

Name: _____ Date: _____

Answer Key: Why Sophisticated 9th Grade Writers Never Just Say 'Good'

Synthesize rhetorical impact and semantic nuance by evaluating how precise adjectival choices transform analytical prose and literary tone.

1. In the sentence 'The candidate's ephemeral popularity vanished after the scandal,' how does the adjective 'ephemeral' function rhetorically?

Answer: B) It establishes a temporal quality, suggesting the popularity was destined to be short-lived.

'Ephemeral' is a descriptive adjective meaning 'lasting for a very short time,' providing crucial context about the nature of the popularity.

2. True or False: In the phrase 'the aforementioned doctrine,' the word 'aforementioned' functions as a demonstrative adjective by identifying a specific noun mentioned previously.

Answer: A) True

'Aforementioned' specifies which noun is being referred to based on prior context, fulfilling the identifying role of a demonstrative adjective.

3. Which set of adjectives best completes this sentence to create a tone of intellectual rigor? 'The professor provided a(n) _____ critique of the _____ theory.'

Answer: B) incisive / antiquated

'Incisive' and 'antiquated' provide precise, academic nuances that 'nice' or 'big' lack, elevating the sentence's register.

4. Consider this phrase: 'The most utilitarian solution.' What is the linguistic function of 'most' in this context?

Answer: C) It is part of a superlative construction for a multi-syllabic adjective.

Because 'utilitarian' has many syllables, it uses 'most' to form the superlative degree rather than adding the suffix '-est'.

5. Choose the adjective that correctly completes the comparison: 'While the first draft was compelling, the second draft was _____ due to its tighter logical structure.'

Answer: A) more compelling

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When comparing two items, the comparative form 'more compelling' must be used.

6. True or False: In legal or formal writing, placing an adjective after the noun it modifies (e.g., 'accounts payable') changes its grammatical category from adjective to adverb.

Answer: B) False

This is called a postpositive adjective; it remains an adjective even though it follows the noun it modifies.

7. Which of the following sentences uses a 'compound adjective' that requires a hyphen for clarity?

Answer: C) He adopted a long term strategy.

'Long-term' acts as a single unit modifying 'strategy' and requires a hyphen when it precedes the noun.

8. The sentence 'The silence was palpable' uses 'palpable' as a(n) _____ adjective.

Answer: B) Predicate

A predicate adjective follows a linking verb ('was') and describes the subject ('silence').

9. Evaluate the use of 'myriad' in this sentence: 'The myriad challenges of space exploration are daunting.' What type of adjective is 'myriad' here?

Answer: A) Quantitative

'Myriad' designates an indefinite but vast quantity, making it a quantitative adjective.

10. True or False: Using 'subjective' adjectives (like 'beautiful') in an academic thesis typically strengthens the objective validity of the argument.

Answer: B) False

Subjective adjectives rely on opinion; academic writing usually favors 'objective' or 'evaluative' adjectives to maintain a formal, evidence-based tone.