

GRE Basic Vocabulary Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

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- 1. Which word indicates intense emotion?**
 - A. Indifferent**
 - B. Ardent**
 - C. Detached**
 - D. Dispassionate**
- 2. How would you classify someone who consistently demonstrates an 'obtuse' mindset?**
 - A. Being highly perceptive**
 - B. Being unresponsive to complex ideas**
 - C. Being quick to adapt to new situations**
 - D. Being deeply understanding of others**
- 3. Which word indicates a tendency towards a particular action or behavior?**
 - A. Prone**
 - B. Neutral**
 - C. Indifferent**
 - D. Averse**
- 4. Which word signifies an idea that is expressed indirectly?**
 - A. Implicit**
 - B. Explicit**
 - C. Overt**
 - D. Direct**
- 5. What term refers to extended verbal expression in speech or writing?**
 - A. Candor**
 - B. Discourse**
 - C. Brevity**
 - D. Circumspect**

- 6. What does it mean to "waft" an aroma?**
- A. To trap or contain it**
 - B. To disperse it into the air**
 - C. To conceal it completely**
 - D. To ignore its presence**
- 7. Which of the following best describes a decision made based on individual whim or preference?**
- A. Calculated**
 - B. Rational**
 - C. Arbitrary**
 - D. Purposeful**
- 8. What mood does the term "morose" convey?**
- A. Cheerful and happy**
 - B. Active and lively**
 - C. Show a brooding ill humor**
 - D. Optimistic and hopeful**
- 9. What characterizes someone who is described as 'discreet'?**
- A. being overly talkative**
 - B. marked by prudence or modesty and wise self-restraint**
 - C. engaging in reckless behavior**
 - D. openly expressing opinions**
- 10. To "qualify" something typically means to do what?**
- A. Make it more ambiguous**
 - B. Make it more specific**
 - C. Support an argument**
 - D. Challenge a statement**

Answers

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- 1. B**
- 2. B**
- 3. A**
- 4. A**
- 5. B**
- 6. B**
- 7. C**
- 8. C**
- 9. B**
- 10. B**

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Explanations

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1. Which word indicates intense emotion?

- A. Indifferent
- B. Ardent**
- C. Detached
- D. Dispassionate

The word "ardent" is the correct choice as it conveys a strong and passionate intensity of emotion. It is typically used to describe feelings that are fervent or enthusiastic, often in the context of love, support, or dedication. When someone is described as ardent, it implies that their emotions are vibrant and deeply felt, reflecting an eager and fervid nature. This strong connection to intense feelings makes "ardent" the best option among the choices provided. In contrast, the other terms suggest the absence of strong emotional involvement. "Indifferent" indicates a lack of interest or concern, while "detached" refers to being emotionally separated or uninvolved. "Dispassionate" denotes a state of being free from emotional involvement, often characterized by rational or objective thinking. Thus, these words diverge from the concept of intense emotion that "ardent" embodies.

2. How would you classify someone who consistently demonstrates an 'obtuse' mindset?

- A. Being highly perceptive
- B. Being unresponsive to complex ideas**
- C. Being quick to adapt to new situations
- D. Being deeply understanding of others

Classifying someone as having an 'obtuse' mindset typically refers to their inability or unwillingness to understand complex concepts or to engage with nuanced ideas. An 'obtuse' individual may struggle to grasp subtleties and complexities in conversations or subjects, often resulting in a lack of responsiveness to intricate arguments or emotional depths. This understanding aligns well with the notion of being unresponsive to complex ideas. This means the person may fail to see connections or implications that are not immediately obvious, often leading to a simplistic or superficial understanding of issues at hand. The other options suggest positive traits or abilities, such as high perceptiveness, adaptability, or deep understanding of others, which are contrary to the traits typically associated with an 'obtuse' mindset. Therefore, the classification of being unresponsive to complex ideas accurately captures the core essence of 'obtuseness.'

3. Which word indicates a tendency towards a particular action or behavior?

- A. Prone**
- B. Neutral**
- C. Indifferent**
- D. Averse**

The word "prone" indicates a tendency towards a particular action or behavior because it describes a predisposition or inclination to something, often with a sense of vulnerability or susceptibility. When someone is described as "prone" to a particular behavior, it suggests that they are likely to engage in that behavior or are easily influenced by it. In contrast, "neutral" conveys a lack of preference or bias, indicating no specific tendency towards any action or behavior. "Indifferent" suggests a lack of interest or concern, which implies a detachment rather than a tendency. "Averse" denotes a strong dislike or reluctance towards something, signaling that an individual is inclined to avoid that behavior rather than tend towards it. Thus, "prone" is the most appropriate choice to describe a natural inclination or tendency.

4. Which word signifies an idea that is expressed indirectly?

- A. Implicit**
- B. Explicit**
- C. Overt**
- D. Direct**

The word that signifies an idea expressed indirectly is "implicit." Implicit refers to something that is suggested or understood without being directly stated. This term is often used in contexts where the underlying meaning or implication is not overtly declared but is rather inferred from the context or surrounding information. For example, an implicit understanding between friends might mean that they both know something without needing to say it aloud. In contrast, the other terms refer to more direct forms of communication. "Explicit" describes something that is stated clearly and in detail, leaving no room for ambiguity. "Overt" refers to actions or expressions that are open, observable, and not hidden, while "direct" denotes a straightforward manner of communication without any nuances or subtleties. These terms all emphasize clarity and openness, which contrasts sharply with the indirect nature of "implicit."

5. What term refers to extended verbal expression in speech or writing?

A. Candor

B. Discourse

C. Brevity

D. Circumspect

The term that refers to extended verbal expression in speech or writing is discourse. Discourse encompasses a wide range of communication forms, including conversations, speeches, essays, and written texts that explore ideas in depth. It implies a level of complexity and depth in the expression, as opposed to merely conveying information or emotion briefly. In contrast, candor refers to honesty or frankness in communication. Brevity indicates conciseness and the quality of expressing much in few words, which is the opposite of extended expression. Circumspect means being cautious or wary, particularly in speech and action, rather than focusing on the nature of verbal expression.

6. What does it mean to "waft" an aroma?

A. To trap or contain it

B. To disperse it into the air

C. To conceal it completely

D. To ignore its presence

To "waft" an aroma means to disperse it into the air in a gentle and easily detectable manner. This term often evokes the image of a scent moving lightly through the air, inviting one's attention or enticing them to notice it. It suggests an effortless, casual transport of the aroma, allowing it to blend into the surrounding environment. When we talk about wafting an aroma, it typically involves the movement of fragrance, such as the smell of fresh bread or blooming flowers, that lingers and travels through a space, making it noticeable to others. This action is characterized by an element of grace, where the scent gently spreads rather than being forcefully projected. The other options present actions that either imply containment, concealment, or disregard of the aroma, which do not align with the nuanced and airy connotation of wafting. The focus here on the gentle dispersal illustrates why the correct interpretation of "waft" is associated with the act of spreading a scent into the air.

7. Which of the following best describes a decision made based on individual whim or preference?

- A. Calculated**
- B. Rational**
- C. Arbitrary**
- D. Purposeful**

The term that best describes a decision made based on individual whim or preference is "arbitrary." When a decision is labeled as arbitrary, it signifies a lack of consistent reasoning or logic behind it, often reflecting personal feelings or spontaneous choices rather than a systematic or structured thought process. This can include decisions that seem random or capricious, highlighting that they are often influenced by personal desires rather than objective criteria. A calculated decision involves careful consideration and analysis of various factors, leading to a logical conclusion. A rational decision is marked by reason and sound judgment, typically based on a coherent set of principles. A purposeful decision is made with a specific goal or intention in mind, indicating a focused direction rather than the randomness associated with whim. In contrast, an arbitrary decision does not adhere to a clear rationale, aligning it more closely with individual quirks or moments of spontaneity.

8. What mood does the term "morose" convey?

- A. Cheerful and happy**
- B. Active and lively**
- C. Show a brooding ill humor**
- D. Optimistic and hopeful**

The term "morose" conveys a mood characterized by a brooding ill humor, indicating a state of deep sadness or gloominess. This word is often used to describe someone who appears sullen, emotionally withdrawn, or generally unhappy. The feelings associated with being morose suggest a lack of joy or enthusiasm, embodying a heavy, dark emotional tone that is the opposite of cheerful or lighthearted moods. Therefore, the interpretation of "morose" as showing a brooding ill humor accurately captures its essence, making it the appropriate choice. The other options describe positive or lively emotions that are incongruent with the meaning of "morose." While 'cheerful and happy' and 'optimistic and hopeful' represent bright, uplifting feelings, 'active and lively' suggests energy and vivacity, which are also contrary to the somber nature of someone who is morose.

9. What characterizes someone who is described as 'discreet'?

- A. being overly talkative
- B. marked by prudence or modesty and wise self-restraint**
- C. engaging in reckless behavior
- D. openly expressing opinions

Someone described as 'discreet' is characterized by prudence, modesty, and wise self-restraint. This means that they are careful in their speech and actions, often exercising caution to avoid drawing attention to themselves or to sensitive situations. A discreet individual is typically someone who respects the privacy of others and handles matters quietly and thoughtfully. The ability to juggle confidentiality and tact is key to this characterization, making it suitable for social situations or professional environments where sensitivity is necessary. In contrast, the other options present traits that are the opposite of being discreet. Overly talkative behavior suggests a lack of self-restraint and an inclination to share too much information. Engaging in reckless behavior implies disregard for consequences or the feelings of others, which is not in line with the careful demeanor of a discreet person. Finally, openly expressing opinions may also indicate a lack of prudence, especially if those opinions could be controversial or inappropriate in certain contexts. Therefore, the most fitting description of someone who embodies qualities of discretion is indeed marked by prudence, modesty, and wise self-restraint.

10. To "qualify" something typically means to do what?

- A. Make it more ambiguous
- B. Make it more specific**
- C. Support an argument
- D. Challenge a statement

To "qualify" something means to make it more specific by adding conditions or limitations that clarify a statement. When one qualifies a statement or argument, it usually involves providing additional details that refine or delimit its scope. For instance, if someone says, "I like ice cream," and then adds, "but only in the summertime," they have qualified their original statement. This process helps eliminate ambiguity and ensures that the statement is understood within a defined context or under specific circumstances. The other choices do not accurately reflect the meaning of "qualify." Making something more ambiguous would involve adding uncertainty, which is the opposite of qualifying. Supporting an argument doesn't directly relate to specifying or clarifying—rather, it refers to providing evidence or reasoning. Similarly, challenging a statement implies a direct contradiction or dispute, which again does not involve making the statement more specific or clear. Thus, the choice that best captures the essence of "qualify" is making something more specific.