

Sentence Completion:

Sentence Completion is a common test item in most competitive exams. A sentence contains one or two blanks (usually), to be filled in using the choices. These questions test your vocabulary and knowledge of the finer distinctions among words. A good vocabulary can be a great help here. But you can use many strategies for these questions, even without knowing all the choices.

Strategies for Sentence Completion:**1. Read the Sentence**

Use the sentence clues by reading the sentence thoroughly. Two things make a question difficult: difficult words and sentence structure. If you cannot dissect a sentence to figure out what fits best, you CANNOT crack the question though you know the word meanings. We need to properly take apart the sentences and improve our vocabulary.

2. Hints

The hints indicate what should go into the blank for the sentence to make sense. Here's a test to locate the right hint: if you change the hint, the choice in the blank MUST be changed. Often, you can use the hint by putting that word or phrase into the blank itself.

3. Pluses and Minuses

Once you find the word clues, indicate the kind of word you're looking for with a + (positive meaning) or – (negative) sign. Also, to indicate synonyms or antonyms, you can use these symbols.

4. 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.

5. Visualize

Before you go to the choices, think of the possible words for the blanks. It will save you from wrong choices. If you know roughly the KIND of words needed, the elimination is much easier. The word you visualize doesn't have to be fancy – a general idea is fine. This is better than trying out the choices to find out "what sounds good." It is faster and less prone to errors.

6. Elimination

Ruling out the wrong choices should be easy now. But remember, BOTH the words have to fit in the given ORDER for the right answer. If one word is a perfect choice but the other one doesn't make sense, the answer is WRONG. DO NOT rule out choices if you don't know their meanings and unless you are sure they do not work. If you have doubts, leave and return after checking the other choices.

7. Improve Your Vocabulary

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

8. 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.

EXAMPLES

A. Neem has _____ qualities and in many clinical trials, doctor have saved countless lives by using raw Neem leaves on serious wounds.

- remedial
- flavouring
- inferior
- doubtful
- notorious

We need a positive word with a "lifesaving" like meaning. Choices C, D, and E are negative and are ruled out. You may be unaware of remedial but you know that "flavouring" doesn't mean anything like lifesaving. Therefore, the answer is remedial.

B. The much-hated bill sparked off a wave of public _____ which could not _____ by the concessions the British announced.

- enthusiasm...dampened
- clamour...misled
- curiosity...complemented
- adoration...channelized
- discontent...abated

Much-hated indicates a negative choice for the first blank indicating anger or protest here. The second one needs harder thinking; even the British concessions did not "lessen" the public anger. Once you are clear about the word SHADES needed, find the words similar to the ones you had visualized.