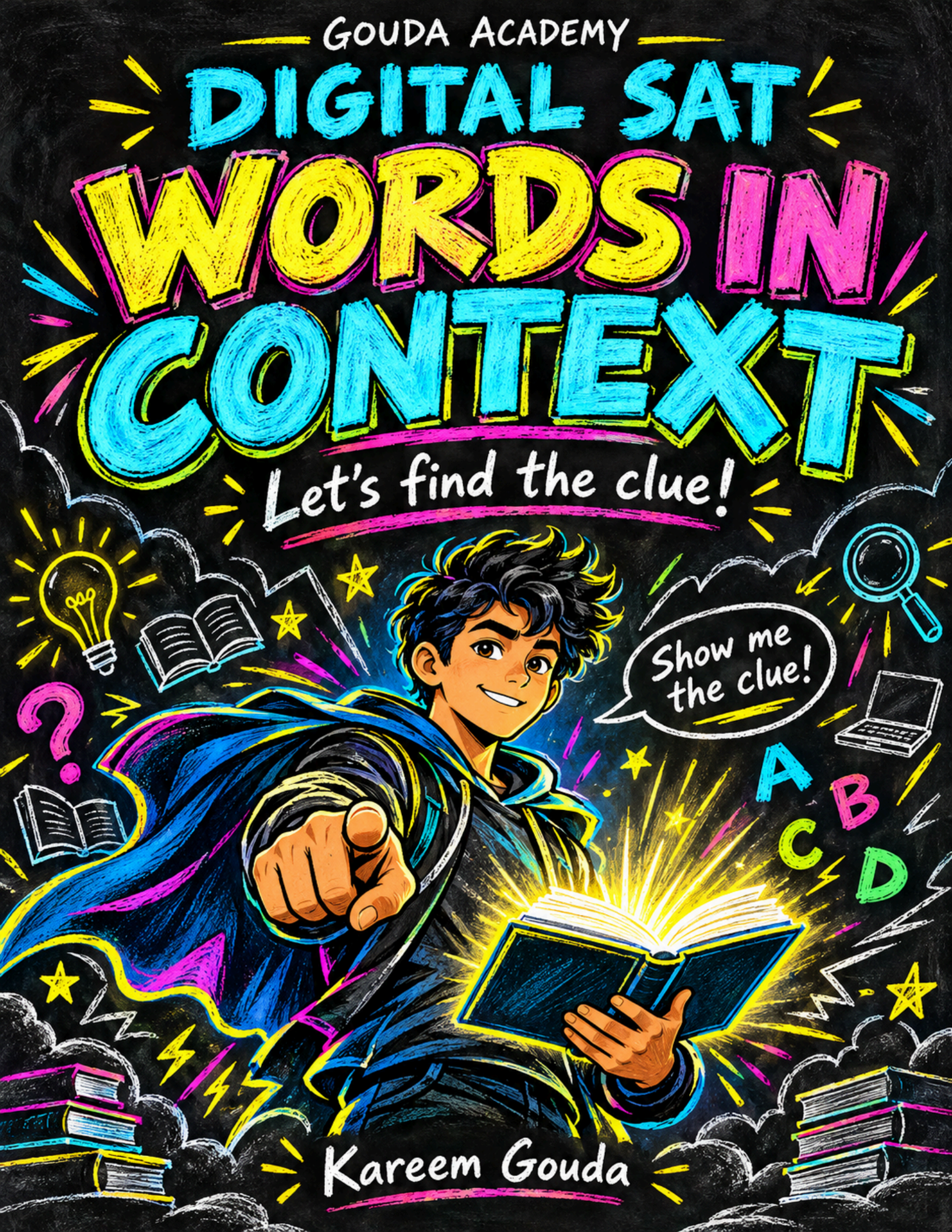
GOUDA ACADEMY

DIGITAL SAT WORDS IN CONTEXT

Let's find the clue!



Kareem Gouda

Okay, look at the choices first.

You do not have to invent a word and hope it appears in A-D. Look at the choices. Then let the sentence help you sort them out.

1. Find your keywords.

What in the passage helps us choose? Underline that part. Read before AND after the blank.

2. Check the connection.

Is the writer explaining, giving examples, showing a result, or making a contrast?

3. Put the choice back.

Read the whole expression. Do not leave out not, hardly, or less.

4. Eliminate for a reason.

Extra information? Contradiction? Wrong meaning? Say exactly why the choice fails.

ONE WORD LOOKS SCARY?

Do not know a word? Leave it undecided for now. Test the words you do know. An unfamiliar word is not automatically right or wrong.

We are going to work through the questions together. Choices first, then the clue, then the explanation.

See a colon? Keep reading!

Look at A-D first. Now find the colon. The part after it explains how the stations work. That is where we check our choices.

A. outmoded

B. informal

C. interconnected

D. optional

The three monitoring stations are _____: **each sends information to the other two**, forming a single coordinated network.

Let's work it out.

Look here: each station sends information to the other two. So they are connected. Which choice says that? **C, interconnected.** The part after the colon has done the explaining for us.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Outmoded means outdated. Where does it say the stations are old?

B. Informal tells us about formality. That is not the clue.

D. Optional means not required. The text does not establish that.

Read past the colon. Then match the explanation to a choice.

Two commas. One useful clue.

The blank sits inside two commas. Read that whole middle part. Here, it tells us what kind of project this is.

A. a diversion

B. a collaboration

C. a contradiction

D. a succession

The project, _____ between a composer and a filmmaker who **developed every scene together**, combined original music with animation.

Let's work it out.

They developed every scene **together**. That is the keyword. A composer and a filmmaker working together make this **B, a collaboration**. The middle phrase explains the project.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. A diversion is a distraction. We have joint work.

C. A contradiction needs conflicting ideas. We do not have those.

D. A succession means one thing follows another. Together is the clue here.

Two commas alone prove nothing. Read what the middle phrase explains.

What are they actually doing?

The sentence may not give you a dictionary definition. No problem. Look at what the people actually do.

A. nervous about

B. completed by

C. delayed by

D. involved in

The director wanted neighborhood residents to be _____ the production. Residents **submitted stories, selected locations, and appeared** in several scenes.

Let's work it out.

Stories, locations, acting in scenes... are these residents just watching? No. They are taking part. That gives us **D, involved in**. We have actions that prove it.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Nervous? That adds a feeling the passage never gives us.

B. Completed by does not describe these people taking part.

C. Delayed? Nobody says the residents slowed the work down.

Actions can explain the word without giving a synonym.

Look at the whole list!

Do not stop at the first example. Read the list. What do all these details tell us about the workshop?

A. multifaceted

B. circumscribed

C. unvarying

D. unintelligible

The workshop was _____, combining a live demonstration, a historical discussion, a design activity, and a question-and-answer session.

Let's work it out.

A demonstration, a discussion, an activity, and questions. This event has several different parts. **A, multifaceted**, means exactly that. We do not need to guess whether the event was exciting or confusing.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

B. Circumscribed means limited. The list shows different parts.

C. Unvarying means no variation. That contradicts the list.

D. Unintelligible means impossible to understand. Extra information!

Use the details that are there. Do not invent new ones.

However... what changed?

We have a contrast. Good. Now find the two things being compared before choosing the word.

A. struggling

B. beneficial

C. simple

D. healthy

Diseased seedlings develop spotted, curling leaves. A _____ seedling, **by contrast**, has **smooth leaves with even coloration**.

Let's work it out.

On one side: diseased seedlings with damaged leaves. On the other: smooth leaves with even color. We need the different condition, so **D, healthy**, fits. Here, an opposite really does work.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Struggling repeats the damaged condition. Wrong direction.

B. Beneficial means helpful. Is helpfulness being compared? No.

C. Simple means uncomplicated. That is not the contrast.

Find both sides of the contrast. Then test the choices.

Wait! This is not an opposite.

You see **but**. Does that mean we need the opposite of displayed? Let's check what actually changes.

A. invented

B. adjusted

C. featured

D. recommended

The artist's early murals were displayed **on neighborhood walls**, but her recent paintings are _____ **in major museums**.

Let's work it out.

Where was the early work? On neighborhood walls. Where is the recent work? In museums. **The place changes.** The work is still being shown. So **C, featured**, fits. We do not reverse the action just because we see but.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Invented means created. We are discussing where art is shown.

B. Adjusted means changed. No changes to the paintings are described.

D. Recommended means suggested. It does not mean displayed.

Contrast in place does not mean opposite action.

Why are they doing that?

Look for the reason. Here, **so that** tells us why the archive is doing this. Use that reason to check A-D.

A. replacing

B. inventing

C. preserving

D. counting

The archive is carefully _____ its fragile recordings **so that listeners decades from now can still hear them**.

Let's work it out.

What do they want? People should still be able to hear the recordings years later. So they need to keep them usable. **C, preserving.** Counting the recordings will not stop them falling apart!

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Replacing brings in different recordings. That is not the stated action.

B. Inventing means creating something new. These recordings already exist.

D. Counting tells us how many. It does not keep them usable.

The purpose helps you test the action.

Did it do the job?

First, find the goal. Then check the result. The answer must describe what the result actually shows.

A. amusing

B. successful

C. inexpensive

D. accidental

The town installed shaded resting areas **to increase use** of its walking trail. The effort was _____: average daily **attendance rose** from 80 walkers to 210.

Let's work it out.

The goal was more walkers. Did they get more walkers? Yes: 80 became 210. So **B, successful**, fits. Do we know whether it was cheap? No. Do not add information.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Amusing means entertaining. We are checking attendance.

C. Inexpensive? We have no cost information.

D. Accidental? The town deliberately tried to increase attendance.

Successful does not automatically mean cheap or easy.

Do not lose the NOT!

That tiny word **not** is doing a big job. Keep it attached to every choice you test.

A. accidental

B. confident

C. expensive

D. consistent

The turbine's output is **not _____**: the amount of electricity it produces **changes sharply and unpredictably**.

Let's work it out.

The output changes unpredictably. Now try the **whole phrase**: not consistent. Does that fit? Yes. So the answer is **D, consistent**. If you drop not, you reverse what the sentence says.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Not accidental would concern chance. That is not the issue.

B. Not confident would concern confidence. Wrong meaning here.

C. Not expensive would concern cost. We have output data, not prices.

Choose the word that fits WITH not, not without it.

Less... compared with what?

Both crews finished the job. So do not call the first crew a failure! We are comparing something more specific.

A. secretive

B. efficient

C. outgoing

D. sympathetic

Both crews completed the **same inspection accurately**. The first crew, however, needed **twice as much time and fuel**, making it less _____ than the second.

Let's work it out.

Same job. Same accuracy. But the first crew uses more time and fuel. That is the comparison. It is **less efficient**, so choose **B**. Less efficient does not mean it failed to finish.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Secretive? There is no information about hiding anything.

C. Outgoing? That describes personality, not resource use.

D. Sympathetic? Again, nothing about feelings here.

Keep less attached. Identify exactly what is being compared.

Which meaning works HERE?

You know this word. But which meaning do we need in this sentence? Look at the thing being described.

A. held up

B. encouraged

C. improved on

D. defended

The roof of the pavilion was **supported** by **six stone columns**. As used here, what does supported most nearly mean?

Let's work it out.

What is being supported? A roof. What is supporting it? Stone columns. So this is physical support: **A, held up**. The columns are not giving the roof a motivational speech!

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

B. Encouraged fits emotional support. Wrong meaning here.

C. Improved on means made better. It does not mean held up.

D. Defended fits protection or an argument. We have physical columns.

Same word. Different meanings. This sentence decides.

A guess is still a guess.

Read the whole passage. The last sentence may give you the strongest hint to the blank.

A. demands

B. doubts

C. establishes

D. speculates

With **no direct observations** yet available, the researcher _____ that the caves may contain liquid water. **This conjecture** will be tested during a later expedition.

Let's work it out.

No direct observations. **May** contain water. And then: **this conjecture**. That phrase points back to the idea. It is still a guess, so **D, speculates**. Establishes would turn the guess into a proven claim.

WHY NOT THE OTHERS?

A. Demands means insists on something. No demand is being made.

B. Doubts means questions whether it is true. That is not the claim.

C. Establishes is too certain. The evidence has not arrived yet.

Possible is not proven. Check the strength of the choice.

Where should I look?

A colon or a dash

Look after it. Is the writer explaining the part with the blank? That explanation can help you choose.

A comma + an extra phrase

Read that extra phrase. It may show how something happened: "expanded access, allowing more people to join."

A phrase between two commas

Ask what it explains. In "the project, a collaboration between two labs," the middle phrase tells us what kind of project it is.

This, these, or such

Look back! "This conjecture" can point to a guess in the previous sentence. It helps you check the meaning of the earlier blank.

However, but, or although

Stop and locate the contrast. Is it a different condition, place, time, method, or amount? Do not choose an opposite automatically.

NO MAGIC PUNCTUATION BUTTON!

A clue tells you where to look. The sentence still has to make sense with your answer inside it.

Find the clue. Make your pick.

For each blank, choose the most logical and precise answer. For a bold word, choose its meaning in this sentence.

QUESTION 01

A. flexible

B. ornamental

C. scarce

D. opaque

The researcher called the material _____: it could bend repeatedly without cracking or breaking.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

QUESTION 02

A. concealed

B. postponed

C. facilitated

D. restricted

The council wanted residents to help shape the park. It therefore _____ their participation by offering evening meetings and an online suggestion form.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

Find the clue. Make your pick.

For each blank, choose the most logical and precise answer. For a bold word, choose its meaning in this sentence.

QUESTION 03

A. isolated

B. self-sufficient

C. uninhabitable

D. extravagant

The village once depended on imported grain. Today, however, its farms produce enough for all its residents, making the village _____.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

QUESTION 04

A. attractive

B. familiar

C. beneficial

D. restricted

The festival is hardly _____ to professional musicians: school groups and first-time performers are also welcome.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

Find the clue. Make your pick.

For each blank, choose the most logical and precise answer. For a bold word, choose its meaning in this sentence.

QUESTION 05

A. discussed

B. organized

C. scheduled

D. negotiated

The curator **arranged** the photographs by date, placing the oldest near the entrance and the newest near the exit. What does arranged most nearly mean?

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

QUESTION 06

A. identical

B. optional

C. invisible

D. distinct

The apparatus has three _____ components: a sensor detects movement, a processor interprets the signal, and an alarm alerts the operator. Each performs a different task.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

Find the clue. Make your pick.

For each blank, choose the most logical and precise answer. For a bold word, choose its meaning in this sentence.

QUESTION 07

A. superficial

B. incidental

C. comprehensive

D. provisional

The review was _____, examining every available record rather than selecting a small sample.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

QUESTION 08

A. effective

B. economical

C. inexpensive

D. effortless

The new filter was _____: after installation, it removed the contaminant the engineers had designed it to eliminate. The report did not evaluate its energy consumption or cost.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

Find the clue. Make your pick.

For each blank, choose the most logical and precise answer. For a bold word, choose its meaning in this sentence.

QUESTION 09

A. conceal

B. convey

C. dispute

D. abandon

Although early maps were printed on paper and newer ones appear on screens, both _____ geographic information through symbols and labels.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

QUESTION 10

A. authentic

B. accessible

C. exhaustive

D. interesting

The historian does not regard the surviving letters as an _____ record of the expedition: several months are undocumented, and many letters are known to have been lost.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

Find the clue. Make your pick.

For each blank, choose the most logical and precise answer. For a bold word, choose its meaning in this sentence.

QUESTION 11

A. improved

B. measured

C. predicted

D. concealed

After the team added ramps and tactile signs, visitors who had previously struggled to enter and navigate the building could do so more easily. These changes _____ access.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

QUESTION 12

A. indifferent

B. nostalgic

C. complacent

D. experimental

The ceramicist was _____, repeatedly testing new glazes, trying unfamiliar firing methods, and revising designs in response to the results.

My answer: _____ My keywords:

I can eliminate _____ because...

Why does that answer work?

01. A - flexible

Look at **bend repeatedly without cracking**. Which choice matches that? **A, flexible.** Decoration, scarcity, and transparency are different ideas. The sentence does not give us those.

02. C - facilitated

The council wants people to join in. Evening meetings and an online form make that easier. So **C, facilitated**. Concealed hides it; postponed delays it; restricted limits it. Wrong direction!

03. B - self-sufficient

Before: grain comes from elsewhere. Now: the village grows enough for everyone. **B, self-sufficient.** It can meet its own need. Do not add isolation, an impossible place to live, or excessive spending.

04. D - restricted

Keep **hardly**! The festival is hardly restricted to professionals because beginners can join too. **D, restricted.** Attractive, familiar, and beneficial make claims the invitation does not prove.

Got the letter right? Good. Now point to the words that prove it. That is the part you can use on the next question.

Why does that answer work?

05. B - organized

What is the curator doing? Putting the photographs in order. **B, organized.** Dates do not automatically mean scheduled. Nobody is planning an event, discussing the photos, or negotiating.

06. D - distinct

One component senses, one processes, one alerts. Different jobs. **D, distinct.** Identical contradicts that. Optional and invisible add things we were never told.

07. C - comprehensive

Every available record, not a small sample. That tells us how much the review covers. **C, comprehensive.** Superficial concerns depth; incidental concerns importance; provisional means not final.

08. A - effective

Did the filter do the job? Yes. **A, effective.** Was it cheap, economical, or effortless? We do not know. Do not turn a successful result into three extra claims.

Got the letter right? Good. Now point to the words that prove it. That is the part you can use on the next question.

Why does that answer work?

09. B - convey

Paper versus screens: the medium changes. But both maps still give information. **B, convey.** Conceal hides it, dispute challenges it, and abandon leaves it behind. None fits the shared job.

10. C - exhaustive

Months are missing. Letters are lost. So the record is **not exhaustive**: it does not cover everything. Choose **C**. Missing material does not make the surviving letters fake, inaccessible, or uninteresting.

11. A - improved

Visitors could enter and move around more easily. That is the result. **A, improved.** Measured, predicted, and concealed do not describe the change that actually happened.

12. D - experimental

Testing, trying, revising. Look at those actions! They support **D, experimental.** Indifferent means not interested; nostalgic looks to the past; complacent suggests no need to improve.

Got the letter right? Good. Now point to the words that prove it. That is the part you can use on the next question.

Prove Your Pick!

One point for the answer.
One point for the clue.
One point for knocking out a wrong choice.

Choose a question.

Use questions 1-12. Keep the answer pages hidden. Both players can see A-D from the start.

Make your case.

Write your answer, underline your keywords, and explain why one other choice does not work. Allow about 60-90 seconds, or take longer if needed.

Challenge each other.

Ask your partner to show you the clue. If a choice adds information or contradicts the sentence, explain where it goes wrong.

Check and score.

Use the answer pages. Give each point separately. A useful clue can earn a point even if the final answer was wrong.

Try again with the right hack.

Missed the contrast? Lost the not? Picked a different meaning? Go back to that lesson, then play the next round.

12 rounds. 36 possible points. A tie? Explain why the most tempting wrong answer fails. No points for speed!