

Vocabulary in context

Reading and Writing / Craft and Structure / Words in Context

Prerequisites: Read short academic texts and use nearby clues

Level: Foundational to intermediate instruction

Coverage: 12 original questions: 1 diagnostic, 3 worked examples, 3 guided, 3 independent, 1 exit ticket and 1 extension. Selected skill coverage, not the complete SAT syllabus.

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Teacher answer edition

Use the diagnostic to identify prerequisites. Model examples before guided practice. Treat the exit ticket as a brief check, not a calibrated mastery score.

Question 1

The researcher offered a tentative explanation, stressing that more trials were needed. Tentative most nearly means:

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

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.

Question 2

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

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

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.

Question 3

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

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

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.

Question 4

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

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.

Question 5

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

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

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.

Question 6

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

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

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.

Question 7

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

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

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.

Question 8

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

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

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.

Question 9

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

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

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.

Question 10

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

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

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.

Question 11

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

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

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.

Question 12

The proposal was feasible because the team already had the necessary equipment and funding.
Feasible most nearly means:

- A. costly
- B. unusual
- C. possible to carry out
- D. guaranteed to succeed

Answer: C

A: Funding availability does not establish high cost.

B: The passage does not discuss novelty.

C: Equipment and funding support practical ability to carry it out.

D: Practical possibility does not guarantee success.