

1. Vocabulary in context

SAT Clarity teaching kit

Original supplementary instruction

Teaching notes

Introduce the skill. These materials are independent of College Board.

2. Learning goal

Infer a word's meaning from context and reject meanings that change the sentence.

Before starting: Read short academic texts and use nearby clues

Teaching notes

Ask learners to restate the goal. Check the prerequisite before proceeding.

3. Diagnostic

The researcher offered a tentative explanation, stressing that more trials were needed.

Tentative most nearly means:

- A. certain
- B. provisional
- C. hostile
- D. detailed

Teaching notes

Allow quiet thinking before sharing. Record reasoning rather than just the letter.

4. Diagnostic reasoning

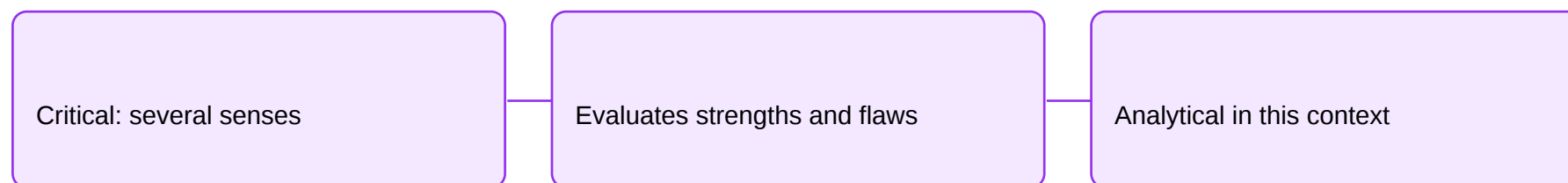
Provisional means subject to later confirmation or revision.

Teaching notes

Answer: B. A: Certain conflicts with the need for further trials. B: Provisional means subject to later confirmation or revision. C: Hostile describes antagonism, which the sentence does not show. D: The sentence concerns confidence rather than level of detail.

5. Context controls meaning

A word can have several dictionary meanings. Nearby actions and descriptions determine the sense used in this passage.

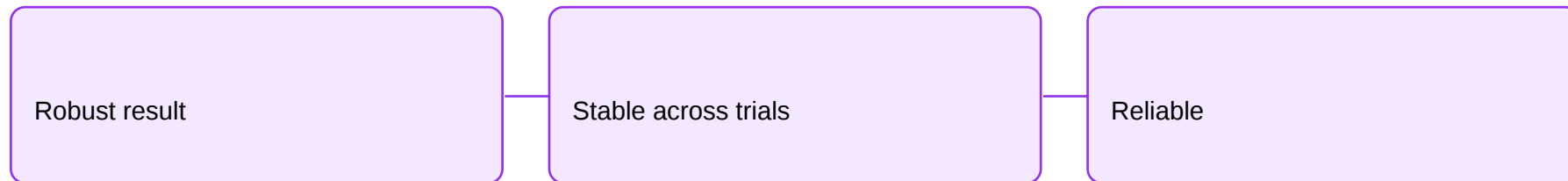


Teaching notes

Ask for an explanation in the learner's own words. Connect this concept to the next worked example.

6. Clues in explanations

A definition, example or restatement can explain an unfamiliar term. Look for what the writer says the subject does.

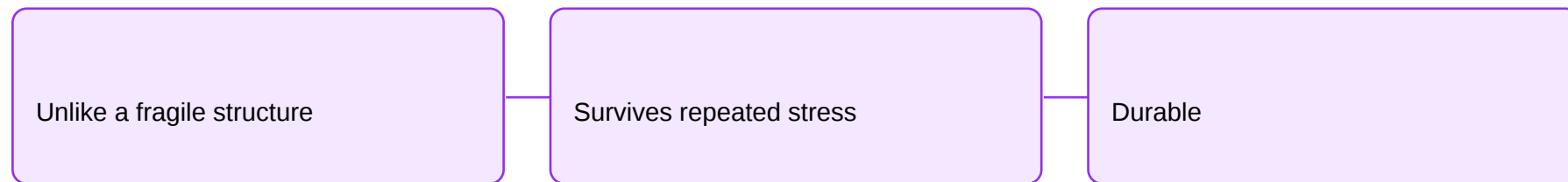


Teaching notes

Ask for an explanation in the learner's own words. Connect this concept to the next worked example.

7. Contrast clues

Although, but and unlike can identify a meaning by contrasting it with another quality.

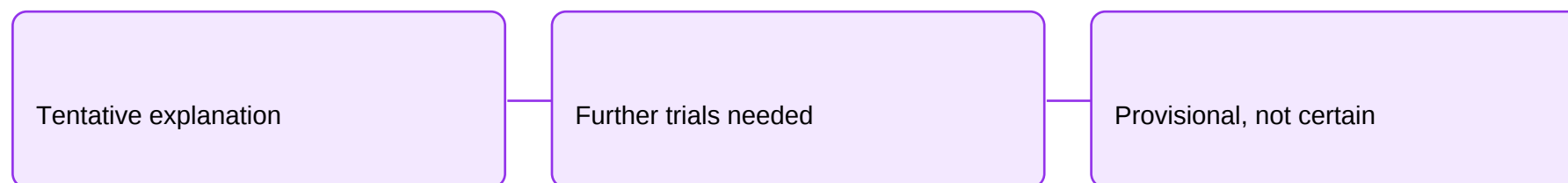


Teaching notes

Ask for an explanation in the learner's own words. Connect this concept to the next worked example.

8. Tone and intensity

Choose a meaning with the right tone and strength. Possible does not mean certain, and critical can mean analytical rather than hostile.

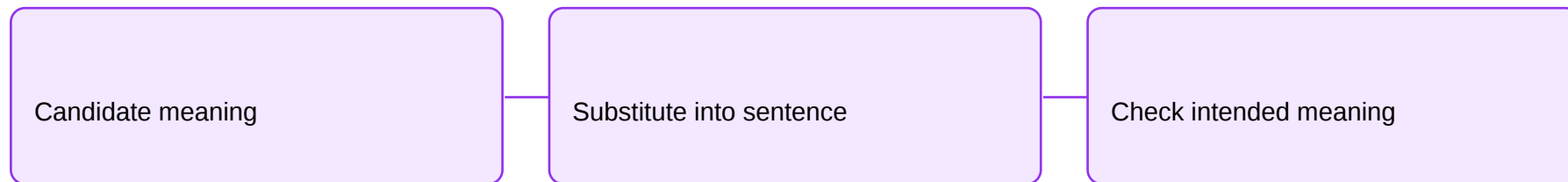


Teaching notes

Ask for an explanation in the learner's own words. Connect this concept to the next worked example.

9. Substitution check

Replace the target word with a candidate meaning. Check whether the sentence still expresses the writer's intended point.



Teaching notes

Ask for an explanation in the learner's own words. Connect this concept to the next worked example.

10. Worked example 1

The reviewer was critical, carefully evaluating both strengths and weaknesses. Critical most nearly means:

- A. essential
- B. analytical
- C. angry
- D. dangerous

Teaching notes

Model reading the prompt and identifying the requested quantity or relationship before solving.

11. Example 1 reasoning

Analytical matches evaluation of both strengths and weaknesses.

Teaching notes

Answer: B. A: Essential is a different sense of critical. B: Analytical matches evaluation of both strengths and weaknesses. C: Angry adds an emotion absent from the sentence. D: Dangerous belongs to another sense of critical.

12. Worked example 2

The engineer tempered her optimism by noting several unresolved safety issues. Tempered most nearly means:

- A. heated
- B. announced
- C. moderated
- D. concealed

Teaching notes

Model reading the prompt and identifying the requested quantity or relationship before solving.

13. Example 2 reasoning

Moderated fits making optimism less absolute because of concerns.

Teaching notes

Answer: C. A: Heated is a physical sense unrelated to optimism here. B: Announced does not convey reducing the strength of optimism. C: Moderated fits making optimism less absolute because of concerns. D: She openly noted concerns rather than concealing optimism.

14. Worked example 3

The result was robust: it remained similar across repeated trials and different instruments.

Robust most nearly means:

- A. reliable
- B. loud
- C. physical
- D. unexpected

Teaching notes

Model reading the prompt and identifying the requested quantity or relationship before solving.

15. Example 3 reasoning

Consistency across methods and trials supports reliable.

Teaching notes

Answer: A. A: Consistency across methods and trials supports reliable. B: Loud concerns sound, not experimental consistency. C: Physical does not explain stability of the result. D: The passage says nothing about expectations.

16. Dictionary-first answers

A valid dictionary sense may fail in the particular passage.

Teaching notes

Ask students to explain how the error changes the result. Use a counterexample if needed.

17. Positive versus negative

A favorable outcome does not make every nearby word positive.

Teaching notes

Ask students to explain how the error changes the result. Use a counterexample if needed.

18. Extreme interpretations

Absolute words such as certain can overstate cautious descriptions.

Teaching notes

Ask students to explain how the error changes the result. Use a counterexample if needed.

19. Sound-alike guessing

Spelling and familiarity do not establish meaning. Use evidence from the sentence.

Teaching notes

Ask students to explain how the error changes the result. Use a counterexample if needed.

20. Guided practice 1

The archive yielded letters that had previously escaped historians' attention. Yielded most nearly means:

- A. surrendered
- B. produced
- C. bent
- D. postponed

Teaching notes

Learners solve first. Ask partners to justify a choice and reject an alternative.

21. Guided practice 1 reasoning

Produced fits making letters available through research.

Teaching notes

Answer: B. A: Surrendered implies giving up control, not finding documents. B: Produced fits making letters available through research. C: Bent uses a physical sense unrelated to the archive. D: Postponed reverses the idea of making material available.

22. Guided practice 2

The author's account was candid, openly acknowledging her own mistakes. Candid most nearly means:

- A. brief
- B. decorative
- C. frank
- D. uncertain

Teaching notes

Learners solve first. Ask partners to justify a choice and reject an alternative.

23. Guided practice 2 reasoning

Frank means direct and honest about the mistakes.

Teaching notes

Answer: C. A: Length does not explain openly acknowledging mistakes. B: Decoration does not concern openness. C: Frank means direct and honest about the mistakes. D: Acknowledging mistakes does not establish uncertainty.

24. Guided practice 3

The two estimates diverged: one was twice as large as the other. Diverged most nearly means:

- A. differed
- B. ended
- C. improved
- D. combined

Teaching notes

Learners solve first. Ask partners to justify a choice and reject an alternative.

25. Guided practice 3 reasoning

The contrasting sizes establish that the estimates differed.

Teaching notes

Answer: A. A: The contrasting sizes establish that the estimates differed. B: The sentence concerns agreement rather than completion. C: No accuracy improvement is stated. D: The estimates remain distinct rather than combine.

26. Independent practice 1

The instructions were precise, specifying each measurement to the nearest millimeter. Precise most nearly means:

- A. flexible
- B. exact
- C. lengthy
- D. popular

Teaching notes

Answer: B. A: Flexible conflicts with exact specified measurements. B: Exact matches the stated measurement detail. C: Length is not established by measurement accuracy. D: Popularity is unrelated to precision.

27. Independent practice 2

The apparent anomaly disappeared when the team corrected a recording error. Anomaly most nearly means:

- A. irregularity
- B. agreement
- C. routine
- D. prediction

Teaching notes

Answer: A. A: An irregularity is an observation that differs from the expected pattern. B: Agreement does not explain an apparent unusual result. C: Routine means ordinary rather than anomalous. D: The sentence concerns an observed result, not a forecast.

28. Independent practice 3

Her enthusiasm was palpable: she smiled, leaned forward, and spoke eagerly. Palpable most nearly means:

- A. hidden
- B. temporary
- C. obvious
- D. measured

Teaching notes

Answer: C. A: The visible actions make the enthusiasm evident. B: Duration is not established. C: Obvious matches the clearly observable enthusiasm. D: Measured means restrained or deliberate, not the emphasized eagerness.

29. Exit ticket

The scientist challenged the assumption by presenting evidence against it. Challenged most nearly means:

- A. invited
- B. questioned
- C. accepted
- D. delayed

Teaching notes

Answer: B. A: Invited does not fit presenting contrary evidence. B: Questioned means disputed the assumption's validity. C: Accepted contradicts presenting evidence against it. D: Delayed describes timing rather than disagreement. Ask the learner to name one remaining uncertainty.

30. Review and next practice

Independent answers: 1: B, 2: A, 3: C

Return to the concept behind each missed item.

Use the extension question in the worksheet.

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Teaching notes

Review the separate teacher edition for all distractor explanations. Domain mapping source: <https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/higher-ed-professionals/sat-validity/content-domains> . Difficulty estimates are instructional, not empirically calibrated.