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for the **College Bound**



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House**



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for the **College Bound**

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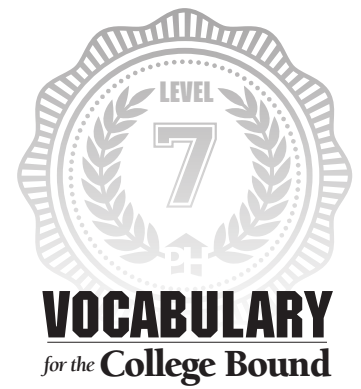


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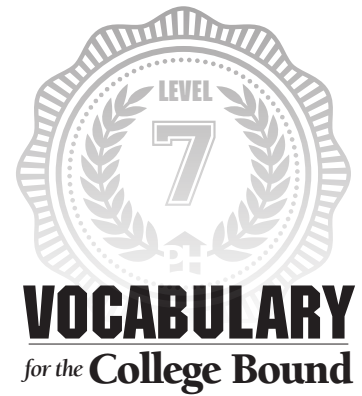
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Strategies for Completing Activities

Words in Context

One way you can make sure that you understand what an unfamiliar word means is to see it used in a sentence and make a guess, an inference, as to its meaning. For example, you probably do not know what the word *theriomorphic* means. Using roots, prefixes, and suffixes will help, as you will see explained below. Read it in the following sentence, though, and you will have another method to arrive at its meaning:

The drawing on the clay tablet that archaeologists recently discovered depicted a man with antlers and hooves—a *theriomorphic* being—within a ring of fire.

Clues in the sentence enable you to see the context of *theriomorphic*: a primitive drawing showing something not completely human. Therefore, you can infer that *theriomorphic* means “a person who looks like an animal.”

Here’s another example:

Dawn was a *somnambulist*; on some nights, her family found her in the hall, other times she was discovered in the basement, and once, they found her sitting asleep in the front seat of the car.

After reading the sentence, you should be able to infer that the word *somnambulist* must mean “someone who walks in his or her sleep.”

Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

To the person interested in words, a knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes turns each new, unfamiliar word into a puzzle. And while it is a sure and lifelong way to build your vocabulary, there are two points to keep in mind.

1. Some words have evolved through usage so that today’s definitions are different from the ones you might have inferred from an examination of their roots and/or prefixes. For example, the word *abstruse* contains the prefix *ab-* (away) and the root *trudere* (to thrust) and literally means “to thrust away.” But today, the word is used to describe something that is “hard to understand.”

2. Occasionally, you may be incorrect about a root. For example, knowing that the root *vin* means “to conquer,” you would be correct in concluding that the word *invincible* means “not able to be conquered”; but if you tried to apply that root meaning to the word *vindictive* or *vindicate*, you would miss the actual meaning. So, in analyzing an unfamiliar word, check for other possible roots than the one you first assumed if your inferred meaning doesn’t fit the context.

These warnings notwithstanding, a knowledge of roots, prefixes, and suffixes is one of the best ways to build a strong, vital vocabulary.

Usage Inferences

The next method of determining if you understand what a word means is for you to see the word as it might be applied to various situations. Therefore, in a Usage Inference, you need to be able to take the definition you learned into the real world. Remembering the definition and using the word correctly are two different concepts. We supply a series of multiple-choice situations in which you need to figure out the best use of the word.

Let’s assume that you learned in a lesson that *specious* means “false or faulty reasoning that seems true” or “an argument that does not stand up to logical reasoning.”

Example:

When or where would making a *specious* argument most likely be challenged?

- A. on Friday night asking for the keys to the family car
- B. in a jury room debating the guilt of someone on trial
- C. with your family deciding on the price of a trip to Hawaii
- D. at school trying to convince your friend to go sky diving

While all the answers could be examples of making a *specious* argument, the one that might cause a problem is B, simply because any faulty argument would most likely be argued against by another juror. Obviously, faulty logic and arguments can be used in A, B, C, and D. After all, saying the wrong thing may prevent getting the keys, spending too much could ruin a trip, and sky diving is dangerous. These three situations, though, are less likely to have flawed logic called into question.

Another key to the correct answer is stated in the question, so make sure that you read that part carefully, as it frequently will narrow down your choices.

Reading Comprehension

Reading questions generally fall into several types.

1. *Identifying the main idea or the author’s purpose.* In short, the question asks, “What is this selection about?”

In some paragraphs, this is easy to spot because there are one or two ideas that leap from the paragraph. In some selections, however, this may be much more difficult, especially if there are convoluted sentences with clauses embedded within clauses. It also may be difficult in those selections in which there are inverted sentences (a sentence with the subject at the end) or elliptical sentences (a sentence in which a word or words are left out). All of these obstacles can be overcome if you take one sentence at a time and put it in your own words.

Consider the following sentence:

These writers either jot down their thoughts bit by bit, in short, ambiguous, and paradoxical sentences, which apparently mean much more than they say—of this kind of writing Schelling's treatises on natural philosophy are a splendid instance; or else they hold forth with a deluge of words and the most intolerable diffusiveness, as though no end of fuss were necessary to make the reader understand the deep meaning of their sentences, whereas it is some quite simple if not actually trivial idea, examples of which may be found in plenty in the popular works of Fichte, and the philosophical manuals of a hundred other miserable dunces.

But if we edit out some of the words, the main point of this sentence is obvious.

These writers either jot down their thoughts bit by bit, in short, ~~ambiguous, and paradoxical~~ sentences, which apparently mean much more than they say—of this kind of writing Schelling's treatises on natural philosophy are a splendid instance; or else they hold forth with a deluge of words ~~and the most intolerable diffusiveness~~, as though [it] ~~end of fuss~~ were necessary to make the reader understand the deep meaning of their sentences, whereas it is ~~some~~ [a] ~~quite~~ simple if not actually trivial idea, ~~examples of which may be found in plenty in the popular works of Fichte, and the philosophical manuals of a hundred other miserable dunces.~~

While the previous sentence needs only deletions to make it clear, this next one requires major revisions and must be read carefully and put into the reader's own words.

Some in their discourse desire rather commendation of wit, in being able to hold all arguments, than of judgment, in discerning what is true; as if it were a praise to know what might be said, and not what should be thought.

After studying it, a reader might revise the sentence as follows:

In their conversations, some people would rather win praise for their wit or style of saying something rather than win praise for their ability to judge between what is true or false—as if it were better to sound good regardless of the quality of thought.

2. *Identifying the stated or inferred meaning. Simply, what is the author stating or suggesting?*
3. *Identifying the tone or mood of the selection or the author's feeling.*

To answer this type of question, look closely at individual words and their connotations. For example, if an author describes one person as stubborn and another as firm, it tells you something of the author's feelings. In the same manner, if the author uses many words with harsh, negative connotations, he is conveying one mood; but if he uses words with milder negative connotations, he may be striving for quite another mood.

Pronunciation Guide

ă pat	ō boat, oh
ā aid, fey, pay	ōō took
â air, care, wear, ant	ōō boot, fruit
ā father	ô ball, haul
b bib	p pop
ch church	r roar
d deed	s miss, sauce, see
ē pet, pleasure	sh dish, ship
ē be, bee, easy, leisure	t tight
f fast, fife, off, phase, rough	th path, thin
g gag	<u>th</u> this, bathe
h hat	ũ cut, rough
hw which	û circle, firm, heard, term, turn, urge, word
ĩ pit	v cave, valve, vine
ī by, guy, pie	w with
î dear, deer, fierce, mere	y yes
j jury, joke	yōō abuse, use
k kiss, clean, quit	z rose, size, xylophone, zebra
oi soil, toy	zh garage, pleasure, vision
ou cow, out	ə about, silent, pencil, lemon, circus
ō closet, bother	ər butter

Lesson One

1. **appall** (ə pōl') *verb* to fill with horror or amazement; to shock
The police were *appalled* at the huge number of homicides.
syn: horrify *ant:* please, calm, console
2. **blasé** (blō zā') *adj.* uninterested; unexcited
The millionaire seemed totally *blasé* about the idea of buying three new cars.
syn: bored *ant:* awed
3. **feint** (fānt) *verb* to pretend in order to deceive an opponent or divert attention away from the real target
He scored the touchdown by *feinting* left and running right.
syn: deceive, trick
4. **integral** (in' tī grəl) *adj.* necessary to form a whole
Bow ties are *integral* parts of tuxedos.
syn: important *ant:* unnecessary
5. **lurid** (lōr' id) *adj.* causing shock or horror
The victim gave a *lurid*, but accurate, account of the accident.
syn: shocking, sensational *ant:* mild
6. **nominal** (nōm' ə nəl) *adj.* so small or low in relation to the real value as to be a mere token
The bank transaction carried a *nominal* charge.
syn: apparent, insignificant *ant:* actual, notable
7. **persistent** (pər sīs' tēnt) *adj.* lasting; unceasing; persevering; enduring
The boy was so *persistent* that his parents finally allowed him to go to the party.
syn: stubborn, determined
8. **seismic** (sīz' mīk) *adj.* having a strong or great impact; of, subject to, or caused by an earthquake or shock
Ending the Communist rule in Russia was an event of *seismic* proportions.
syn: major *ant:* minor, unimportant
9. **skeptical** (skēp' tī kəl) *adj.* doubting or disbelieving
Most people are *skeptical* about the existence of UFOs.
syn: doubtful *ant:* convinced
10. **whimsical** (wīm' sī kəl) *adj.* playful; fanciful
Cartoons are filled with *whimsical* characters.
syn: capricious *ant:* serious

Exercise I Words in Context

Fill in the blanks with the correct vocabulary words needed to complete the sentences.

appall **blasé** **skeptical** **nominal** **persistent**

- A. When it comes to investing my money, I am very cautious and _____ about new companies. My son, however, is the opposite and invests in a very _____ manner. Some corporations _____ me by their unethical behavior.
- B. Although the telemarketer was _____, I refused the offer, even though she eliminated the _____ \$15 sign-up fee.

feint **whimsical** **integral** **lurid** **seismic**

- C. _____ to the peace treaty was a total surrender.
- D. Most boxers could not _____ as well as Muhammad Ali could.
- E. The new comedy on TV had a funny, _____ character on it.
- F. The earthquake produced _____ shocks felt thousands of miles away.
- G. The _____, gruesome murder made national headlines.

Exercise II Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

1. Identify the prefixes in the following words:

incredible
unable
unarmed
disinterested
insincere
intolerant
uninvolved
disability
disadvantage

The prefixes are *in-*, *un-*, and *dis-*. They all mean “not.” In addition, *dis-* can also mean “apart, away.” When a word begins with any of these prefixes, the meaning is changed to a negative. List at least two more words for each prefix.

in _____	un _____	dis _____
in _____	un _____	dis _____
in _____	un _____	dis _____

2. Sometimes, *in*, *un*, and *dis* are not prefixes, but are part of the word itself. *Intimate*, *underneath*, and *distinguish* are examples of this. Complete the spaces below with your own examples of words in which *in*, *un*, and *dis* are not prefixes, but are part of the words themselves.

in _____	un _____	dis _____
in _____	un _____	dis _____
in _____	un _____	dis _____

Exercise III Usage Inferences

Choose the answer that best suits the situation.

1. Who would be most blasé about tomorrow's weather?
 - A. someone going fishing
 - B. a weatherman
 - C. a person confined to bed rest
 - D. the school principal
2. What should you be most skeptical about?
 - A. something too good to be true
 - B. a winning ticket in the lottery
 - C. your teacher's warning about cheating
 - D. something unnecessary to your life
3. Who or what is usually most persistent?
 - A. the weather
 - B. a dog
 - C. a car salesman
 - D. a dictionary that is missing pages

Exercise IV Reading Comprehension

Read the selection and answer the questions.

The guanaco, or wild llama, is found on the plains of Patagonia; it is the South American representative of the camel of the East. It is an elegant animal in a state of nature, with a long slender neck and fine legs. It is very common over the whole of the temperate parts of the continent, as far south as the islands near Cape Horn. It generally lives in small herds of from half a dozen to thirty in each; but on the banks of the St. Cruz we saw one herd which must have contained at least five hundred.

They are generally wild and extremely wary. Mr. Stokes told me that he one day saw through a glass a herd of these animals which evidently had been frightened, and were running away at full speed, although their distance was so great that he could not distinguish them with his naked eye. The sportsman frequently receives the first notice of their presence, by hearing from a long distance their peculiar shrill neighing note of alarm. If he then looks attentively, he will probably see the herd standing in a line on the side of some distant hill. On approaching nearer, a few more squeals are given, and off they set at an apparently slow, but really quick canter, along some narrow beaten track to a neighboring hill. If, however, by chance he abruptly meets a single animal, or several together, they will generally stand motionless and intently gaze at him; then perhaps move on a few yards, turn round, and look again.

—Charles Darwin

1. What is the best title for this selection?
 - A. What Darwin Found
 - B. Traits of Guanacos
 - C. Mr. Stokes Spies a Llama
 - D. Stalking the Wild Llamas
 - E. Patagonian Wildlife

2. The difference between solitary and herding llamas is that single ones
 - A. live in Patagonia.
 - B. have longer necks.
 - C. are extremely cautious.
 - D. are less wary.
 - E. can be shot more easily.

3. Darwin compares the llama to
 - A. a quadruped.
 - B. a mule.
 - C. a camel.
 - D. a guanaco.
 - E. a herd of buffalo.

4. According to Darwin, the hunter
 - A. can hear the llamas from a distance.
 - B. has the advantage of a telescope.
 - C. should not shoot these animals.
 - D. can catch sight of llamas easily.
 - E. needs to sneak up on llamas.