

# Words in Context Easy Questions

## Question 1

While *Solomon Asch's* classic conformity experiments (1951) revealed a strong tendency for individuals to align with group opinions, later research, such as that by *Serge Moscovici* (1969) on minority influence, highlighted instances where individuals or small groups can remain steadfast and even challenge the majority. Moscovici's work demonstrated that a minority can exert significant influence if they are \_\_\_\_\_ in their views.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A flexible
- B sporadic
- C resolute
- D hesitant

## Question 2

Cabbage plants possess a defense mechanism against threats. According to research by Jingyuan Chen and Daniel Vassão in 2020, when plant tissue is damaged, isothiocyanates are formed. These substances are \_\_\_\_\_ to attackers, helping the plant survive by fending them off.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A beneficial
- B common
- C harmful
- D fragrant

## Question 3

In his research on honeybee swarms, biologist Thomas Seeley (2006) explored how these insects select a new nest site. Scout bees *advertise* potential locations through waggle dances. If a site receives enough support, indicating a \_\_\_\_\_ for that option, the swarm commits to it. This collective decision-making process ensures the selection of a suitable home.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A consensus
- B preference
- C disagreement
- D observation

## Question 4

Literary critic Erich Auerbach, in his seminal work *Mimesis* (1946), examined how reality has been represented in Western literature through different historical periods. His method involved detailed analysis of specific literary passages, moving from the text's language and style to broader historical and cultural contexts. This close attention to the text itself, coupled with an understanding of its historical setting, allowed Auerbach to demonstrate the \_\_\_\_\_ nature of literary representation across centuries.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A evolving
- B consistent
- C superficial
- D static

## Question 5

In their seminal work on cognitive biases, psychologists Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky (1974) demonstrated the anchoring effect, a phenomenon where an initial piece of information, even if arbitrary, profoundly \_\_\_\_\_ subsequent judgments. This initial "anchor" can significantly alter the range and magnitude of estimations, illustrating its power to adjust perceptions away from objective assessments.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A modulates
- B diminishes
- C obstructs
- D compiles

## Question 6

The National Heritage Fellowship was created to honor exceptional folk and traditional artists in the United States for their \_\_\_\_\_. The Irish American accordionist Joe Derrane was chosen for the fellowship because he has contributed so much to the arts.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A achievements
- B suspicions
- C assumptions
- D predictions

## Question 7

Mycorrhizal fungi form a symbiotic relationship with plant roots, significantly extending their reach. This partnership allows plants to absorb water and essential nutrients like phosphorus more efficiently from the soil. In return, the fungi receive sugars produced by the plant. This mutualistic exchange thus demonstrates how these fungi \_\_\_\_\_ plant growth and overall health.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A enhance
- B impede
- C diminish
- D undermine

## Question 8

In 1957, psychologist Leon Festinger proposed the theory of cognitive dissonance, a mental state experienced when an individual holds two or more \_\_\_\_\_ cognitions—that is, thoughts or beliefs that are inconsistent with each other. This often creates psychological discomfort, prompting the individual to alter their beliefs or behaviors to achieve mental harmony.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A incongruous
- B profound
- C nascent
- D prevalent

## Question 9

Literary critic Helen Vendler often discussed how poets use various techniques to enrich their work. One such technique is the use of hints or clues about future events in the narrative. This literary device, where later plot developments are subtly suggested early on, is known as \_\_\_\_\_. It allows authors to create suspense and prepare readers for what is to come without explicitly stating it.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A foreshadowing
- B symbolism
- C rhyme scheme
- D personification

## Question 10

Rather than pushing for immediate agreement, effective leaders cultivate environments where team members feel comfortable expressing varied perspectives. This deliberate cultivation of diverse viewpoints helps to avoid the \_\_\_\_\_ of thought that can hinder creativity and problem-solving, as highlighted in a 2017 study by organizational psychologist Dr. Kristine N. Sherman and colleagues in *Administrative Science Quarterly*.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A disparity
- B divergence
- C uniformity
- D complexity

## Question 11

In her 2017 analysis of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, literary critic Sarah Smith highlights the novel's resistance to a single, definitive reading. Smith argues that the text offers a \_\_\_\_\_ set of interpretations, suggesting that its complexity allows for numerous valid perspectives on its characters, themes, and social commentary. This resistance to a singular meaning is, for Smith, a key aspect of the novel's enduring appeal.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A limited
- B manifold
- C superficial
- D obscure

## Question 12

In a significant observation, Henry Walter Bates described a phenomenon in 1862 known as Batesian \_\_\_\_\_, in which a harmless species evolves to imitate a more dangerous one. This deceptive resemblance often provides protection from predators, who mistake the harmless mimic for its toxic or venomous counterpart, thereby deterring attack.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A adaptation
- B predation
- C mimicry
- D evolution

## Question 13

Research by biologist Roger Hanlon (2018) has illuminated the extraordinary camouflage abilities of octopuses. Their specialized skin cells, called chromatophores, allow them to alter their texture and color almost \_\_\_\_\_, disappearing into their surroundings within fractions of a second. This remarkable speed helps them evade predators and ambush prey effectively.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A erratically
- B gradually
- C instantly
- D hesitantly

## Question 14

Art historian Griselda Pollock's 1998 book *Mary Cassatt: Painter of Modern Women* examines the work of American Impressionist Mary Cassatt. Cassatt frequently depicted the private lives of women, focusing on mothers and children in domestic settings. Pollock argues that these scenes, often considered merely sentimental, were in fact radical for their time because they captured the independent lives of women within the home, showing them as individuals with agency rather than simply objects of the male gaze. Cassatt's paintings thus offered a powerful counter-narrative to the typical depictions of women in art, which often \_\_\_\_\_ them.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A exaggerated
- B objectified
- C disregarded
- D idealized

## Question 15

The following text is adapted from Louisa May Alcott's 1868 novel *Little Women*. The excerpt describes the contrasting moods and behaviors of two characters during a difficult moment.

Jo had lost her good humor, and the perverse fit returned; but Amy, who had virtuously done her duty, kept her temper, and pleased everybody, was in a most angelic frame of mind.

As used in the text, what does the word "frame" most nearly mean?

- A Border
- B Support
- C Structure
- D State

## Question 16

In their 1880 book *The Power of Movement in Plants*, Charles Darwin and his son Francis Darwin studied phototropism, the phenomenon of plants growing toward a light source. They observed that this growth is not merely a random occurrence but rather an active process, an inherent \_\_\_\_\_ of the plant to orient itself to light. Their experiments demonstrated that the tip of the plant's shoot is responsible for detecting light and influencing the plant's directional growth.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A deviation
- B inclination
- C consequence
- D limitation

## Question 17

In his famous 1960s experiments, psychologist Stanley Milgram investigated the power of authority figures to influence individuals. Participants were instructed to administer what they believed were painful electric shocks to another person. Despite signs of distress from the recipient (an actor), many participants continued to follow orders, illustrating how readily people can be under the \_\_\_\_\_ of authority.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A observation
- B sway
- C analysis
- D doubt

## Question 18

Literary theorist Julia Kristeva, building on Mikhail Bakhtin's work in the 1960s, proposed the concept of *intertextuality*, asserting that every text is a mosaic of other texts. She argued that no work is truly original, but rather a re-reading and re-writing of previous discourses, making literature fundamentally \_\_\_\_\_ by its constant engagement with prior works.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A autonomous
- B singular
- C derivative
- D isolated

## Question 19

In 2010, artist Marina Abramović performed *The Artist Is Present* at the Museum of Modern Art, a groundbreaking performance. For nearly three months, Abramović sat in silence for hours each day, inviting visitors to share a moment of eye contact. This work is considered a prime example of \_\_\_\_\_ art, characterized by its extreme length and the artist's sustained physical and mental effort.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A endurance
- B fleeting
- C spontaneous
- D decorative

## Question 20

In 1951, psychologist Solomon Asch conducted experiments revealing the power of social conformity. Participants were asked to match line lengths, a task where the correct answer was consistently clear and undeniable. Despite this, many chose to align their responses with confederates who gave incorrect answers, demonstrating how group pressure can override \_\_\_\_\_ evidence.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

- A sporadic
- B ephemeral
- C compelling
- D insignificant

# Answers

## Question 1

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage states that individuals or groups can "remain steadfast and even challenge the majority" and "exert significant influence if they are \_\_\_\_\_ in their views." The word in the blank must mean firm, unwavering, or determined. (C) "resolute" means admirably purposeful, determined, and unwavering, which perfectly matches the context. (A) "flexible," (B) "sporadic," and (D) "hesitant" all suggest a lack of firmness or consistency, which contradicts the idea of remaining steadfast and challenging the majority.

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## Question 2

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage states that the substances are formed "to attackers, helping the plant survive by fending them off." This indicates the substances have a negative effect on the attackers. Therefore, the word that fills the blank must mean damaging or injurious to attackers. (A) beneficial means helpful, which is the opposite of the intended meaning. (B) common and (D) fragrant describe characteristics unrelated to the effect on attackers. (C) harmful means causing damage or injury, which accurately reflects the function of the substances described in the passage.

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## Question 3

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage states that if a site receives "enough support," the swarm commits to it. This means the bees agree on that location. The word that

means agreement or general agreement is consensus. Looking at the choices, (A) consensus means general agreement. (B) preference means a stronger liking for one over others, but not necessarily agreement among the group. (C) disagreement is the opposite of support and agreement. (D) observation is the act of watching something and does not fit the context of the swarm's decision. Therefore, consensus is the most logical and precise word.

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## Question 4

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage states that Auerbach examined how reality was represented "through different historical periods" and showed the blank nature of literary representation "across centuries". This indicates that Auerbach's analysis revealed that literary representation changed over time. Therefore, the word that fills the blank must mean changing or developing. Looking at the options, (A) evolving means developing or changing. (B) consistent means staying the same. (C) superficial means not deep or detailed. (D) static means not changing. The only word that matches the idea of changing over time is (A).

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## Question 5

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage states that the initial "anchor" can "significantly alter the range and magnitude of estimations" and "adjust perceptions." The blank requires a word that means to adjust or regulate. (A) "modulates" means to adjust or regulate, which perfectly matches the context. (B) "diminishes" means to make less, which contradicts the idea that the anchor *alters* or *adjusts* perceptions, not necessarily lessens them. (C) "obstructs" means to block or impede, which does not fit how an anchor *influences* judgments. (D) "compiles" means to gather or put together, which is unrelated to how the anchor affects perceptions.

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## Question 6

**Correct Answer: A**

The sentence states that the National Heritage Fellowship was created to "honor exceptional folk and traditional artists" and that Joe Derrane was chosen because "he has contributed so much to the arts." The word that logically fits here to describe what someone is honored for, especially when they've contributed significantly, is "achievements." This word positively reflects the recognition of their accomplishments.

(B) refer to beliefs without proof, which is illogical in this context.

(C) are things taken for granted, not typically honored.

(D) Predictions are forecasts about the future, not what artists are honored for.

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## Question 7

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage describes how mycorrhizal fungi help plants by allowing them to absorb nutrients and water "more efficiently" and refers to the relationship as a "mutualistic exchange." These phrases indicate that the fungi have a positive effect on plant growth and health. To "enhance" something means to improve or intensify it. Therefore, (A) enhance logically and precisely completes the text, as it conveys the idea of the fungi improving plant growth and health. Choices (B) impede, (C) diminish, and (D) undermine all suggest a negative effect, which contradicts the positive and beneficial relationship described in the passage.

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## Question 8

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage defines cognitive dissonance as occurring when thoughts or beliefs are "inconsistent with each other." Therefore, the word that fills the blank must mean "inconsistent" or "conflicting." (A) "incongruous" means not in harmony or inconsistent, which perfectly matches the context. (B) "profound" means very great or intense, which does not describe the relationship between the conflicting beliefs. (C) "nascent" means just beginning to exist or develop, which is unrelated to the nature of the beliefs. (D) "prevalent" means widespread or common, which is also not relevant to the inconsistency of the beliefs themselves.

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## Question 9

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage describes a literary device where authors provide "hints or clues about future events in the narrative" and where "later plot developments are subtly suggested early on." This directly defines the term needed for the blank. Looking at the choices, (A) foreshadowing is a literary device that does exactly this – it hints at future events. (B) symbolism is the use of symbols to represent ideas or qualities. (C) rhyme scheme is the ordered pattern of rhymes at the ends of lines of a poem. (D) personification is giving human qualities to something nonhuman. Therefore, only (A) matches the definition provided in the passage.

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## Question 10

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage states that effective leaders encourage "varied perspectives" and "diverse viewpoints" to "avoid" the blank. Therefore, the blank must mean the opposite of "varied" and "diverse"—it must mean "sameness" or "lack of variety." (C) uniformity means the state of being the same or consistent, which directly matches this meaning. (A) disparity means a great difference, which contradicts the intended meaning. (B) divergence means moving apart or becoming different, which also contradicts the intended

meaning. (D) complexity means the state of being intricate or complicated, which is unrelated to the concept of varied or same viewpoints.

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## Question 11

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage states that the novel resists a "single, definitive reading" and that its "complexity allows for numerous valid perspectives." This tells us that the blank should describe something that is numerous or has many different parts. Looking at the choices, (A) limited means restricted, which is the opposite of what is needed. (C) superficial means shallow, which doesn't fit the idea of numerous perspectives. (D) obscure means not well-known or unclear, which also doesn't match the context. (B) manifold means many and varied, which perfectly aligns with the description of numerous valid perspectives resulting from the novel's complexity.

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## Question 12

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage describes a phenomenon where "a harmless species evolves to imitate a more dangerous one" to gain protection. The word that precisely captures this concept of imitation or resemblance for survival is "mimicry." Therefore, (C) is the correct answer. (A) "adaptation" is too broad; mimicry is a type of adaptation, but "adaptation" doesn't specifically convey the imitation aspect. (B) "predation" refers to the act of one animal hunting another, which is the opposite of the protection described. (D) "evolution" is the process by which species change over time, which is the broader mechanism, not the specific phenomenon of imitation described.

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## Question 13

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage states that octopuses disappear "within fractions of a second." This phrase tells us that the change in their camouflage is very fast or immediate. Therefore, the word that fills the blank must mean quickly or immediately.

(A) "erratically" means in an unpredictable or irregular way, which does not fit the idea of speed.

(B) "gradually" means slowly or little by little, which is the opposite of "within fractions of a second."

(C) "instantly" means immediately or at once, which perfectly matches the meaning of "within fractions of a second."

(D) "hesitantly" means with pauses or uncertainty, which does not relate to the speed of the action.

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## Question 14

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage states that Cassatt's paintings showed women as "individuals with agency rather than simply objects of the male gaze." This directly tells you that typical depictions of women in art treated them as "objects of the male gaze." Therefore, the word that fills the blank should mean "treated as objects." Looking at the answer choices, (B) objectified means to treat someone as an object. (A) exaggerated means to represent something as larger or more important than it is. (C) disregarded means to pay no attention to. (D) idealized means to regard or represent as perfect or better than in reality. Only (B) matches the meaning provided in the passage.

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## Question 15

**Correct Answer: D**

The context of the passage describes Amy's internal mood and attitude. The text says she was in a "most angelic frame of mind" right after explaining that she "kept her temper" and "pleased everybody."

Therefore, the word "frame" is used to describe her mental condition or mood.

(A) is incorrect because "border" refers to the physical edge of an object, like a picture frame, which doesn't fit the context of a mind.

(B) is incorrect because "support" refers to physically holding something up or providing assistance, not a mood.

(C) is incorrect because "structure" refers to how something is built, which is not how we describe a temporary mood or feeling.

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## Question 16

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage states that the plant growing toward light is "an active process, an inherent \_\_\_\_\_ of the plant to orient itself to light." This indicates that the blank describes a natural tendency or leaning of the plant towards light. Looking at the choices, (A) deviation means a departure from a standard, which doesn't fit the context of a natural plant process. (C) consequence means a result or effect, but the blank describes the plant's internal drive, not an outcome. (D) limitation means a restriction. (B) inclination means a tendency or a leaning. This meaning perfectly matches the context provided by "an active process" and "to orient itself to light."

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## Question 17

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage discusses how people in Milgram's experiment were easily influenced by authority figures to do things that conflicted with their conscience. The blank needs a word that means influence or control by another. Looking at the choices, (A) observation means watching something. (C) analysis means examining something in detail. (D) doubt means a feeling of uncertainty. (B) sway means influence or control. The passage states that participants continued to follow orders, illustrating how readily people can be under the blank of authority. This directly tells us that the blank means being influenced or controlled by authority. Therefore, sway is the best fit.

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## Question 18

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage states that "every text is a mosaic of other texts" and that "no work is truly original, but rather a re-reading and re-writing of previous discourses." This means that literature is characterized by being drawn from or influenced by other works. The word that best fits this meaning is (C) derivative, which means something that is based on or derived from another source. (A) autonomous means independent, which contradicts the idea that texts are mosaics of other texts. (B) singular means unique or individual, which also contradicts the passage's description. (D) isolated means separate or disconnected, which is the opposite of the constant engagement described.

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## Question 19

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage describes the art piece as having "extreme length" and

requiring "sustained physical and mental effort." The word that best fits this description is "endurance," which refers to the ability to withstand hardship or prolonged effort. (A) is the correct choice because "endurance" art perfectly matches the characteristics given. (B) is incorrect because "fleeting" means lasting for a very short time, which contradicts "extreme length." (C) is incorrect because the performance was a planned and sustained effort, not "spontaneous" or impulsive. (D) is incorrect because "decorative" refers to something ornamental, which is irrelevant to the described nature of the performance.

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## Question 20

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage describes the correct answer in Asch's experiment as "consistently clear and undeniable." This means the evidence pointing to the correct answer was strong and convincing. Therefore, the blank needs a word that means convincing or powerful. (C) "compelling" means strongly convincing or forceful, which perfectly matches "clear and undeniable." (A) "sporadic" means happening irregularly, which contradicts the idea of consistent and clear evidence. (B) "ephemeral" means lasting for a very short time, which is not relevant to the nature of the evidence. (D) "insignificant" means unimportant, which directly contradicts the description of the evidence as "clear and undeniable."