1.9 Synonyms and Antonyms: 30-minute Pack

GL ASSESSMENT / CSSE 11+ Entrance English (GL Assessment / CSSE style) · about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

The Keeper of Blackrock Point

Source written for Revision Library (original, copyright-free). Fictional narrative created for 11+ synonym and antonym practice. Any resemblance to real people or places is coincidental.

Maya had never seen a building so ancient. The lighthouse at Blackrock Point rose from the cliff like a solitary tooth, its whitewashed walls scarred by a century of salt wind. She was reluctant to climb the spiral staircase at first, for the old caretaker had warned her that the top step was treacherous, but curiosity soon overcame her caution.

Inside, the air smelled of rust and rain. Cobwebs draped the iron railings like grey lace, and her footsteps echoed in the vast emptiness of the stairwell. Halfway up, she paused to rest, her legs aching, and peered through a narrow window at the churning sea below. Waves battered the rocks with a ferocious energy, throwing spray high into the pale morning sky.

At the summit, the great lamp stood silent, its glass lens dull with dust, though it had once flashed a brilliant warning to sailors for thirty miles around. Maya ran her fingers along the brass fittings, imagining the keeper who had tended this light every night for forty years, utterly devoted to his solitary task. A folded scrap of paper had been wedged behind a pipe, and she eased it free. The message, though faded almost to nothing, was still legible: a single line of verse about the sea's ancient, restless patience.

Maya tucked the fragment into her pocket. As she descended, the ordinary world outside seemed suddenly diminished, as though the lighthouse had granted her a secret she would carry for the rest of her life.

1 In paragraph 2, the writer describes the sea as battering the rocks 'with a ferocious energy', rather than using a plainer synonym such as 'strong energy' or 'powerful energy'. Explain how this word choice affects the reader's impression of the sea. Refer to the word 'ferocious' in your answer.

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(4)

2 The passage uses 'vast' (paragraph 2) to describe the emptiness inside the lighthouse and 'diminished' (paragraph 4) to describe how the ordinary world seems to Maya afterwards. Explain how this contrast between largeness and smallness contributes to the meaning of the final paragraph.

(4)

3 In each group of four words, three are synonyms of each other. Identify the word that does NOT belong.

(a) brave, courageous, timid, valiant **(1)**

(b) huge, tiny, enormous, immense **(1)**

(c) joyful, cheerful, miserable, delighted **(1)**

(d) rapid, swift, quick, sluggish **(1)**

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4 Complete each sentence with an antonym (opposite) of the word given in brackets. The word you choose must make sense in the sentence.

(a) 'The cave was completely dark, unlike the ___ (dim) light outside.' **(1)**

(b) 'After the storm, the sea became ___ (turbulent).' **(1)**

(c) 'Her answer was ___ (vague), leaving no doubt about her meaning.' **(1)**

(d) 'The path was ___ (narrow) enough for three carts to pass side by side.' **(1)**

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5 Match each word below to its antonym (opposite) from this box. Each word in the box is used once only: scarce, strange, reveal, temporary, arrogant, rigid.

(a) ABUNDANT **(1)**

(b) FAMILIAR **(1)**

(c) CONCEAL **(1)**

(d) PERMANENT **(1)**

(e) HUMBLE **(1)**

(f) FLEXIBLE **(1)**

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6 Give one word that means the OPPOSITE of the underlined word, as it is used in the source text.

(a) 'her footsteps echoed in the vast emptiness of the stairwell' (paragraph 2) **(1)**

(b) 'it had once flashed a brilliant warning to sailors' (paragraph 3) **(1)**

(c) 'the ordinary world outside seemed suddenly diminished' (paragraph 4) **(1)**

(d) 'utterly devoted to his solitary task' (paragraph 3) **(1)**

7 Give one synonym (a word with a similar meaning) for each word below, as it is used in the source text.

(a) 'ancient' (paragraph 1: 'Maya had never seen a building so ancient') **(1)**

(b) 'reluctant' (paragraph 1: 'She was reluctant to climb the spiral staircase') **(1)**

(c) 'vast' (paragraph 2: 'her footsteps echoed in the vast emptiness of the stairwell') **(1)**

(d) 'ferocious' (paragraph 2: 'Waves battered the rocks with a ferocious energy') **(1)**

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Mark scheme · 1.9 Synonyms and Antonyms: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

Level 1 A simple or partial comment on the effect of the word, for example that it makes the sea 'sound powerful' or 'scary', without developed explanation of connotation. **1-2**

Level 2 A clear, developed explanation of how 'ferocious' suggests violent, animal-like aggression, creating a vivid and threatening impression of the sea that a plainer synonym would not achieve, with reference to the surrounding text. **3-4**

Indicative content:

- 'Ferocious' has connotations of a wild animal attacking, suggesting the sea has a savage, almost living aggression
- This is a stronger impression than a plain synonym such as 'strong' or 'powerful', which describe force without suggesting danger or violence
- The word choice makes the sea seem threatening and untamed, fitting the isolated, wild setting of the lighthouse
- It heightens the sense of danger already associated with the treacherous staircase Maya climbed earlier

Question 2

Level 1 A simple or partial comment recognising a contrast in size or importance, without full explanation of its effect on meaning. **1-2**

Level 2 A clear explanation of how the contrast between the lighthouse's vastness and the diminished ordinary world shows that Maya's experience has changed her perspective, making everyday life seem smaller and less significant by comparison. **3-4**

Indicative content:

- 'Vast' describes the huge, echoing scale of the lighthouse's interior, suggesting something impressive and larger than everyday experience
- 'Diminished' suggests the ordinary world has shrunk or lessened in importance by comparison
- The contrast shows that Maya's visit to the lighthouse has changed how she sees the everyday world, making it feel smaller and less significant
- This supports the idea that she has gained a new, private perspective or 'secret' that separates her from ordinary experience

Question 3

(a) timid cao **B1**

(a) Answer: timid

(b) tiny cao **B1**

(b) Answer: tiny

(c) miserable cao **B1**

(c) Answer: miserable

(d) sluggish cao **B1**

(d) Answer: sluggish

Question 4

(a) accept bright, brilliant or radiant oe **B1**

(a) Answer: bright (accept brilliant / radiant)

(b) accept calm, still or tranquil oe **B1**

(b) Answer: calm (accept still / tranquil)

(c) accept precise, clear or exact oe **B1**

(c) Answer: precise (accept clear / exact)

(d) accept wide or broad oe **B1**

(d) Answer: wide (accept broad)

Question 5

(a) scarce cao **B1**

(a) Answer: scarce

(b) strange cao **B1**

(b) Answer: strange

(c) reveal cao **B1**

(c) Answer: reveal

(d) temporary cao **B1**

(d) Answer: temporary

(e) arrogant cao **B1**

(e) Answer: arrogant

(f) rigid cao **B1**

(f) Answer: rigid

Question 6

(a) accept tiny, small or cramped oe **B1**

(a) Answer: tiny (accept small / cramped)

(b) accept dull or dim oe **B1**

(b) Answer: dull (accept dim)

(c) accept extraordinary, remarkable or unusual oe **B1**

(c) Answer: extraordinary (accept remarkable / unusual)

(d) accept accompanied, shared or sociable oe **B1**

(d) Answer: accompanied (accept shared / sociable)

Question 7

(a) accept old, aged, age-old or venerable oe **B1**

(a) Answer: old (accept aged / age-old / venerable)

(b) accept unwilling, hesitant, loath or disinclined oe **B1**

(b) Answer: unwilling (accept hesitant / loath / disinclined)

(c) accept huge, immense, enormous or extensive oe **B1**

(c) Answer: huge (accept immense / enormous / extensive)

(d) accept fierce, savage, violent or intense oe **B1**

(d) Answer: fierce (accept savage / violent / intense)

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