

GRE

Verbal Reasoning Assessment

Sentence Equivalence

Answer Explanations

1. Correct Answer: CD

Explanation:

Since the competition was spoiled it did not do what it set out to do. The word 'conceived' is a definite possibility, but there is no other word with a similar meaning. The word 'touted' can mean advertised, and so can 'heralded' (announced) both of which would complete the sentence sensibly.

2. Correct Answer: AF

Explanation:

If the economy needs boosting it is probably not doing well. Two similar words from the negative choices available are 'languishing' and 'flagging' both of which imply the economy is weak. (Note that 'flagging' has more than one meaning!)

3. Correct Answer: BD

Explanation:

The 'but' indicates opposite ideas. The opposite of mislead would be something that helps us see clearly – making 'perceptive' and 'insightful' obvious choices.

[Heuristic = serving to stimulate interest; prosaic = dull; iconoclastic = unorthodox]

4. Correct Answer: EF

Explanation:

Since the computer is more interactive it is no longer to be viewed as a passive tool. We need two words which both suggest a passive role for the computer. 'Repository' and 'cache' are words which are used for a storage place and thus, are the best answer.

5. Correct Answer: AC

Explanation:

The problem here is simply to find two synonyms: abiding and perennial are the only possibility. Both mean 'lasting'.

6. Correct Answer: CF

Explanation:

Someone who cannot see the nuances (shades of meaning) in a situation could be described as 'imperceptive'. Someone who is imperceptive can also be called 'obtuse' (mentally dull and slow to understand).

7. Correct Answer: DE

Explanation:

The word 'arcane' means known only to a few people; it is, therefore, 'obscure'. As you can see, the sentence more or less defines the word 'arcane' so we can be sure we are correct.

8. Correct Answer: AD

Explanation:

If an unchanging viewpoint is admired, then being changeable will not inspire respect. Therefore, we need two words suggesting changeable: 'fickle' and 'capricious' both have that connotation. [Bombastic = arrogant; dogmatic = forcefully insistent; stalwart = brave and loyal]

9. Correct Answer: BF

Explanation:

Anyone who has to tow the line and show no sign of rebellion is likely to be docile (easily lead) or taciturn (quiet) but these words do not have synonyms in the answer choices. However, 'servile' (groveling and sycophantic) does have a synonym – 'fawning'.

10. Correct Answer: AB

Explanation:

Taken individually, almost all the words except venial (minor) seem to fit. But we have to find two words which give the sentence the same meaning. Hence we need 'contrite' and 'repentant' which both imply feeling sorry for wrong-doing.

11. Correct Answer: AE

Explanation:

Almost any word might fit the blank so we have to look for the most similar pair of words. 'Rococo' means highly elaborate; 'understated' means low-key; 'pronounced' means obvious and 'ingenuous' means naïve. We are left with 'studied' and 'mannered' which both can have the connotation of deliberate and even pretentious. Note that both words can be used in other contexts too.

12. Correct Answer: BC

Explanation:

The word 'barbs' implies insults. So we might be looking for a word that means 'insult'. The word 'disparage' fits the bill but does not have a similar word in the remaining choices. Of what is left we can focus on 'lampoon' and 'ridicule' which both mean to mock or deride – which imply making fun of someone to show up faults.

13. Correct Answer: BE

Explanation:

A person who is abstracted has their mind on something else. As a result of being abstracted the teacher would have given a superficial (perfunctory; cursory) evaluation instead of a thorough evaluation.

14. Correct Answer: CE

Explanation:

He sentences implies that under certain circumstances punishment for crime will not put off potential criminals. The point is to find two words which will point to the same circumstance. If a sentence or punishment is 'commuted' it is reduced or even 'waived' (not applied), thus providing the answer. [Arbitrary = random; lenient = not strict]

15. Correct Answer: DF

Explanation:

One word from the first part of the sentence seems to be what we need in the blank. The word is 'affects'. If we see this then we can choose words that will give the meaning 'affect the interpretation'. Obviously the word 'impact' fits. (Note that 'impact' is used as a verb here not a noun). For the other word we can consider 'cloud' and 'color', both of which can be used as verbs. To cloud would imply to obscure and would be negative,

whereas to color is not necessarily negative. Hence we are better to take the words 'impact' and 'color' as they are less restrictive than 'cloud'.

16. Correct Answer: DE

Explanation:

The sentence implies that what is rejected has value but is discarded in favor of something valueless that sounds more familiar. Hence we are looking for words that convey 'valuable'. 'Germane' and 'pertinent' are best since they both mean relevant. [Anomalous = not fitting a pattern; inconsequential and peripheral = unimportant]

17. Correct Answer: BE

Explanation:

The second part of the sentence tells us we are looking for something that involves 'hiding'. Since puritanical and prudish are used for attempts to cover or hide what is shameful or immoral, they are the best pair. Covert means hidden or secret, but there is no partner for it. [Misogynistic = involving hatred of women; camouflaging = disguising]

18. Correct Answer: AF

Explanation:

If he overcame torpor (inactivity) he must have acted quickly; hence, 'dispatch' and 'celerity' are the best as they both mean speed. (Note the use of 'dispatch' as a noun.)

19. Correct Answer: BD

Explanation:

A word from the earlier part of the sentence fits the meaning of the blank; that word is 'confrontational'. Once you see that then it should be easy to find 'bellicose' and 'aggressive' which both imply hostility. [mordant = biting sarcasm; complaisant = easy-going; jaundiced = negative in outlook]

20. Correct Answer: CF

Explanation:

If there is no obvious solution, we might welcome any suggestion even a vague one. 'Flimsy' and 'tentative' imply hesitant and not firm. You cannot choose 'unusual' and 'outrageous' because outrageous is so much stronger than unusual that the meaning would not be close enough.

21. Correct Answer: BC

Explanation:

The clue is in the word 'belies' which means 'contradicts'. Hence, the diary contains matter that suggests the opposite of what is true in the academic part of Mannering's life. Since he is known for deep thought, the diary must contain matter that is the opposite of 'deep'. 'Mundane' and 'petty' are the correct answers because 'mundane' suggests something boring or ordinary and 'petty' suggests something minor or trivial. Note that this is one case where the correct answers are not exactly synonymous. [Erudite = learned, knowledgeable; untoward = unexpected]

22. Correct Answer: AD

Explanation:

If the volume of donations goes down as people view more and more images of ill-treated pets, it is likely that the images are no longer having any effect on the viewers. Thus we can say that the viewers have ceased to react, or have become 'inured' or 'hardened' to the emotional appeal of the images. [inured = habituated, hardened; overwrought = over-emotional, over-excited]

23. Correct Answer: BE

Explanation:

Any of the words taken individually might make a logical sentence. However, since the conclusion is surprising in that the risk to the individual reduces as the risk to the community increases, the work 'paradoxical' is a good choice. 'Anomalous' gives a similar suggestion of the unexpectedness of the results, although 'anomalous' is most often defined as 'not fitting into the expected pattern'.

24. Correct Answer: CF

Explanation:

If devotion to the examination is so strong, students will not consider anything outside the syllabus. Hence, they close their minds to anything non-essential or 'extraneous'. 'Peripheral' also conveys the same idea of not central.

25. Correct Answer: AF

Explanation:

Since the writer and her subject favor levity (humor), it would be unexpected if the tome of the biography were too serious. 'Lugubrious' (mournful) and 'melancholy' (sad) convey this idea best. Note that 'jaunty' and 'jocose' are nearly synonymous but their meaning of 'playful' would not fit.

26. Correct Answer: BE

Explanation:

Since no one is willing to compromise a deadlock had been reached. 'Impasse' is another word for deadlock. Note that the clue comes in the part after the semicolon. Without that last part any of the answers would seem suitable.

27. Correct Answer: AB

Explanation:

The clue is in the word 'however' which indicates opposition of ideas. If the drama does not always come together well as indicated in the first part of the sentence, it might come together well (coalesce, crystallize) at some points. Note the use of 'crystallize' in a metaphorical sense.

28. Correct Answer: DE

Explanation:

The second half of the sentence confirms that the teacher's approach to grading is unpredictable. Hence, 'whimsical' fits the sentence as it describes something fickle or changeable and rather random. 'Ambivalent' with its suggestion of something wavering

and uncertain is the second correct answer. 'Authoritarian' and 'strict' are synonyms but do not fit the meaning of the sentence. [hidebound = fixed and rigid; tardy = slow]

29. Correct Answer: BD

Explanation:

The clue is in the word 'reconcile'. In order to reconcile (bring together opposing ideas/people etc) there should be two opposing items. Since one item of the pair is 'theoretical underpinnings' the word used to describe 'experience' must be the opposite of 'theoretical'. Hence, 'empirical' (found by experiment or experience) and 'practical' are the best choices. [arcane = obscure; obtuse = slow to understand, mentally dull]

30. Correct Answer: DE

Explanation:

The candidate must have kept calm in a situation where others had become annoyed. In other words, she behaved with 'propriety' and 'decorum' (both of which mean good, correct behavior) when others were 'unseemly'. Note that 'unseemly' (unsuitable, inappropriate) is an important clue. [pertinacity = persistence; adroitness = skill; alacrity = speed and eagerness]

31. Correct Answer: AF

Explanation:

The word 'surprising' offers an important clue. Once the person had been flexible but in his later years became its opposite: inflexible. The words that best convey this idea are 'intransigent' and 'dogged' which both mean stubborn and inflexible. [vacillating = wavering]

32. Correct Answer: BD

Explanation:

The noise must have been bad for the health as Natasha seeks a more 'salubrious' or health-giving place. 'Debilitating' and 'enervating' are correct as they both mean weakening. [soporific = sleep-inducing]

33. Correct Answer: CF

Explanation:

The sentence implies that the grandfather did not discipline the children even when their actions deserved 'censure' (strong criticism or blame). Hence, we can say he seldom 'upbraided' or 'chided' the children. Both these words imply scolding and berating.

34. Correct Answer: BE

Explanation:

The word 'rather' suggests that the attempt to 'elucidate' (make clear) has the opposite effect. 'Obfuscate' and 'becloud' both imply that something has been made more obscure. [denigrate = decry; attenuate = weaken]

35. Correct Answer: AF

Explanation:

Since he taught by example, and he criticized (berated) his students for circumlocution (using too many words) he must have avoided ('shunned' or 'eschewed') long-windedness in his own lectures. [epitomized = acted as a good example of]

36. Correct Answer: BC

Explanation:

Since he went against the accepted authorities he would have needed some amount of nerve or daring. 'Audacity' and 'temerity' can both be used of the kind of daring that is needed to challenge authority. Remember to note any unfamiliar words in the sentence as well as in the answer choices. In case you are unfamiliar with the word, 'iconoclastic' means 'against accepted authority'.

37. Correct Answer: AC

Explanation:

The interests of Boris and his peers are opposed. Since the words 'predilections' and 'inclinations' are synonyms for interests in or leanings toward something, they are the best answers.

38. Correct Answer: BE

Explanation:

The writer is complaining about a preface which apparently does not contain any insights (perceptive comments). Hence we can say that the preface is 'inane' or 'vacuous' as these words suggest something empty of meaning. [egregious = outstandingly obvious, blatant; pretentious = putting on an act of superiority; subliminal = under the threshold of consciousness]

39. Correct Answer: CD

Explanation:

The word 'duped' is the clue. 'Quacks' and 'charlatans' are tricksters who fool people, often by pretending to have expertise in an area such as medicine. [mavericks = people who do not follow the herd; hypochondriacs = people with imaginary illnesses]

40. Correct Answer: CF

Explanation:

Since 'chagrined' means annoyed or upset, we can infer that the chief executive must have gone against the directions of the director. The correct answers are 'undermined' and 'subverted' (both of which mean attempted to overthrow or negated). [underscored = emphasized; substantiated = given supporting evidence]

41. Correct Answer: AC

Explanation:

The word 'though' indicates an opposition of ideas. Byron is 'glib' (smooth-talking, possibly insincere) but it does not mean that his thought is 'superficial' or 'lightweight'. [profound = deep; verbose = wordy]

42. Correct Answer: AF

Explanation:

The expression 'far from' is the clue; it indicates that the action is NOT an innocent prank. Hence we need words that are the opposite of innocent: 'malicious' (having bad or evil intentions) and 'callous' (deliberately unfeeling) are the best choices. [salubrious = health-giving; saturnine = gloomy; innocuous = harmless]

43. Correct Answer: AF

Explanation:

'Although' indicates the need for opposite ideas. So by choosing A you are saying that although he was initially treated with 'derision' (scorn), he was finally proved right (vindicated). Similarly, if he was treated with 'incredulity' (disbelief) at first, to be proved right would be surprising. [jubilation = great joy]

44. Correct Answer: DE

Explanation:

The sentence implies that elements that seem separate are to be combined into a coherent whole. 'Disparate' and 'discrete' both imply 'separate'. (Do not confuse 'discrete' and 'discreet'!) [sporadic = on and off; incessant = non stop]

45. Correct Answer: CE**Explanation:**

Someone who notices every little mistake in his work, and who pays attention to the details, that is someone 'meticulous' or 'punctilious', might be unwilling to overlook the little quirks or 'foibles' of others. Note that 'prevarication' and 'mendacity' are close in meaning but would not fit the overall logic of the sentence. [xenophobia = fear of foreigners; mendacity = telling lies; prevarication = avoiding the truth]

46. Correct Answer: DE**Explanation:**

The words 'sycophantic' and 'fawning' are synonyms to describe people who suck up to others. This is just the kind of word we need to fill the blank as we are looking to describe writers who 'pander' to the public (and, presumably, to the icons that they portray).

47. Correct Answer: BF**Explanation:**

We can infer from the sentence structure that the word to fill the blank should be unlike 'tradition'. 'Originality' fits the bill well. Now all you need to do is to recognize that 'singularity' can mean something unique which would also give the same overall sense to the sentence. [gestation = period of development; provenance = authenticated origin; nonchalance = appearance of indifference]

48. Correct Answer: BC**Explanation:**

By rationalizing (trying to justify) their decision, donors are exposing the fact that they are not being entirely honest about their motives. Hence they are open to the charge of 'hypocrisy' (saying one thing and doing another) or 'equivocation' (using words in deliberately ambiguous ways). [nepotism = favoring relatives etc when assigning jobs, positions etc.]

49. Correct Answer: CE**Explanation:**

If something cannot be 'condoned' (tolerated) it must be very bad. The only words that mean something bad enough not to be tolerated under any circumstances are 'reprehensible' and 'insupportable'. [untoward = unexpected; credible = believable; utilitarian = concerned with the usefulness of something]

50. Correct Answer: AD**Explanation:**

'Prurience' and 'voyeurism' both indicate taking an unhealthy interest in something unwholesome (especially something sexual). [avarice = greed for money]

51. Answer: D and E**Explanation:**

A careful reading of the sentence suggests that the missing word is related to slowing down of the heart as the sentence clearly brings out that the pulse rates drop. Therefore, A, D and E could be the likely answers. However, we need to choose only two words that

mean the same and which will impart the same meaning to the sentence when placed in the blank. Therefore, D and E are the correct answers as out of these three words, 'choke' and 'throttle' are the closest in meaning. Option F means "to stir" which is a misfit in this context.

52. Answer: B and D

Explanation:

The missing word is describing a tendency of the brain which is frightening and is a danger of free diving. This implies that 'comforting' is clearly incorrect. Out of the remaining four answer options, 'perplexing' and 'disconcerting' are the only two words that mean the same and hence, B and D are the correct answers. The last option F – Critical- whose medical meaning would imply abrupt change for better or worse cannot be a correct answer.

53. Answer A and E

Explanation:

The missing word is describing the action that needs to be taken. C is clearly incorrect as placing 'expendable' in the blank will render the sentence meaningless. The words 'prompt' and 'expeditious' mean the same. In the absence of any other synonyms in the given list, it is evident that A and E are the correct answers. The last option –dilatatory-which means causing delay – means the opposite of what is intended. Therefore it is incorrect.

54. Answer B and D

Explanation:

The words, 'relegating' and 'delegating' mean the same which is to assign responsibility. However, it is aptly clear that the context in which the missing word has been used does not warrant the use of either A or E as the correct answer. Out of the remaining options, 'shunting' and 'diverting' are the closest in meaning and therefore, B and D are the correct answers. Option F-Compressing- meaning constricting or shrinking would be incorrect.

55. Answer C and E

Explanation:

It is obvious that the missing word is a positive word as it is describing the efforts which will lead to subsequent improvement. Therefore, even though A, B, D & F carry the same meaning; they are all incorrect as they all imply a negative connotation. C and E mean the same and both of them fit in well. Therefore, C and E are the correct answers.

56. Answer A and D

Explanation:

A careful reading of the sentence suggests that the fragments of the endoplasmic reticulum join to form the envelope. It is unlikely that the envelope will be formed if the fragments are dispersing –B, disintegrating–E, & dissipating–F. Option C –rescinding means to cancel or abort is a misfit. Therefore, A and D are the correct answers as they mean the same when plugged into the sentence.

57. Answer B and E

Explanation:

Out of all the given answer options, the words, 'auspices' and 'aegis' are the only two words that carry the same meaning and both of them fit in well with the meaning being conveyed by the sentence. Options D--adytum & F--sanctum, both of which mean sanctuary are misfits. Therefore, B and E are the correct answers.

58. Answer C and D**Explanation:**

The issue under discussion is being described by two words; 'complex' and the missing word. This implies that B is clearly incorrect as the issue cannot be complex and facile at the same time. Option F—motley & A—multifarious both mean variety .but they are not the correct answers. Out of the remaining options, C and D are the only two words that mean the same and therefore, C and D are the correct answers.

59. Answer A and C**Explanation:**

Out of all the given answer options, 'inappropriate' and 'unseemly' are the only two words that could fit into the sentence... Options B—obscure & F ---arcane both mean the same—abstruse. But they are incorrect. Therefore, A and C are the correct answers.

60. Answer C and D**Explanation:**

The missing word has been used to describe an aspect of the subject's nature. The word, 'dichotomy' is used to indicate a division into halves. This implies that C and D would carry the same meaning when used in that context. The other two synonyms E—bonding &F—cementing are opposites in meaning and therefore misfits.

61. Answer B and C**Explanation:**

The word, 'implode' means to cave in or to collapse inwards. Therefore, B and C are synonyms. In the absence of any other synonyms in the given list of answer options, it is evident that B and C are the correct answers. The other pair of synonyms E—drown & F---drench which mean a thorough wetting are misfits.

62. Answer A and D**Explanation:**

Each of the given answer options can be placed in the blank to impart a significant meaning to the sentence. However, we have to look for two words that carry the same meaning. Out of all the given answer options, only 'veneration' and 'reverence' are the closest in meaning. This implies that A and D are the correct answers. The other pair of synonyms E---apathy& F---impassivity will not add to the meaning of the sentence. Therefore, they are incorrect.

63. Answer B and E**Explanation:**

On reading the sentence carefully, it seems likely that the missing word could mean 'trust'. Moreover, out of all the given answer options, 'credibility' and 'credence' are the only words that mean the same and are close to 'trust' or 'acceptance' in meaning. Therefore, B and E are the correct answers. Although A—citation & F—excerption are synonyms meaning extracts-they are irrelevant.

64. Answer C and D**Explanation:**

All the answer options are qualities related to leadership and hence, each of them will fit in well with the remaining sentence when placed as the missing word. However, we need

to choose two words that mean the same. Therefore, C and D are the correct answers as they carry the same meaning. The last option F—stalemate—which means an impasse—is a misfit.

65. Answer A and D

Explanation:

As this sentence is referring to a practice which can be traced ages back, it is unlikely that the missing word is related to modernization. Therefore, B, C and E are all incorrect. A and D mean the same and both of them complement the meaning being conveyed by the remaining sentence and hence, A and D are the correct answers. Option F—currency --which not only means specific kind of money but also implies currentness is a variant antonym of A and D.

66. Answer C and E

Explanation:

The words, 'discerned' and 'ascertained' will mean the same when used in the context of the two arguments being discussed. C and E are the correct answers. Option A—annulled & option F—nullified are synonyms but the meaning of the sentence calls for two positive words whereas A & F are negatives.

67. Answer A and D

Explanation:

Out of all the given answer options, the only words that carry the same meaning are 'inducement' and 'incentive'. Therefore, it is evident that A and D are the correct answers. The other pair of synonyms B—impiety & F---sacrilege which mean—gross irreverence—are irrelevant.

68. Answer C and E

Explanation:

The words, 'detested', 'followed' and 'resisted' do not have any synonyms in the given list of answer options; Option F deplored which means to disapprove would be the opposite of the intended meaning. Whereas the words 'attested' and 'affirmed' that imply a positive meaning (C and E) are the correct answers.

69. Answer A and B

Explanation:

C & F are clearly incorrect as the business schools cannot be 'delectable' or 'palatable' at all. E is also incorrect as 'deliberate' is entirely unsuitable as it will render the sentence meaningless. Out of the remaining three answer options, 'detrimental' and 'deleterious' are the only words that carry the same meaning and therefore, A and B are the correct answers.

70. Answer C and E

Explanation:

The missing word has been used to describe the belief that is being discussed. The words, 'prevailing' and 'customary' describe the same aspect of the said belief. None of the other answer options mean the same. This implies that C and E are the correct answers. Options A & F atrocious & abominable which mean appalling or disgusting are misfits.

71. Answer B and E**Explanation:**

As the industry has become highly productive, it is evident that the missing word has a positive connotation. Therefore, the remaining options A, C, D, & F are ruled out. The words, 'harmony' and 'amicability' mean the same and they fit in well with the meaning being conveyed by the sentence as a whole. Therefore, B and E are the correct answers.

72. Answer C and D**Explanation:**

The missing word is describing an aspect related to the dead and the fact that the dead had the power to harm the living is another such aspect. This implies that the missing word cannot mean something close to 'magnanimous' or 'auspicious' or 'benevolent'. Out of the remaining options, 'malevolent' and 'vindictive' are the closest in meaning and therefore, C and D are the correct answers.

73. Answer A and D**Explanation:**

The correct answers will be two words that will render the same meaning to the sentence as a whole. Out of all answer options, 'dogma' and 'belief' are the only two such words. Therefore, A and D are the correct answers. Although B-ambiguity & F-obscure are synonyms, they are misfits

74. Answer B and E**Explanation:**

A careful reading of the sentence suggests that the missing word means something close to crossing. Out of the six answer options, the word that is closest in meaning to 'crossing' is 'transverse'. Therefore, B and E are the correct answers. Options D transpose & F alchemize are synonyms but misfits.

75. Answer C and D**Explanation:**

Out of all the given answer options, 'indubitable' and 'irrefutable' are two words that carry a positive meaning. Although we do have another pair of synonyms --A irrational & F fallacious -both of which mean non-rational, they are misfits. Therefore, C and D are correct.

76. Answer B and D**Explanation:**

Option A is incorrect because it means artificiality. E and C are incorrect as they are misfits. Option F larceny means thievery or embezzlement -- could be accepted as an answer but does not have a matching word. Therefore, B and D are the correct answers as they imply the same meaning.

77. Answer C and E**Explanation:**

A careful reading of the sentence suggests that the missing word is referring to something other than the equation itself or the truth or algebra related to it. Therefore, options A, B and D are all incorrect. 'Terms' and 'conditions' will complete the meaning of the

sentence when placed in the blank and therefore, C and E are the correct answers. Option F catalysts which mean instruments of change is a misfit.

78. Answer B and D

Explanation:

As the missing word is in relation to the reality in the mirror of illusion, the first word that comes to mind is 'reflection'. Among all the given answer options, 'manifestation' is the closest to 'reflection' in meaning. The other pair of synonyms A-restoration & F –restitution which mean recompense or compensation are misfits. Therefore, B and D are the correct answers.

79. Answer A and E

Explanation:

The missing word is referring to something which is not needed because the significance or interpretation of the mystery is very well known. Therefore, it is likely that the missing word is close to 'detailed description' in meaning. Out of the six answer options, 'explanation' and 'elaboration' are the only words that mean the same. Therefore, A and E are the correct answers. Although D-expediency & F –desirability are synonyms meaning suitability, they are inappropriate as answers.

80. Answer B and C

Explanation:

Answer options, A and D are grossly incorrect as placing the words, 'innovates' and 'imbibes' in the blank will create a grammatical as well as a logical error. The options E-intoxicates & F-galvanizes are synonyms but irrelevant to the context in which the word 'contamination' is used. The words, 'inoculates' and 'immunizes' fit in well with the meaning being conveyed by the sentence and hence, B and C are the correct answers.

81. Answer C and E

Explanation:

'Whistle' is clearly an incorrect answer option. 'Mingle' could have been the correct answer, but we have to look for two words that impart the same meaning to the sentence and so in the absence of a synonym for 'mingle' in the given list, B is incorrect. Out of the remaining answer option, the words, 'vie' and 'compete' are closer to one another and therefore, C and E are the correct answers. The other two options D--clash & F—skirmish are related words but incorrect in this context.