

Scholastic Aptitude Test: **Sentence Completion**

**test basics and
testing strategies**

SAT critical reading

Question types

- sentence completion
- reading comprehension (short, long, and paired passages)

sections

- 2 sections of M-C
25 minutes, 24 questions
- *sentence completion and reading comprehension (short, paired, and long passages)*
- 1 section of M-C
20 minutes, 19 questions
- *sentence completion and reading comprehension (usually one long passage)*

Critical Reading section: what the College Board is testing

1. Vocabulary

your knowledge of words and ability to determine meaning through context

2. Reasoning Skills

your ability to determine relationship between words and ideas

3. Reading Skills

your understanding of what you read (main idea, tone, details, content)

Sentence-Completion strategies

- Answer the sentence-completion questions first because they will take less time.
- **Read the sentence for clues** (*Circle them!*) before reading answer choices.
- **Predict the answer** before reading choices.
- **Select the best match.**
- **Insert your answer choice** into the sentence to check to correctness and clarity.

Sentence-Completion strategies

- Pay attention to **introductory** and **transitional** words (*but, although, however, yet, even though, and, therefore*).
- Be aware that some of the most difficult questions contain negatives.
- Consider the tone (attitude of the sentence) to help you choose apt answers.

Sentence-Completion tips

- The sentence-completion questions are the only verbal questions ranged from simplest to most challenging.
- When the questions become too difficult, skip to shortest reading-comprehension passage.
- In questions with two blanks, focus on the easiest blank first—crossing out choices that do not fit. Then, move to the remaining choices for second blank.
- Avoid tricky wrong answers (antonyms and overly complicated words).

Sentence-Completion sample

1. Although this small and selective publishing house is famous for its _____ standards, several of its recent novels have appealed to the general population.

- (A) proletarian
- (B) naturalistic
- (C) discriminating
- (D) imitative
- (E) precarious

Sentence-Completion sample

2. The king's _____ decisions as a diplomat and administrator led to his legendary reputation as a just and _____ ruler.

- (A) quick . . . capricious
- (B) equitable . . . wise
- (C) immoral . . . perceptive
- (D) generous . . . witty
- (E) clever . . . uneducated

Sentence-Completion sample

3. Granted, Janice is extremely _____; still, it is difficult to imagine her as a professional comedian.

(A) dull

(B) garrulous

(C) effusive

(D) conservative

(E) witty

Sentence-Completion sample

4. These latest employment statistics from the present administration are so loosely documented, carelessly explained, and potentially misleading that even the most loyal senators will _____ the _____ of the presidential appointees who produced them.

- (A) perceive . . . intelligence
- (B) understand . . . tenacity
- (C) recognize . . . incompetence
- (D) praise . . . rigor
- (E) denounce . . . loyalty

Sentence-Completion sample

5. Despite her _____ of public speaking experience, the student council member was surprisingly cogent and expressed the concerns of her classmates persuasively.

(A) anticipation

(B) depth

(C) routine

(D) lack

(E) harmony

Sentence-Completion sample

6. Once Murphy left home for good, he wrote no letters to his worried mother; he did not, therefore, live up to her picture of him as her _____ son.

- (A) misunderstood
- (B) elusive
- (C) destructive
- (D) persuasive
- (E) dutiful

Sentence-Completion sample

7. Although its publicity has been _____, the film itself is intelligent, well-acted, handsomely produced, and altogether _____.

- (A) tasteless . . . respectable
- (B) extensive . . . moderate
- (C) sophisticated . . . amateur
- (D) risqué . . . crude
- (E) perfect . . . spectacular