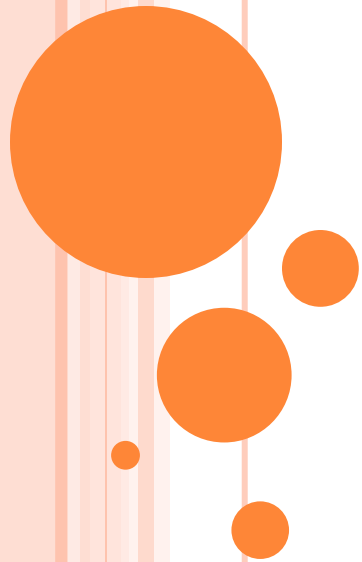




UNIT 3

LECTURE 6

Sentence Completion





What are Sentence Completion Questions?

- They are nothing but the good old 'Fill in the Blanks' type of questions we've been handling since primary school!
- The only difference is – the 'test' is of a slightly different kind when it comes to your level today; and what companies/recruiters test in you using this variety of questions.

What do they test?

- Vocabulary
- Not just 'meanings' of words, but also their fine usage.
- Your ability to mark logical consistency among given elements of a sentence.
- Your ability to grasp how words fit into various contexts
- Sometimes, your mere knowledge of how parts of sentence affect each other can help you determine which option to pick; .You may not necessarily know the meanings of the options given!!



QUESTION TYPES



1. Single Blank

2. Double Blank

- *Double Blank questions are easier to solve rather than the Single Blank ones. The reason is you can eliminate word pairs based on the inaptness of just one word in the pair!!*





POLL QUESTION: SINGLE BLANK

Q: The man is most _____, talking sweetly one day and blasting on the other.

a. Indifferent b. Objective c. Unpredictable d. Ineffectual e. Unobtrusive



ANSWER:



Unpredictable





POLL QUESTION: DOUBLE BLANK

Q: Although Ms. Harvey's disposition was generally -----, she could become enraged when sufficiently -----.

a. Vicious, ignored b. Serene, provoked c. Energetic, disappointed d. Meek, compliment e. Perverse, betrayed



ANSWER:



sereneprovoked



IMPORTANT THINGS ABOUT SENTENCE COMPLETION QUESTIONS



- **Read the sentence carefully for meaning**

You are never going to determine the answer until you understand the question. Think about the sentence means and what part of speech is necessary to correctly complete the sentence.

- **Visualize**

Before you go to the choices, think of the possible words for the blanks. It will save you from wrong choices. This is better than trying out the choices to find out "what sounds good." It is faster and less prone to errors.

- **Structure Words**

Look for words like but, rather, although, however, and, while, but, therefore. They reveal the sentence organization and the hint- blank relationship. They tell you what kinds of words to look for, as they change the thought process in the sentence.



- **Always read all the answer choices**

In sentence completion section, if you are strapped for time and you select “A” because it works without checking the other choices, it just may be that answer choice “E” was an even better selection.

- **Use process of elimination**

This is especially true of the questions with 2 blanks. This essentially doubles the chances you will know at least one of the 2 words in the answer choices and that you can eliminate the choice from consideration if the words do not make sense.

- **Improve Your Vocabulary**

Improving your vocabulary and usage can help you do better as the word meanings help you find the right answer.



○ Working Backwards

The two-blank questions can be easier as you have more opportunities to eliminate wrong choices.

If you can eliminate a choice based on one word, you don't need to know the other word. Often, working backwards i.e. picking the second blank choice first works better.

○ Positive/Negative Flow

When you read the sentence, you have to look out for adjectives/adverbs which tell you the idea of the sentence. After finding these adjectives/adverbs, you need to find out if the idea of the sentence is positive/negative. All the negative ideas may be a "bad word/bad phrase" or any term which has no/none/not... in it. In simple words, if the flow of the first part of the sentence is positive and the second part is negative, then the blank must be negative to even the flow of the sentence. This would solve the sentence completion question without even understanding the question.



POLL QUESTION

Example: Because he did not want to appear_____, the junior executive refused to dispute the board's decision, in spite of his belief that the decision would impair employee morale.

- A. contentious
- B. indecisive
- C. solicitous
- D. overzealous
- E. steadfast





Explanation:

(C) and (E) are gone because they're positive words.
.(B)doesn't work because the clue is "refused to dispute." That doesn't work with indecisive. For the same reason,(D) doesn't work either. So the **best answer is option A**





○ Punctuation

Whenever the punctuation "," (comma) appears, followed by a blank in between two sentences, then it means that the synonym of the phrase/word before "," is the meaning of the blank.

In simple words, when you find ',' followed by a blank then find the Synonym of the word before ',' and check the options to match the synonym of the word.

In the same way, when you find ":"(colon) or ";"(semi-colon) in the sentence, they will indicate that the idea coming up is merely an explanation of the earlier idea. So, simply find the synonym of the word/phrase before the punctuation and fill in the blank with the synonym from the options given.

○ Transitional Words

- Be alert to transitional words. Transitional words tell you what is coming up. They indicate that the author is now going to draw a contrast with something stated previously, or support something stated previously.
- A transition word demonstrates the relationship between two portions of the text or spoken language.



POLL QUESTION:

Despite ----- on taking rare tamarins from their habitat, the illegal trade in the tiny monkeys remains -----.

- A. commendations . . obligatory
- B. consultations . . predominant
- C. restrictions . . local
- D. penalties . . illicit
- E. prohibitions . . active



ANSWER

- **Correct Answer: E**

Explanation:

Choice (E) is correct. "Prohibition" refers to something banned by legal authorities; "active" in this context means in place or functioning. If one were to insert these terms into the text, the sentence would read "Despite prohibitions on taking rare tamarins from their habitat, the illegal trade in the tiny monkeys remains active." Since the word "despite" at the beginning of the sentence indicates that the second missing term will describe an outcome of the first missing term, it makes sense to say that although taking tamarins from their habitat is prohibited, the illegal activity still goes on.



THERE ARE CERTAIN INDICATORS TO GUIDE SENTENCE COMPLETION:



i. Contrast Indicators:

To contrast two things is to point out how they differ. In this type of sentence completion problem, we look for a word that has the opposite meaning (an antonym) of some key word or phrase in the sentence.

Following are some of the most common contrast indicators:

- But
- Yet
- Despite
- Although
- However
- Nevertheless





POLL QUESTION:

Q: Although the warring parties had settled a number of disputes, past experience made them _____ to express optimism that the talks would be a success.

- A. rash
- B. ambivalent
- C. scornful
- D. overjoyed
- E. reticent





ANSWER:

"Although" sets up a contrast between what has occurred—success for the whole talks. Hence, the parties are reluctant to express optimism. The common word "reluctant" is not offered as an answer- choice, but a synonym--reticent--is. The answer is (E).





ii. Support Indicators:

Supporting words support or further explain what has already been said. These words often introduce synonyms for words elsewhere in the sentence.

Following are some common supporting words:

- And
- Also
- Furthermore
- Likewise
- In Addition





POLL QUESTION:

Q: Davis is an opprobrious and _____ speaker, equally caustic towards friend or foe--a true curmudgeon.

- A. lofty
- B. vituperative
- C. unstinting
- D. retiring
- E. laudatory



ANSWER:



"And" in the sentence indicates that the missing adjective is similar in meaning to "opprobrious," which is very negative. Now, vituperative--the only negative word--means "abusive." Hence, the answer is (B).





○ **iii. Cause And Effect Indicators:**

These words indicate that one thing causes another to occur. Some of the most common cause and effect indicators are :

- Because
- For
- Thus
- Hence
- Therefore
- If





POLL QUESTION

Q: Because the House has the votes to override a presidential veto, the President has no choice but to _____.

- A. object B. abdicate C. abstain D. capitulate E. compromise





ANSWER:

Since the House has the votes to pass the bill or motion, the President would be wise to compromise and make the best of the situation. The answer is (E).





iv. CONTEXT CLUES

- Important words or phrases can help decipher which word would fit in the blank best. These are context clues.
- Context Clues can be synonyms, antonyms or definitions.
- Usually if an antonym context clue is present, the words, 'however', 'but', etc. will be also present in the sentence.





POLL QUESTION:

Q: Choose the word or set of words that best completes the following sentence.

- **Despite the advice he had received to project a confident _____, James realized that being _____ with the interviewers made him much more endearing than bragging about his accomplishments could have.**
- demeanor . . . forthright
- description . . . illusioned
- persona . . . distinguished
- attitude . . . distinguished
- countenance . . . disingenuous





ANSWER:

- **Correct answer:**

demeanor . . . Forthright

- **Explanation:**

"Countenance" and "demeanor" could both work for the first blank. That James was doing the opposite of bragging gives a strong contextual clue that the second word will be similar to honest. This is exactly what "forthright" means..





Thank you for learning!

