tradition.

- (A) articulate
- (B) unrepresentative
- (C) subdued
- (D) broad-minded
- (E) worldly

12. This well-documented book is ____ researched, fluently written, and unfailingly intelligent in tracing the ____ course of its subject's tormented career.

- (A) indifferently...triumphant
- (B) inadequately...unfortunate
- (C) painstakingly...tragic
- (D) carefully...auspicious
- (E) thoroughly...promising

13. Lexy's joy at finding the perfect Christmas gift for John was ____, for she still had to find presents for the cousins and Uncle Bob.

- (A) transitory
- (B) antithetical
- (C) exuberant
- (D) exhaustive
- (E) incontrovertible

14. Life is a ____ of the sacred and the profane, of good and evil; to try to ____ them is futile.

- (A) rejection...embrace
- (B) commingling...separate
- (C) misalliance...endure
- (D) defamation...reform
- (E) confusion...promulgate

15. Under the rule of the foreign invaders, the land seemed asleep, save for a small group of rebels who sought to kindle the ____ nationalism of the people.

- (A) valid
- (B) blatant
- (C) dormant
- (D) pretentious
- (E) contemplated

16. Many of the early Hollywood moguls sought to ____ themselves and enhance their celluloid empires by snaring ____ writers and intellectuals as screenwriters.

- (A) advance...presumptuous
- (B) aggrandize...prestigious
- (C) intimidate...unsuspecting
- (D) glorify...superannuated
- (E) sabotage...distinguished

17. The Turner Network's production is an absorbing Heart of Darkness, watchful, surreptitious, almost ____ as it waits to ____ our emotions.

- (A) lighthearted...cater to
- (B) melancholy...cheer up
- (C) mercenary...pay for
- (D) predatory...pounce on
- (E) furtive...figure out

18. Helen valued people who behaved as if they respected themselves; nothing irritated her more than an excessively ____ waiter or a fawning salesclerk.

- (A) austere
- (B) domineering
- (C) grave
- (D) obsequious
- (E) contentious

19. Whereas most scholars have tended to regard Monteverdi's opera *L'Orfeo* as the beginning of a tradition, Mr. Pickett sensibly considers it the ____ of one.

- (A) origin
- (B) example
- (C) presence
- (D) culmination
- (E) birthright

20. Though ostensibly teaching posture, Feher brings into play techniques of ballet, yoga, and vocal projection to come up with lessons that can best be described as ____.

- (A) problematic
- (B) eclectic
- (C) homogeneous
- (D) unpretentious
- (E) doctrinaire

EXERCISE 4

1. During the troubles of 1750, the extent of ____ in Scotland was terrible; many Scots could afford nothing to eat but oatmeal porridge.

- (A) anarchy
- (B) detriment
- (C) punishment
- (D) apathy

(E) destitution

2. The biographer of Tennyson is confronted with the problem, rarely solved, of how to make a basically ____ life interesting.

(A) dramatic

(B) bewildering

(C) intriguing

(D) controversial

(E) uneventful

3. If, like the mole rat, you could run backward as easily as forward but had weak eyes that could see only dim shadows of light and dark, you too might want touch-sensitive whiskers to help ____ you through the tunnels of your underground home.

(A) carry

(B) illuminate

(C) excavate

(D) distract

(E) guide

4. Getting into street brawls is no minor matter for professional boxers, who are required by law to restrict their ____ impulses to the ring.

(A) humorous

(B) aggressive

(C) obligatory

(D) amateurish

(E) legitimate

5. For all of his turn-of-the-century trappings, the novel's hero is basically a ____ voice; his values and cultural ____ are of the present more than the 1890s.

(A) derivative...antecedents

(B) modern...antiquity

(C) contemporary...sensibility

(D) familiar...descendants

(E) hollow...premises

6. She wondered whether triangles, which had only three sides, ___ as polygons, which she thought of as many-sided.

(A) theorized

(B) estimated

(C) qualified

(D) subsisted

(E) multiplied

7. Kepler's observations of the supernova would have been more ___ and valuable had they been made with a telescope; unfortunately, Kepler's supernova lighted the night skies five full years before Galileo made the first ___ telescopic scan of the heavens.

(A) remote...skeptical

(B) solemn...unseemly

(C) infamous...extraneous

(D) detailed...documented

(E) fortuitous...recorded

8. As a product of the Soviet literary establishment, the author was brave enough to ___ the hand that fed him, but not heroic enough to bite it.

(A) give up

(B) nibble at

(C) cringe from

(D) worship

(E) devour

9. It is a relief to see people who can be interested in the arts without being "arty"—collectors who collect for their own ___ rather than for ___.

(A) enjoyment...satisfaction

- (B) interest...pleasure
- (C) reputation...amusement
- (D) pleasure...show
- (E) education...fulfillment

10. The periodic nature of her complaints began to concern us: alarmed by these ____ attacks, we decided to consult a doctor in spite of her opposition.

- (A) trivial
- (B) recurrent
- (C) superficial
- (D) spontaneous
- (E) tentative

11. Though critic John Simon seldom had a good word to say about most contemporary plays, his review of All in the Timing was a total ____.

- (A) mistake
- (B) dismissal
- (C) fraud
- (D) rave
- (E) farce

12. Traditional Chinese painters trained by copying their teachers; ____ was reserved for old age, when you might make changes so ____ that they were almost invisible.

- (A) imitation...ubiquitous
- (B) emulation...dramatic
- (C) novelty...marked
- (D) originality...slight
- (E) honor...petty

13. Satisfied that her name had been ____, she dropped her libel suit after the newspaper finally published a ____ of its original defamatory statement.

- (A) praised...summary

- (B) maligned...glossary
- (C) vindicated... repetition
- (D) enhanced...reaffirmation
- (E) cleared...retraction

14. Like Machiavelli before him, Henry Kissinger has a keen appreciation for the hard-headed, even ____, use of power, to the point of admiring some traits in leaders who were otherwise ____.

- (A) cynical...benevolent
- (B) gentle...insignificant
- (C) ruthless...detestable
- (D) resentful...charismatic
- (E) forceful...exemplary

15. Some thought Dali was a brilliant painter; others ____ him as a conceited poseur.

- (A) respected
- (B) venerated
- (C) dismissed
- (D) vindicated
- (E) exasperated

16. The late James Beard was ____ with his time and knowledge—a ____ trait in the narrow world of food writing, a milieu notorious for its pettiness and infighting.

- (A) unselfish...common
- (B) unconcerned...standard
- (C) stingy...remarkable
- (D) occupied...negative
- (E) generous...rare

17. New Yorker short stories often include ____ allusions to ____ people and events: the implication is, if you are in the in-crowd, you'll get the reference; if you come from Cleveland, you won't.

- (A) esoteric...obscure
- (B) redundant...celebrated
- (C) tedious...notorious
- (D) provincial...major
- (E) passing...common

18. Her growing bitterness was ____ by her professional rivalry with her sister, whose fortunes rose while her own ____.

- (A) represented...ascended
- (B) mitigated...dwindled
- (C) exemplified...soared
- (D) nurtured...multiplied
- (E) exacerbated...declined

19. Mr. Levi is ____ learned; he has read everything bearing on his subject and on poetry in general (in several languages), and he has forgotten little if anything.

- (A) moderately
- (B) spottily
- (C) inadvertently
- (D) formidably
- (E) inadequately

20. Because vast organizations are an inevitable element in modern life, it is ____ to aim at their abolition.

- (A) necessary
- (B) important
- (C) customary
- (D) realistic
- (E) futile

Level C

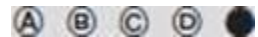
Most high school students have trouble answering many sentence completion questions on this level of difficulty. Consider the four practice exercises that follow to be a chance for you to acquaint yourself with the toughest sorts of sentence completion questions that occur on the SAT.

Each of the following sentences contains one or two blanks; each blank indicates that a word or set of words has been left out. Below the sentence are five words or phrases, lettered A through E. Select the word or set of words that best completes the sentence.

Example:

Fame is ----; today's rising star is all too soon tomorrow's washed-up has-been.

(A) rewarding	(B) gradual
(C) essential	(D) spontaneous
(E) transitory	



EXERCISE 1

1. The moon was hidden and the night had grown very dark; she had to ____ to see.

- (A) blink
- (B) strain
- (C) mask
- (D) remember
- (E) reflect

2. The Battle of Lexington was not, as most of us have been taught, a ____ rising of individual farmers, but was instead a tightly organized, well-planned event.

- (A) premeditated
- (B) cautionary
- (C) spontaneous
- (D) coordinated
- (E) theoretical

3. The book will arouse antagonism, disagreement, and animosity among theologians because it will ____ many ____ rituals and beliefs.

- (A) undermine...iconoclastic
- (B) tolerate...accepted
- (C) undermine...established
- (D) disregard...forgotten
- (E) observe...pious

4. The ____, by definition, possesses wisdom; the virtuoso, by definition, possesses ____.

- (A) scholar...morality
- (B) sage...expertise
- (C) zealot...sincerity
- (D) visionary...idealism
- (E) pedant...proficiency

5. For a young person, Winston seems remarkably ____; you'd expect someone his age to show a little more life.

- (A) sophomoric
- (B) vigorous
- (C) stodgy
- (D) tidy
- (E) sensitive

6. The true historian finds the facts about Marlowe and Shakespeare far more interesting than people's unfounded ____.

- (A) complaints
- (B) evidence
- (C) conjectures
- (D) qualms
- (E) certainty

7. Even Cormac McCarthy, Don DeLillo, and William Gaddis—eminent novelists who are notoriously ____ when it comes to ____—have surrendered to the exigencies of modern publishing and agreed to be the subjects of magazine articles.

- (A) prolific...writing
- (B) egotistical...fame
- (C) overrated...style
- (D) irate...delays
- (E) shy...publicity

8. Tom prided himself on knowing the latest news, the secrets of the rich and the poor; it ____ him that there was something he did not know about his friend.

- (A) delighted
- (B) flattered
- (C) reminded
- (D) galled
- (E) reassured

9. Uncertain which suitor she ought to marry, the princess ____, saying now one, now the other.

- (A) improvised
- (B) vacillated
- (C) threatened
- (D) compromised
- (E) divulged

10. Factory trawlers, large fishing vessels that drag heavy nets over the seafloor, “vacuum” the North Pacific seas, trapping fish ____.

- (A) unintentionally
- (B) indiscriminately
- (C) paradoxically
- (D) collaboratively

(E) temporarily

11. Elizabeth Barrett, whose ____ father would brook no interference or disagreement with his plans for his daughter, eloped in order to ____ his autocratic rule.

(A) attentive...underscore

(B) vindictive...preserve

(C) domineering...escape

(D) idiosyncratic...accommodate

(E) authoritarian...extend

12. Duke Ellington's jazz symphonies were attacked by classical critics who felt that the entire attempt to fuse jazz as a form with classical music should be ____.

(A) promoted

(B) documented

(C) discouraged

(D) acclaimed

(E) repeated

13. During the last four decades of Tennyson's long life, his creative powers never ____, some of his most remarkable work coming after the age of 70.

(A) recovered

(B) manifested

(C) flagged

(D) blossomed

(E) broadened

14. The villagers fortified the town hall, hoping this improvised ____ could ____ them from the guerrilla raids.

(A) citadel...alienate

(B) refuge...distinguish

(C) stronghold...protect

(D) venture...intimidate

(E) disguise...safeguard

15. Lovejoy, the hero of Jonathan Gash's mystery novels, is an antiques dealer who gives the reader advice on how to tell ____ antique plate from the real thing.

(A) a priceless

(B) a spurious

(C) a classical

(D) an authentic

(E) an antiquated

16. The omniscient narrator stands above the story he is telling, ____ his knowledge of what will occur.

(A) disheartened by

(B) unlimited in

(C) ostracized for

(D) vindicated by

(E) uncertain of

17. Today employers no longer speak of firing or discharging employees; instead, according to the latest ____, they simply "effect a separation."

(A) digression

(B) overstatement

(C) euphemism

(D) paradox

(E) proverb

18. The TV news magazine sits precisely at the ____ of information and entertainment, for while it is not a silly sitcom, it is not a documentary either.

(A) foundation

(B) juncture

(C) cessation

(D) institution

(E) eclipse

19. Even though nonbreeding female mole rats are ____, when the queen mole rat dies, several females suddenly ____ their sexual and reproductive powers and battle one another to replace her.

(A) prolific...accept

(B) sterile...regain

(C) barren...relinquish

(D) fecund...recover

(E) fragile...lose

20. ____ by life's ____, the last emperor of China worked as a lowly gardener in the palace over which he had once ruled.

(A) Fortified...generosity

(B) Deluded...coincidences

(C) Humbled...vicissitudes

(D) Venerated...survivors

(E) Recognized...impostors

EXERCISE 2

1. The observers hope to find out how important ____ foraging is to these endangered shorebirds in order to ____ the importance of restricting nighttime human use of beaches to specific places or times.

(A) nocturnal...ascertain

(B) aerial...convey

(C) underwater...rectify

(D) sporadic...mitigate

(E) desultory...mandate

2. Most people who are color-blind actually can distinguish several colors; some, however, have a truly ____ view of a world all in shades of gray.

- (A) monochromatic
- (B) opalescent
- (C) translucent
- (D) astigmatic
- (E) roseate

3. Even when being ____ in method, people can come up with incorrect answers by basing their arguments on false premises.

- (A) original
- (B) logical
- (C) slipshod
- (D) realistic
- (E) careless

4. Was he so thin-skinned, then, to ____ any small ____ at his expense?

- (A) support...purchase
- (B) repeat...compliment
- (C) comprehend...mystery
- (D) resent...jest
- (E) disregard...insult

5. We look with pride at our new bridges and dams, for they are works of art as well as of ____.

- (A) leisure
- (B) aesthetics
- (C) drudgery
- (D) utility
- (E) anachronism

6. When clay dries out, it loses its plasticity and becomes less ____.

- (A) synthetic

- (B) expensive
- (C) malleable
- (D) tangible
- (E) brittle

7. For many years an unheralded researcher, Barbara McClintock gained international ____ when she won the Nobel Prize in Physiology and Medicine.

- (A) condemnation
- (B) notoriety
- (C) renown
- (D) affluence
- (E) camaraderie

8. In judging the degree of his guilt, the question remains whether he acted out of purely ____ motives or whether he acted with thoughts of his own ____ in mind.

- (A) benevolent...fame
- (B) disinterested...advantage
- (C) selfish...benefit
- (D) mercenary...profit
- (E) malicious...cleverness

9. Rosa was such a last-minute worker that she could never start writing a paper till the deadline was ____.

- (A) known
- (B) problematic
- (C) imminent
- (D) superseded
- (E) recent

10. Rather than feeling toward Miss Havisham the ____ due a benefactor, Estella became resentful and even ____ to her patron.

- (A) esteem...effusive

- (B) obligation...dutiful
- (C) altruism...quarrelsome
- (D) gratitude...hostile
- (E) condescension...benign

11. Trying to prove Hill a liar, Senator Specter repeatedly questioned her ____.

- (A) intelligence
- (B) veracity
- (C) optimism
- (D) autonomy
- (E) brevity

12. It was only the first day of summer vacation, but his nerves were already ____ by the constant clamor of the children.

- (A) eliminated
- (B) alleviated
- (C) replete
- (D) vacillated
- (E) frayed

13. Donald Trump's former casino in Atlantic City once was the most ____ gambling palace in the East, easily outglittering its competitors.

- (A) professional
- (B) speculative
- (C) ostentatious
- (D) lucrative
- (E) restrained

14. Mrs. Thatcher had a better eye for the weaknesses and ____ of her contemporaries than for their virtues.

- (A) responsibilities

- (B) foibles
- (C) merits
- (D) talents
- (E) attractions

15. American culture now stigmatizes, and sometimes even heavily ____, behavior that was once taken for granted: overt racism, cigarette smoking, the use of sexual stereotypes.

- (A) advocates
- (B) penalizes
- (C) ignores
- (D) indoctrinates
- (E) advertises

16. Because we have completed our analysis of the major components of the proposed project, we are free to devote the remainder of this session to a study of the project's ____ details.

- (A) lurid
- (B) scrupulous
- (C) unquestionable
- (D) incidental
- (E) involuntary

17. When we encounter a tentative thought of our own in someone else's writings, any ____ we may have had of its validity is ____, and what we were hesitant to believe is confirmed as truth.

- (A) assurance...unfounded
- (B) intimation...imprudent
- (C) doubt...dispelled
- (D) proof...unjustified
- (E) suspicion...reinforced

18. Determined to hire employees on the basis of their merits rather than on the basis of their family connections, Johnson refused to ____ nepotism and other forms of favoritism in the engagement of new workers.

- (A) obscure
- (B) proscribe
- (C) countenance
- (D) misrepresent
- (E) discern

19. Just as sloth is the mark of the idler, ____ is the mark of the ____.

- (A) grief...miser
- (B) obsequiousness...toady
- (C) wanderlust...trespasser
- (D) suspicion...tyrant
- (E) brevity...wit

20. Unlike Sartre, who was born into a cultivated environment, receiving culture in his feeding bottle, so to speak, the child Camus had to fight to ____ a culture that was not ____.

- (A) acquire...innate
- (B) encourage...barbarous
- (C) develop...frivolous
- (D) restrain...inferior
- (E) justify...conventional

EXERCISE 3

1. Because the damage to his car had been ____, Michael decided he wouldn't bother to report the matter to his insurance company.

- (A) intermittent
- (B) gratuitous
- (C) negligible

(D) spontaneous

(E) significant

2. Such was Brandon's ____ that he was frequently described as being honest as the day was long.

(A) vigilance

(B) munificence

(C) probity

(D) gravity

(E) eminence

3. While the movie Spellbound is in many ways a glowing testimonial to the powers of psychoanalysis to overcome the evils of unreason, its portrait of the analytic profession is not entirely ____.

(A) malignant

(B) obscure

(C) adulatory

(D) vehement

(E) derivative

4. Hoping for a rave review of his new show, the playwright was ____ when the critics ____ it unanimously.

(A) gloomy...condoned

(B) incredulous...appraised

(C) vexed...selected

(D) miserable...panned

(E) impressed...divulged

5. Because it had not been blasted into a stable orbit, the satellite moved ____ through space.

(A) innocuously

(B) terminally

- (C) erratically
- (D) effortlessly
- (E) routinely

6. When railroads first began to supplant rivers and canals as highways of commerce, they were regarded as blessings and their promoters were looked upon as ____.

- (A) hucksters
- (B) upstarts
- (C) atheists
- (D) benefactors
- (E) diehards

7. Though she tried to be happy living with Clara in the city, Heidi ____ for the mountains and for her gruff but loving grandfather.

- (A) pined
- (B) searched
- (C) cheered
- (D) labored
- (E) trembled

8. The discovery by George Poinar and Roberta Hess that amber can preserve intact tissue from million-year-old insects ____ the possibility, since proved correct, that it also can preserve intact DNA.

- (A) eliminated
- (B) distorted
- (C) raised
- (D) precluded
- (E) predestined

9. The new dance troupe's gravest problem, one that mars the current production, is a desire for correctness and technical accuracy that ____ both energy and musical response.

- (A) enhances
- (B) stifles
- (C) transforms
- (D) reflects
- (E) supplies

10. New judges often fear that the influence of their own backgrounds will ____ their verdicts, no matter how sincere they are in wanting to be ____.

- (A) contradict...revered
- (B) corroborate...silent
- (C) condition...impartial
- (D) disclose...secretive
- (E) falsify...humane

11. Because he had abandoned his post and joined forces with the Indians, his fellow officers considered the hero of Dances with Wolves a ____.

- (A) martinet
- (B) braggart
- (C) renegade
- (D) skinflint
- (E) laggard

12. To take a ____ attitude, looking down on others as one's inferiors, often is to ____ any chance of favorable relations with them.

- (A) promising...negate
- (B) patronizing...eliminate
- (C) modest...reduce
- (D) pertinent...violate
- (E) benign...deny

13. Contemporary critics often ____ the poet Longfellow as a simple sentimentalist who relied too much on poetic meters only suitable for light verse.

- (A) heed
- (B) endorse
- (C) dismiss
- (D) embellish
- (E) acclaim

14. On some occasions Monteverdi clearly specifies the instruments he wishes to make up his orchestra, but more often he is ____ or silent on the issue.

- (A) enigmatic
- (B) precise
- (C) eloquent
- (D) resolute
- (E) vehement

15. Just as an ____ dish lacks flavor, an inane remark lacks ____.

- (A) intriguing...spice
- (B) insipid...sense
- (C) inedible...listeners
- (D) occasional...implications
- (E) offensive...taste

16. Deeply ____ by the insult to his dignity, he maintained that no true gentleman would accept such an ____ calmly.

- (A) mortified...opportunity
- (B) incensed...affront
- (C) puzzled...honor
- (D) shamed...iconoclasm
- (E) gratified...admonition

17. Isozaki's love for detail is apparent everywhere in the new museum, but happily the details are ____ to the building's larger formal composition, which is ____ by the unfortunate busyness of much recent architecture.

- (A) important...harmed
- (B) irrelevant...fragmented
- (C) subordinated...unencumbered
- (D) appropriate...echoed
- (E) incidental...nullified

18. Although most worthwhile criticism concentrates on the positive, one should not ____ praise everything.

- (A) argumentatively
- (B) constructively
- (C) derogatorily
- (D) analytically
- (E) indiscriminately

19. The biographer may not have ____ the depths of her subject's self-contradictory character, but she has traced its intriguingly complex ____.

- (A) plumbed...tedium
- (B) sounded...surface
- (C) thwarted...background
- (D) reached...insipidity
- (E) disregarded...psyche

20. Learned though she was, her ____ never degenerated into ____.

- (A) erudition...pedantry
- (B) knowledge...ignorance
- (C) scholarship...research
- (D) speculation...thought
- (E) education...inquiry

EXERCISE 4

1. Biologists categorize many of the world's environments as deserts: regions where the ___ availability of some key factor, such as water, sunlight, or an essential nutrient, places sharp constraints on the existence of living things.

- (A) ready
- (B) gradual
- (C) limited
- (D) nearby
- (E) unprecedented

2. The sea was so rough that the safest thing to do was to seize the railing of the ship and hang on; walking was too ___ a pastime.

- (A) leisurely
- (B) pleasant
- (C) tempting
- (D) precarious
- (E) prosaic

3. Though the ad writers had come up with a highly creative campaign to publicize the company's newest product, the head office rejected it for a more ___, down-to-earth approach.

- (A) innovative
- (B) drastic
- (C) prosaic
- (D) noteworthy
- (E) philosophic

4. The Americans and the British seem to have a dog-in-the-manger attitude toward the island of Malta, no longer needing it themselves but nevertheless wishing to ___ it to others.

- (A) interpret
- (B) offer
- (C) deny

(D) praise

(E) reveal

5. Increasingly silent and withdrawn, he changed from a fluent, articulate speaker to someone who gave only ____ answers to any questions asked of him.

(A) bookish

(B) effusive

(C) idiomatic

(D) pretentious

(E) monosyllabic

6. When you learn archaeology solely from lectures, you get only ____ sense of the concepts presented, but when you hold a 5,000-year-old artifact in your hands, you have a chance to involve your senses, not just your intellect.

(A) an invalid

(B) an anachronistic

(C) an abstract

(D) a specious

(E) a tangential

7. Paradoxically, while it is relatively easy to prove a fraudulent work of art is a fraud, it is often virtually impossible to prove that an authentic one is ____.

(A) unpretentious

(B) objective

(C) impartial

(D) dubious

(E) genuine

8. The humorist Mark Twain had a great ____ for history and historians, observing that each year the antiquarians shed new darkness on the past.

(A) reverence

(B) affinity

- (C) tolerance
- (D) contempt
- (E) empathy

9. Since novelty of presentation is apt to add to a performer's popularity, the most successful troubadours were those who were also the most ____ in their delivery.

- (A) spontaneous
- (B) lyrical
- (C) academic
- (D) practiced
- (E) repetitious

10. Unfortunately, in developing countries rapid economic growth often ____ the overexploitation of natural resources and ____ distribution of wealth.

- (A) halts...indiscriminate
- (B) holds off...inadequate
- (C) leads to...inequitable
- (D) continues...evenhanded
- (E) goes beyond...ungrateful

11. Untempered by any ____, she spread an ever more militant message to her followers.

- (A) conviction
- (B) enthusiasm
- (C) radicalism
- (D) hardship
- (E) discretion

12. The idea that people are basically economic creatures, intent only upon their own material advantage, induces disbelief in the ____ of any seemingly ____ motive.

- (A) purpose...natural
- (B) desirability...ulterior

- (C) stupidity...altruistic
- (D) seemliness...egoistic
- (E) integrity...unselfish

13. Leavening his decisions with humorous, down-to-earth anecdotes, Judge Wapner was not at all the ____ legal scholar.

- (A) considerate
- (B) pedantic
- (C) indecisive
- (D) competent
- (E) pragmatic

14. The Apache are a ____ society, where husbands typically move into wives' dwellings and women take the leadership role in family affairs.

- (A) sedentary
- (B) defunct
- (C) fragmented
- (D) matrilineal
- (E) xenophobic

15. ____ James Baldwin, who wrote of black Americans as being in a perpetual state of rage, Mr. Cose asserts that few human beings could ____ the psychic toll of uninterrupted anger.

- (A) Corroborating...endure
- (B) Refuting...enhance
- (C) Dismissing...refine
- (D) Challenging...survive
- (E) Upholding...weather

16. Rather than allowing these dramatic exchanges between her characters to develop fully, Ms. Norman unfortunately tends to ____ the discussions involving the two women.

- (A) exacerbate
- (B) protract
- (C) truncate
- (D) augment
- (E) elaborate

17. "The show must go on" is the oldest ____ of show business; every true performer lives by that creed.

- (A) euphemism
- (B) allegory
- (C) precursor
- (D) tenet
- (E) corroboration

18. The ____ with which musicians and lovers of fine instruments ____ Paul Irvin's professional services attests to his great expertise and craftsmanship as a harpsichord maker.

- (A) hesitation...acquire
- (B) avidness...solicit
- (C) persistence...supersede
- (D) harmony...conjure
- (E) vehemence...reject

19. From the critic's perspective, M. F. K. Fisher is a writer who ____ classification, for her food writing reads like love stories, her fiction like memoirs.

- (A) remembered
- (B) relished
- (C) skirted
- (D) complied with
- (E) matured with

20. Because the apelike members of *Australopithecus afarensis* were capable both of walking and of swinging through trees, the anthropologist described them as a mosaic, bipedal from the waist down and ____ from the waist up.

- (A) ethereal
- (B) arboreal
- (C) dysfunctional
- (D) articulated
- (E) pedestrian

Answers to Sentence Completion Exercises

Level A

Sentence Completion Exercise 1

1. C	8. D	15. A
2. D	9. C	16. A
3. B	10. E	17. D
4. E	11. D	18. B
5. C	12. B	19. D
6. C	13. D	20. B
7. C	14. A	

Sentence Completion Exercise 2

1. B	8. D	15. C
2. C	9. E	16. C
3. E	10. C	17. D
4. D	11. C	18. D
5. A	12. D	19. B
6. A	13. C	20. C

7. C	14. D	
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Sentence Completion Exercise 3

1. E	8. A	15. A
2. E	9. C	16. C
3. C	10. C	17. C
4. B	11. C	18. E
5. A	12. B	19. D
6. E	13. B	20. C
7. C	14. D	

Sentence Completion Exercise 4

1. D	8. C	15. B
2. D	9. B	16. D
3. E	10. E	17. E
4. C	11. D	18. E
5. A	12. C	19. A
6. D	13. B	20. A
7. B	14. A	

Level B

Sentence Completion Exercise 1

1. B	8. B	15. C
2. C	9. E	16. C
3. B	10. B	17. D

4. A	11. C	18. B
5. C	12. C	19. C
6. E	13. D	20. C
7. C	14. D	

Sentence Completion Exercise 2

1. D	8. D	15. A
2. A	9. C	16. C
3. E	10. C	17. E
4. A	11. D	18. B
5. C	12. C	19. C
6. D	13. C	20. E
7. C	14. A	

Sentence Completion Exercise 3

1. B	8. D	15. C
2. C	9. A	16. B
3. C	10. E	17. D
4. C	11. C	18. D
5. A	12. C	19. D
6. D	13. A	20. B
7. D	14. B	

Sentence Completion Exercise 4

1. E	8. B	15. C
2. E	9. D	16. E
3. E	10. B	17. A
4. B	11. D	18. E
5. C	12. D	19. D
6. C	13. E	20. E
7. D	14. C	

Level C

Sentence Completion Exercise 1

1. B	8. D	15. B
2. C	9. B	16. B
3. C	10. B	17. C
4. B	11. C	18. B
5. C	12. C	19. B
6. C	13. C	20. C
7. E	14. C	

Sentence Completion Exercise 2

1. A	8. B	15. B
2. A	9. C	16. D
3. B	10. D	17. C
4. D	11. B	18. C
5. D	12. E	19. B
6. C	13. C	20. A

7. C	14. B	
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Sentence Completion Exercise 3

1. C	8. C	15. B
2. C	9. B	16. B
3. C	10. C	17. C
4. D	11. C	18. E
5. C	12. B	19. B
6. D	13. C	20. A
7. A	14. A	

Sentence Completion Exercise 4

1. C	8. D	15. D
2. D	9. A	16. C
3. C	10. C	17. D
4. C	11. E	18. B
5. E	12. E	19. C
6. C	13. B	20. B
7. E	14. D	

Answer Explanations

Level A

Sentence Completion Exercise 1

1. (C) If Washington political circles had been aware for a week that the Cabinet member was on the way out, his resignation did not come as a shock or surprise to them.

2. (D) Because the heavy rains had made their original route impracticable or impassable, the leaders decided to alter their route.

3. (B) The key phrase “as if it were a laboratory specimen” signals you that excessive literary analysis is analogous to the dissecting or cutting apart of animals and plants done in a biology lab.

4. (E) Customs generally arise because they serve a function. In this case, the division of labor by gender probably came about because it promoted or furthered the interests of the family and in this way was a sensible cooperative strategy.

5. (C) Silk possesses qualities invaluable in nest building. Therefore birds incorporate or introduce silk into their nests, including it as a component.

6. (C) Because no one had ever rebuked or reprimanded the recruit so harshly, the sergeant’s words particularly stung or smarted.

7. (C) The earlier writers differ from this writer in being reticent (reserved) and conventional.

8. (D) A report that constantly interpreted things to reflect badly on or discredit someone would clearly be unfriendly or hostile to that person.

9. (C) There remained in Foster, who had not grown up fully, a trace (small bit; hint) of the undergraduate; he was clever but in some ways immature.

10. (E) Although she felt contempt (scorn) for the world of money and opinion and power, she nevertheless desired or yearned for the fame that only that world could give.

11. (D) If you are excessively careful about what you say, you are not likely to be spontaneous or free in your choice of words.

12. (B) A layperson or nonexpert by definition lacks the training to appreciate or recognize the importance of fossils and ancient artifacts.

13. (D) It would be extremely hard to be unaffected or unmoved by truly mesmerizing, enchanting art.

14. (A) Anthropologists attempt to determine (discover; learn) the origins of the fossils they find.

15. (A) If the therapy has been shown to work in dogs (animals larger than rodents), then its efficacy or effectiveness in larger animals has been proven.

16. (A) To mute or muffle the noise inside a car should make a trip in the car quieter.

17. (D) Neither her father's admonition (warning or counsel) nor her classmates' cool (unsociable; distant) reception stopped Cleeves from following her chosen path.
18. (B) To derail someone from his course is to throw him off track.
19. (D) By definition, a maverick (dissenter; nonconformist) is someone who takes a stand that differs from that of his or her associates.
20. (B) Comte coined (invented; created) a term to denote (stand for; mean) the concept of unselfishness.

Sentence Completion Exercise 2

1. (B) If we manage to destroy the environment, we will be well on the way to extinction as a species.
2. (C) "Even though" children cannot influence affairs in the usual ways, thanks to Edelman's work they are nevertheless not ignored.
3. (E) A campaign that breaks new ground is by definition innovative.
4. (D) Both an outstanding sense of timing and a mastery of the law would be helpful to an attorney.
5. (A) The goal of the project is to make Woolf's work more accessible or available to scholars.
6. (A) The entangling threads that slow down the victim's escape vibrate from the prey's struggles. These vibrations alert (warn; inform) the spider that something is trapped in its web.
7. (C) In poking through the subject's private papers, the biographer invades the subject's privacy.
8. (D) If the babies drink so much fruit juice that they do not get the varied nourishment they need, then drinking large amounts of juice could be detrimental (harmful) to them.
9. (E) An epic or account of heroic exploits by definition narrates the mighty struggles of a central character or protagonist.
10. (C) If it is so amazing that good poems ever get written, there must be many ways to ruin poems.
11. (C) The musk oxen declined or grew fewer in number because the herds were devastated (destroyed; ravaged) by hunters.

12. (D) Just as the limbs of a tree branch off from the trunk, the major arteries branch off from the aorta.
13. (C) Someone who looks on human virtues as less worthy than canine virtues clearly views people in general with contempt (scorn).
14. (D) The dumbfounded neuroanatomist disbelieved Diamond's work. Skeptical of the results of her experiments, he maintained that a rat's brain could not increase or grow.
15. (C) Though he maintained that he did not care (protested his indifference), Judge Hand was disappointed that he had not been nominated to the Supreme Court.
16. (C) Someone consistently hopeful is by definition an optimist.
17. (C) In an arid, extremely dry land, wildlife needs access to water.
18. (D) One would expect that a liberal political movement advocating freedom would favor less authority, not more. However, Trilling asserts that, paradoxically, contrary to expectations, liberalism must move in the direction of increasing control.
19. (B) The contrast here is between the extremes of euphoria (elation) and gloom (melancholy; depression).
20. (C) By definition, to lead a lewd or wanton life is to be dissipated (corrupted by sensuality; self-indulgent).

Sentence Completion Exercise 3

1. (E) Though most people disregarded or made fun of her book, some appreciated it (admired it; grasped its worth).
2. (E) If the critics all say the opera's score has both praiseworthy and wretched sections, then they agree that the score varies in quality. In other words, it is uneven.
3. (C) Someone who plans everything in advance is not spontaneous.
4. (B) Our almost-human ancestors did not become extinct. Instead, they survived.
5. (A) The marketing experts have divided or carved up the mass (whole) audience into segments.
6. (E) Like an overinflated balloon, aneurysms burst.
7. (C) Critics attribute the delay to unexpected problems, a common cause of slowdowns.

8. (A) A hotshot is someone conspicuously talented and successful. Many lawyers are not legal hotshots. They are ill prepared and they lack professional skills.
9. (C) Scientists continue to test hypotheses against experience, verifying them or establishing their accuracy by keeping on making observations.
10. (C) To supersede or replace a learned, scholarly biography, this new life of Gaskell must be a very good book. In other words, it must be a considerable accomplishment or achievement for the author.
11. (C) After Boccherini's death, the composer's reputation fell into a decline, or weakened. It has not yet recovered or improved enough to satisfy the writer of this sentence.
12. (B) Because he had emphasized his scandal-free, virtuous reputation, Hosokawa could not withstand or successfully resist the notoriety (ill fame) of being connected with a scandal.
13. (B) It is paradoxical (incongruous; puzzlingly contradictory) that a civilized center should have been the site of horribly uncivilized, inhumane acts.
14. (D) The sentence serves to define the term illness.
15. (A) If Schlesinger laments or mourns the state of biography, then he is unhappy about the gossipy new biographies currently on sale. Thus, he deplores (disapproves of) them.
16. (D) The waitress handled the bottle nonchalantly or casually, without undue concern.
17. (C) To begin to appear in prominent, responsible positions is to emerge from obscurity or anonymity into the public view.
18. (E) If the crisis will not affect us for years, then by definition it is not imminent (immediately looming; near).
19. (D) A charlatan falsely pretends to know more than he actually does. When Dorothy finds out that the Wizard does not know how to get her home, she thinks he has duped or made a fool of her.
20. (C) Healing waters are by definition therapeutic (curative).

Sentence Completion Exercise 4

1. (D) To revoke a license is to cancel it, to make it void.
2. (D) A curious child is by definition inquisitive.

3. (E) Since many scholars helped to put together the survey, it was a collective (combined; cooperative) effort, not an individual one.
4. (C) A fair solution is by definition equitable or just.
5. (C) It is physically impossible for most living creatures to walk on water. Thus, by running across the surface of water, the basilisk seems to defy or challenge the laws of physics.
6. (D) Passive, inactive people tend to observe rather than to act.
7. (B) Keynes was not immobilized. Instead, he was energized or invigorated.
8. (C) The telling of tales is by definition narrative.
9. (B) An enthusiastic, spirited response would be likely to please or gratify a speaker.
10. (E) Advances or new developments in science would make it necessary to revise the book.
11. (D) Someone lying half asleep in a hot tub is clearly relaxed.
12. (C) Plants that do not survive shrivel (wither) and die.
13. (B) To fabricate events is to make them up, to invent them. Dali's tendency to make things up makes it hard for biographers to portray his life with accuracy.
14. (A) Many people accepted and liked Earhart ("her fame was unusually widespread and her popularity long-lived"). However, not everyone did: her acceptance was not universal.
15. (B) His belief in individual faith contrasts with his doubts (skepticism) about the organized church.
16. (D) Theses is the plural form of thesis, which here means theory or contention. The details are disconnected; no overarching or encompassing theories bring them together or unify them.
17. (E) If global warming poses a threat to all life on Earth, then by definition it is not a peripheral (marginal; minor) issue.
18. (E) Radicals tend to believe that old customs are nonsense and that change is always a good idea. This author thinks it would be good for radicals to rethink their beliefs. They need to realize that old customs are not always worthless and that change can sometimes be a bad idea (beinadvisable).

19. (A) Though Eliot was personally reticent (reserved; uncommunicative about himself), he was realistic enough to assume that his private papers someday would be read.

20. (A) To be fidgety by definition is to exhibit or be marked by impatience.

Level B

Sentence Completion Exercise 1

1. (B) People on the cutting edge—at the forefront of a new movement—are likely to be innovative.

2. (C) Wittgenstein's comment is a rule to which good historians should adhere or stick. It says, "If you don't know anything about a subject, you can't say anything about it." In other words, write about what you know.

3. (B) If only a few of her allies stood by her, she must have alienated or estranged all the others.

4. (A) A soporific effect by definition puts people to sleep, causing them to nod off.

5. (C) The papers rank as (have the status or position of) the most impressive statements of American political philosophy.

6. (E) Someone who has improvidently squandered his money without thinking about the future would regret his prodigal, wasteful ways.

7. (C) Digressive remarks that wander from the topic may make us forget the gist or main point of what's being said.

8. (B) Allende's book is based on or rooted in actual Chilean history.

9. (E) If they plan on selling ad space, their motivations in making the donation are at least partially financial and not solely charitable or philanthropic.

10. (B) Blackmun's voice stood out from the featureless mix of the other Justices' voices: it was an individual, personal voice.

11. (C) It is somewhat of an understatement for Gaddis to describe himself as never having been in a rush to get into print. At a rate of one book every 10 years, he's been markedly slow to publish.

12. (C) Precarious means uncertain in prospects; risky. Acting as a career certainly is that.

13. (D) Montana was unintimidating; he did not frighten or overawe those who met him.
14. (D) In Sand's time, for a woman to take lovers or wear men's clothes was a shocking departure from convention (usual social custom).
15. (C) The speaker is not resigned or reconciled to her death. Instead, he is inconsolable (heartbroken; unable to be comforted or consoled).
16. (C) The Chinese artists have been clever. They have made canny (shrewd) use of Western styles.
17. (D) One would expect the use of outmoded, archaic vocabulary and twisted, tortuous phrasing to make a poem unintelligible. However, contrary to expectations, the poet's argument is intelligible.
18. (B) By definition, an experience that splits a nation into factions or conflicting groups is divisive (dissension creating).
19. (C) Traumas or major shocks can lead to aberrations or abnormalities of behavior in survivors.
20. (C) Someone intellectually fecund (fertile; prolific) is bursting with ideas. Clearly, this productive novelist is at the height of her powers.

Sentence Completion Exercise 2

1. (D) The writers who are not negative about the past look on it positively, even nostalgically (sentimentally, with a sense of wistful longing).
2. (A) By revitalizing Chrysler, Iacocca made it a vigorous, energetic company.
3. (E) One expects a scholar to know the serious works on his subject. Though Cose is not a scholar, he nevertheless is familiar with the appropriate serious works.
4. (A) Despite his self-centeredness, White could be kind to others and even belittle or be modest about himself (be self-deprecating).
5. (C) The contrast here is between the apartment's actual state ("shabby and dilapidated") and its promised condition: pristine (spotlessly clean).
6. (D) By definition, someone apathetic does not care.
7. (C) To scavenge is to hunt through discarded items to find useful bits.
8. (D) Most of the books are not excellent, but are mediocre (of moderate or low quality) instead.

9. (C) Angry, heated discussions suggest no settlement is near. However, the two sides actually are close to agreeing.
10. (C) Churchill was not a dilettante or dabbler; he was a serious artist.
11. (D) Foreign powers that look on territory in the Americas as prey to be seized are by definition predatory.
12. (C) A spotty book is uneven in quality. This particular book suffers from sections that are relatively uninteresting, less than exciting though not precisely dull.
13. (C) A strict teetotaler (person who abstains from drinking alcohol) would not condone (overlook or disregard) anyone's drinking intoxicants.
14. (A) To interpret art fancifully, inventing things, is a temptation to the critic. This critic resists the temptation; he is scrupulous (carefully painstaking) in sticking to the facts.
15. (A) Because he owes money, Lydgate must take a lucrative (well-paying) position.
16. (C) The writer is relatively positive about people's decisions in choosing to represent themselves in court. He or she concludes that people have a reliable or dependable sense of when lawyers are and are not necessary.
17. (E) For the listener to come to agree with the speaker, any doubts he might have had must have been dispelled (made to vanish).
18. (B) Empathy by definition is sensitivity to the feelings and thoughts of others.
19. (C) Tacit cooperation is implied but not expressed actively. Johnson's cooperation with Boswell went far beyond this.
20. (E) Lesser scholars would have been intimidated or daunted by the amount of material to be explored.

Sentence Completion Exercise 3

1. (B) The key phrase here is "longer lives." The doctors are trying to lengthen or prolong human life.
2. (D) If the colonies appeared remarkably homogeneous or uniform in opinion, then clearly there were only superficial or very minor differences among them.
3. (C) A small hall would tend to promote a sense of closeness appropriate to recitals. In other words, such a hall would be particularly conducive to the intimacy that is the recital's special charm.

4. (C) “Even” intensifies what is being said. Lullabies not only have a dark side; many also have a threatening, menacing quality.
5. (A) For a dispute to become ugly and destructive, the level of disagreement must escalate (intensify; increase).
6. (D) Lao Li’s archives document or record contemporary Chinese art.
7. (D) Someone who leaves parties in order to go off alone clearly can no longer be described as gregarious (sociable).
8. (D) If science is always ready to change or modify its theories, it clearly is tentative (provisional) rather than absolute in making its statements.
9. (A) Because we today are able to cure tuberculosis, we think of it as simply another long-term chronic illness. In the past, however, people regarded it as a pestilence or plague.
10. (E) Rather than lure or attract readers, Gaddis’s work tends to repel or drive them away.
11. (C) Instead of being showily glamorous like opera, classical song is more restrained or subdued.
12. (C) The writer is uniformly positive about the book being reviewed, calling it painstakingly or carefully researched. The life the book describes, however, is not positive: the subject’s tormented career was tragic.
13. (A) Lexy’s pleasure did not last long; it was transitory, or fleeting.
14. (B) Commingling is a thorough combining of parts. It would be futile or pointless to try to separate elements that have been thoroughly mixed.
15. (C) By describing the land as asleep, the writer means that the nation had yet to rouse itself to confront the foreign invaders. Clearly the people’s sense of nationalism was dormant or sleeping.
16. (B) In order to enhance or improve their empires, the moguls (cinema magnates) needed the services of prestigious writers whose eminence would rub off on them. In this way the moguls would aggrandize themselves, making themselves appear greater through their association with great intellectuals.
17. (D) The production is described metaphorically as if it were a jungle creature, alert, stealthy, almost predatory (ready to seize its victim) as it waits to pounce.
18. (D) Obsequious means servile or fawningly attentive.

19. (D) “Whereas” signals a contrast. L’Orfeo is not the beginning of a tradition. Instead, it is the culmination or highest achievement of one.

20. (B) In combining so many different approaches, Feher’s lessons are clearly eclectic (composed of elements drawn from different sources).

Sentence Completion Exercise 4

1. (E) If you could afford only such meager nourishment, clearly you would be very poor—in other words, suffering from destitution, or utter poverty.

2. (E) An uneventful life, one in which nothing much important or notable happened, would be difficult to make interesting.

3. (E) Unable to rely on its poor vision to help it move in the darkness, the mole rat depends on the sensitivity of its whiskers to what they touch to give it a feel for its surroundings. Thus, the whiskers help guide the mole rat.

4. (B) Aggressive, belligerent impulses push people to get into street brawls. However, professional boxers are allowed to fight only in professional competitions—that is, in the ring.

5. (C) The phrase “for all” as used here means “in spite of.” It signals a contrast. The novel’s hero does not really belong in the 1890s. He is a contemporary voice and has a contemporary cultural sensibility or capacity for appreciation.

6. (C) She wondered whether triangles qualified (demonstrated the required characteristics) to be called polygons.

7. (D) Telescopic observations are more detailed (complete) than ones made with the naked eye. However, the first documented or recorded use of the telescope came after Kepler saw the supernova.

8. (B) The author was not brave enough to attack the people who had the power to prevent his books from being published; he did not bite the hand that fed him. However, he was brave enough to make an occasional negative remark about these people; thus, he nibbled at the hand that fed him.

9. (D) People who are “arty” are showily or pretentiously artistic: they collect art in order to show off their belongings. True art lovers, however, collect for their own pleasure, not for show.

10. (B) Recurrent (periodically reappearing) attacks or bouts of illness could well alarm someone’s friends and family.

11. (D) "Though" signals a contrast. In this case, Simon's review of a contemporary play is a rave (extravagant praise).
12. (D) In their old age, Chinese painters no longer copied their teachers. However, their originality did not involve major changes; they made slight, barely visible ones.
13. (E) If you had your reputation damaged by a libelous statement, you would want your name cleared or freed of blame. Thus, you would welcome a retraction (disavowal; withdrawal) of the libel.
14. (C) Kissinger appreciates the hard-headed, realistic use of power. He even appreciates power when it is used ruthlessly, without compassion or remorse. For this reason, he is able to admire the ability to use power effectively even when he sees it in people who are otherwise detestable(odious).
15. (C) Poseurs by definition pretend to be something they are not. Some people thought Dali was a great artist. Others dismissed (slighted; made little of) him as a painter who pretended to be great.
16. (E) If the world of food writing is known for its pettiness (small-mindedness) and infighting (internal quarrels), then an author who was generous would be rare in this milieu.
17. (A) Esoteric allusions are by definition references that are understood by only a small, restricted group. References to obscure, little-known people and events clearly would not be understood by people in general.
18. (E) To see her sister's fortunes rise while her own declined or fell would be likely to exacerbate or intensify the subject's bitterness.
19. (D) To have retained so much information is to be formidably or awe inspiring learned.
20. (E) It is futile or useless to try to abolish something whose existence is inevitable (unavoidable).

Level C

Sentence Completion Exercise 1

1. (B) In the dark, one's eyes have to work hard or strain to be able to see.
2. (C) The uprising was organized and planned. Thus, it was not spontaneous or unpremeditated.

3. (C) Theologians (specialists in the study of religious faith and practices) would be upset by a book that undermined or weakened established rituals and beliefs.
4. (B) By definition, a sage is a wise person. Likewise, a virtuoso is a skilled person, one who has expertise.
5. (C) Someone old for his years, slow and conservative, could well be called stodgy.
6. (C) Preferring facts, the historian is uninterested in speculations or conjectures.
7. (E) By agreeing to be the subjects of magazine articles, these famously shy novelists have given in to their publishers' insistence on publicity.
8. (D) Caring so much about being in the know, Tom was vexed or galled by his ignorance.
9. (B) To waver between choices is by definition to vacillate.
10. (B) With their huge nets, the trawlers scoop up everything in their path. Thus, they trap fish indiscriminately, hauling them in without distinguishing among them.
11. (C) A father who rules autocratically and will brook or allow no disagreement is by definition domineering (overbearing; tyrannical). His daughter eloped to escape his control.
12. (C) The symphony is a classical music form. In writing jazz symphonies, Ellington was combining or fusing jazz with a classical form. He was attacked by critics who wished to discourage such fusions.
13. (C) If Tennyson managed to produce particularly impressive work in his last years, clearly his creative powers had not declined or flagged.
14. (C) A stronghold (fortified area) by definition is a place set up to protect people from attack.
15. (B) Lovejoy advises the reader how to avoid being fooled by fake or spurious antiques.
16. (B) Someone omniscient (all-knowing) would by definition be unlimited in knowledge.
17. (C) A euphemism is a mild expression used in place of a blunt, unpleasant one.
18. (B) By definition, a juncture is a point of convergence, here the point where televised information and entertainment are joined in a new format.

19. (B) For a nonbreeding female to be able to replace a queen, taking over her breeding functions, the female must regain her reproductive abilities. In other words, the nonbreeding female suddenly reverses her sterility (barrenness; inability to reproduce).

20. (C) Vicissitudes are the changes of fortune one experiences in the course of a lifetime. Going from ruling an empire to laboring in a garden, China's last emperor clearly would have been humbled or lowered in condition by these changes.

Sentence Completion Exercise 2

1. (A) Before they can ascertain or figure out how important it is to limit the human use of the beaches at night, the observers must determine just how much the shorebirds depend on their nocturnal (nighttime) feeding.

2. (A) If you can see only shades of gray, your view is by definition monochromatic (made up of one color or hue).

3. (B) A faulty premise or underlying assumption can undermine the most logically reasoned argument.

4. (D) To be thin-skinned by definition is to be quick to resent any insult or joking remark (jest) that might reflect on one's dignity.

5. (D) Bridges and dams are built to serve useful functions: they are works of utility. However, this writer asserts that the new bridges and dams are works of art as well.

6. (C) By definition, something that loses its plasticity (capacity for being molded or shaped) is less malleable (capable of being shaped).

7. (C) McClintock went from being unheralded (not celebrated or famous) to being renowned (celebrated; acclaimed).

8. (B) A disinterested (unselfishly motivated) act would not be motivated by selfish thoughts of one's own advantage.

9. (C) Imminent means near at hand, hanging threateningly over one's head. A procrastinator or last-minute worker often delays till the deadline is nearly upon her.

10. (D) Conventionally, one owes a benefactor gratitude. Rather than feeling thankful, however, Estella felt resentful and even hostile (unfriendly; antagonistic).

11. (B) Veracity means truthfulness. By questioning someone's truthfulness, you hope to prove he or she is a liar.

12. (E) Nerves would be frayed or strained by constant clamor (noise).
13. (C) Something that outglitters its rivals is more showy or ostentatious than they are.
14. (B) Foibles by definition are minor flaws or weaknesses. The support signal and suggests that the missing word must be a synonym or near-synonym for "weaknesses."
15. (B) To stigmatize behavior is to characterize or mark it as disgraceful or wicked. To penalize behavior is to go even further and punish it.
16. (D) Now that they have dealt with the major items, they can move on to the minor or incidental ones.
17. (C) If you now believe what you had been reluctant to believe, your doubts or uncertainties have been dispelled (dissipated; driven away).
18. (C) Johnson would not countenance (tolerate; approve) such unfair hiring practices.
19. (B) A toady (sycophant; flatterer in search of getting favors) is characterized by obsequiousness (servile attentiveness).
20. (A) Camus had to fight to acquire or gain a culture that was not his by birth (in other words, was not innate or inborn).

Sentence Completion Exercise 3

1. (C) One wouldn't bother to make an insurance claim for negligible (small; inconsequential) damage.
2. (C) Probity is by definition honesty or integrity.
3. (C) In calling Spellbound a glowing testimonial to (expression of the benefits received from) the powers of psychoanalysis to do good, the writer maintains that the movie presents a favorable picture of psychoanalysis. However, it is not an exclusively admiring, adulatory picture.
4. (D) To have his work panned or harshly criticized would be likely to make a playwright miserable.
5. (C) The satellite is off course and is moving erratically (irregularly or inconsistently) through space.
6. (D) A benefactor by definition is someone who confers benefits or blessings on others.

7. (A) "Though" signals a contrast. In spite of her attempts to be happy, Heidi was unhappy because she pined (fruitlessly longed) to be back home.
8. (C) The couple's discovery raised or suggested a possibility that further investigation showed to be correct.
9. (B) An overemphasis on correctness that stifled or repressed the performers' liveliness would mar or spoil a production.
10. (C) Your background can condition or determine your thinking, subtly prejudicing you so that you cannot be truly impartial or fair.
11. (C) A renegade by definition deserts one allegiance in favor of another.
12. (B) A patronizing or condescending attitude may offend others and eliminate or rule out the possibility of good relations.
13. (C) To dismiss Longfellow in this way is to reject him as unworthy of serious critical consideration.
14. (A) By not specifically stating his wishes, Monteverdi leaves them a mystery. Thus, he is enigmatic (mysterious).
15. (B) By definition, insipid means lacking flavor. By definition, inane means lacking sense.
16. (B) An affront (deliberate offense or insult) would clearly incense or anger someone.
17. (C) Because the details are subordinated or made less important than the building's total design, the building is unencumbered (unimpeded; unhampered) by a sense of busyness.
18. (E) To praise things indiscriminately, making no distinctions between treasures and trash, is to fail to exercise proper critical selectivity.
19. (B) To sound the depths is to ascertain just how deep something is. This biographer has not reached the depths, but she has examined the surface.
20. (A) Erudition means great learning or scholarship. Pedantry, however, is a great show of learning, an excessive attention to petty details that lacks the true scholarly spirit.

Sentence Completion Exercise 4

1. (C) A limited availability of necessities would put constraints or restrictions on the creatures needing them.

2. (D) Under such rough conditions, it would be too risky or precarious to walk without holding on.

3. (C) “Though” signals a contrast. Rather than being creative, the eventual publicity campaign was prosaic or unimaginative.

4. (C) To deny or refuse to others something you yourself do not need or want is to behave like the proverbial dog-in-the-manger, who did not want to eat the hay in the manger but refused to let the hungry cattle get at it.

5. (E) No longer fluent and prone to speech, he became monosyllabic, answering in words of one syllable.

6. (C) Something understood only theoretically or intellectually is known only in the abstract.

7. (E) It is incongruous that it is easier to prove something a fake than to prove it genuine or real.

8. (D) When we say historians shed new light on or illuminate the past, we express respect for historians. When Twain observed that the antiquarians (students of ancient things) shed new darkness on the past, he expressed contempt or scorn for historians.

9. (A) Spontaneous performances, performances arising from the impulse of the moment, tend to be fresh or novel.

10. (C) The key word here is “unfortunately.” To have rapid economic growth lead to the overexploitation or excessive, unjust use of resources and the unfair or inequitable sharing of wealth is truly unfortunate.

11. (E) If she became increasingly militant (aggressively active), then she was not tempered (mellowed) by a spirit of discretion or caution.

12. (E) If you think that people are motivated only by selfish thoughts of their own advantage, you will be unlikely to believe in the integrity or trustworthiness of any unselfish motive.

13. (B) Wapner was not a pedantic scholar, fussing about minute points of law.

14. (D) By definition, a matrilineal society, in which inheritance is determined through the female line, is one in which women have a significant role.

15. (D) In remarking that few humans could survive living in a state of uninterrupted anger, Cose challenges or disputes Baldwin’s statement about anger as a constant in black American life.

16. (C) Instead of allowing the exchanges to develop fully, the playwright cuts short or truncates them.

17. (D) By definition, a tenet is a belief generally held to be true. Here it is used as a synonym for guiding principle or “creed.”

18. (B) Musicians solicit or seek out Irvin’s services with avidness (eagerness) because he is a highly skilled artisan.

19. (C) Fisher’s work evades or skirts classification because it does not fall neatly into set categories.

20. (B) Arboreal means inhabiting or frequenting trees.