



● Sentence Completion 18 *(high-intermediate level)*

**Directions:** Choose the best word(s) to complete each sentence.

1. The bridge is very \_\_\_\_\_. As a result, heavy trucks must detour around it.
  - A. old
  - B. heavy
  - C. weak
  - D. strong
  - E. sturdy
2. Compared to the \_\_\_\_\_ homes one might see in the countryside, city apartments are quite \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. spacious ... cramped
  - B. elegant ... regal
  - C. poor ... destitute
  - D. enormous ... large
  - E. lavish ... gaudy
3. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the dinosaur fossils was purely accidental. Digging dirt in her backyard, a child \_\_\_\_\_ the tip of a huge dinosaur bone.
  - A. invention ... revealed
  - B. discovery ... uncovered
  - C. appearance ... struck
  - D. recovery ... exhumed
  - E. quarry ... unearthed
4. In order to \_\_\_\_\_ my investment portfolio, I purchased shares in a wide range of companies.
  - A. weaken
  - B. synchronize
  - C. unify
  - D. diversify
  - E. align
5. Marcel knew that admitting his lies could \_\_\_\_\_ his relationship with his girlfriend. Nevertheless, he felt he must tell the truth.
  - A. destroy
  - B. strengthen
  - C. reinforce
  - D. promote
  - E. engage
6. I will never allow my son to play football; it's too dangerous. There is a high risk of serious \_\_\_\_\_ from being tackled too hard.
  - A. victory
  - B. celebration
  - C. competition
  - D. training
  - E. injury
7. Several people were \_\_\_\_\_ during Dr. Zimbardo's experiment. \_\_\_\_\_, he had to cancel the rest of his study.
  - A. terrified ... However
  - B. harmed ... As a result
  - C. friendly ... On the other hand
  - D. damaged ... Conversely
  - E. delighted ... Therefore
8. The Senator accepted bribes from the corporations she was supposed to regulate. Her conduct is seriously \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. unethical
  - B. inhumane
  - C. crafty
  - D. clever
  - E. acceptable

## Answers and Explanations

1) **C**

The main clue in this question is “heavy trucks must detour around it.” This means that heavy trucks cannot travel over the bridge. The most likely reason for this is that the bridge is too (C) weak to support the weight of the trucks. When a bridge is weak, putting too much weight on the bridge could cause it to collapse. The correct answer is (C).

An (A) old bridge might or might not be weak. We cannot assume that an old bridge cannot bear a heavy weight just because it is old. The other answer choices all directly imply that the bridge would be able to handle the weight of the trucks. (B) Heavy, (D) strong, and (E) sturdy all mean that the bridge itself is large, well-built, and capable of bearing lots of weight. If this were the case, there would be no reason for the trucks to detour around it. Therefore, these answer choices are incorrect.

2) **A**

The phrase “compared to” sets up a comparison, usually implying that two things will have opposite characteristics. This means that there will be an opposite relationship between country houses and city apartments. Country houses can be (A) spacious because there is a lot of land in the countryside to build large houses on. City apartments can be (A) cramped because the amount of land in a city is limited, so living spaces must be smaller. This sets up an opposite relationship between the size of these two types of dwellings. The correct answer is (A).

The other answer choices do not set up opposite relationships. (B) Elegant and (B) regal are very close in meaning, so there is no conflict between elegant country houses and regal city apartments. Similarly, there is no opposite relationship between being both (C) poor and (C) destitute, (D) enormous and (D) large, or (E) lavish and (E) gaudy. These answer choices are incorrect.

3) **B**

Most dinosaur bones are buried deep underground because millions of years’ worth of soil piled up on the dinosaurs after they died. Sometimes, humans (B) discover these bones accidentally simply by digging. If a girl was digging in her yard and (B) uncovered the tip of a dinosaur bone, then she accidentally discovered the fossils. The correct answer is (B).

Dinosaur fossils cannot be (A) invented by people. Dinosaurs lived long before humans did, and we can only uncover their existing remains. Dinosaur bones do not merely (C) appear, either. They exist wherever dinosaurs lived millions of years ago. They can be (D) recovered, but it is likely that the little girl (D) exhumed the tip of the bone. To “exhume” something means to dig it out of the earth completely. It’s more likely that she uncovered part of the bone, rather than

breaking it off and removing it completely from the ground. A (E) quarry is a pit where rocks and minerals are dug out of the earth, not dinosaur bones, so we can ignore this answer choice entirely.

4) **D**

The main clue in this question is “wide range of companies.” This means that I bought shares in many different corporations, not just one or two. Investors often do this to (D) diversify their portfolios. This means that they intentionally place smaller amounts of money in many different places instead of keeping one large amount of money in one place. This can protect them against the risk of losing their money. The correct answer is (D).

Even if you are unfamiliar with this finance term, you can tell that it stands out from the other answer choices. (B) Synchronize, (C) unify, and (D) align all deal with bringing things together, not spreading them out. This is the opposite of what is stated in the question. (A) Weaken also stands out, but spreading out your investments across multiple companies does not weaken your portfolio. Furthermore, it is not the goal of most investors to intentionally weaken their portfolios; they want to strengthen their portfolios to earn more money. These answer choices are incorrect.

5) **A**

The word “nevertheless” sets up a negative or opposite relationship between two things. The correct answer choice will set up an opposite relationship with Marcel’s desire to tell the truth. This means that his lies have negative consequences. If they didn’t, then he would have no problem whatsoever telling the truth, and no opposite relationship would exist. If his lies can (A) destroy his relationship, that is a very negative characteristic. The correct answer is (A).

The other answer choices have positive connotations that do not set up the opposite relationship we need. (B) Strengthen, (C) reinforce, and (D) promote are all similar in meaning. They all imply that Marcel’s relationship would improve after he tells the truth. (E) Engage relates to the idea of “to get engaged,” which means that his lies would result in a proposal for marriage, another presumably positive outcome.

6) **E**

The main clues in this question are “too dangerous” and “being tackled too hard.” This means that there is a danger inherent in being tackled while playing football. The most common risk when being tackled is the risk of serious (E) injury. When another player knocks you to the ground with all of his or her force, you can get seriously injured (hurt). The correct answer is (E).

There is no danger or risk in (A) victory or (B) celebration. These are both positive words, and although they can relate to football, they do not directly relate to being tackled. Similarly, (C) competition and (D) training are important parts of

a football player's routine, but they do not constitute a danger, and they do not result from being tackled. These answer choices are incorrect.

7) **B**

The main clue in this question is "he had to cancel the rest of his study." Something must have gone wrong, or else Dr. Zimbardo would not have cancelled his study. If the people involved in the study were (B) harmed in some way, Zimbardo would probably cancel the experiment (B) as a result. He would not want any more people to get hurt. The correct answer is (B).

If people were (C) friendly or (E) delighted, there would be no reason to stop the study. These are positive words, but most scientists only abandon their research if it becomes dangerous or harmful. (A) Terrified and (D) damaged are negative effects, but the second components in these answer choices do not fit the question. (A) However and (D) conversely both set up opposite relationships, but this question requires a logical, cause-and-effect relationship. Dr. Zimbardo cancelled his experiment *because* something went wrong, not in spite of something going wrong. These answer choices are incorrect.

8) **A**

The main clue in this question is "accepted bribes." A bribe is a gift of money given to influence the actions of a powerful official. If companies bribe a Senator who is supposed to regulate them, then they give her money in the hopes that she will not impose strict rules on them. This is seriously (A) unethical (immoral, wrong) conduct. Ethical, morally upright officials do not accept bribes. They are illegal and wrong. The correct answer is (A).

(B) Inhumane is another negative adjective, but it has a different shade of meaning. "Inhumane" usually involves some type of cruelty towards a living creature, not a breach of a Senator's moral code. Some people might say that the Senator was (C) crafty in accepting the bribes. "Crafty" is another word for "clever," and has a connotation of trickery or dishonest conduct. However, since "crafty" does not *always* have that negative connotation, it is not the best answer. (D) Clever and (E) acceptable are both positive words that most people would not use to describe a negative action such as taking a bribe. These answer choices are incorrect.