3.4 Vocabulary for Impact Synonyms: Test Pack

about 20 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 The word groups below share a similar core meaning (denotation), but each word carries a different connotation. For each group, identify the word with the most POSITIVE connotation.

(a) (describing someone thin) **(1)**

- ☐ A) slender
- ☐ B) skinny
- ☐ C) gaunt

(b) (describing someone talkative) **(1)**

- ☐ A) garrulous
- ☐ B) chatty
- ☐ C) gossipy

(c) (describing someone careful with money) **(1)**

- ☐ A) frugal
- ☐ B) stingy
- ☐ C) tight-fisted

(d) (describing someone widely known) **(1)**

- ☐ A) renowned
- ☐ B) notorious
- ☐ C) infamous

(e) (describing someone brave) **(1)**

- ☐ A) courageous
- ☐ B) reckless
- ☐ C) foolhardy

(Total for Question 1 is 5 marks)

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2 Read each short extract below and explain the effect of the underlined word choice on the reader.

(a) 'The old dog no longer bounded across the field; now it SHUFFLED, pausing every few steps to catch its breath.' Explain the effect of the word 'shuffled'. **(2)**

(b) 'She did not just disagree with the plan; she DETONATED, her fury filling the small office within seconds.' Explain the effect of the word 'detonated'. **(2)**

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

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3 Replace the vague, overused word shown in brackets in each sentence with a single word that is more precise and has more impact. Any suitable word that fits the meaning and register of the sentence is acceptable.

(a) The film was [nice]. **(1)**

(b) She [walked] into the room. **(1)**

(c) It was a [big] storm. **(1)**

(d) He felt [bad] about what he had done. **(1)**

(e) The food tasted [good]. **(1)**

(Total for Question 3 is 5 marks)

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4 Read the two versions of the same idea below.

Bland version: 'The old car was noisy and slow.'

Vivid version: 'The old car groaned and juddered along the lane, wheezing like a tired animal that had long since given up hope of a rest.'

Evaluate how effectively the vocabulary choices in the vivid version create impact for the reader, compared with the bland version.

(Total for Question 4 is 8 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.4 Vocabulary for Impact Synonyms: Test Pack

Question 1

(a) A) slender **B1**

(a) Answer: A

(b) B) chatty **B1**

(b) Answer: B

(c) A) frugal **B1**

(c) Answer: A

(d) A) renowned **B1**

(d) Answer: A

(e) A) courageous **B1**

(e) Answer: A

Question 2

(a) identifies a straightforward idea, e.g. the dog moves slowly, weakly or with dragging steps (oe) **1 mark**

(a) develops this with reference to connotations and contrast, e.g. 'shuffled' contrasts sharply with the earlier 'bounded', suggesting the dog's age and weakness, and creating a sense of sad decline in the reader (oe) **1 mark**

(a) Answer: 'Shuffled' suggests slow, dragging, effortful movement, and its contrast with the earlier 'bounded' emphasises the dog's age and physical decline, creating a sense of sadness in the reader.

(b) identifies a straightforward idea, e.g. her reaction was sudden and explosive (oe) **1 mark**

(b) develops this with reference to connotations, e.g. 'detonated' compares her anger to a bomb exploding, suggesting an overwhelming, uncontrollable reaction that is far more dramatic and violent than simply 'got angry' (oe) **1 mark**

(b) Answer: 'Detonated' compares her reaction to an explosion, suggesting a sudden, overwhelming and uncontrollable outburst of fury that feels far more dramatic and violent than a plain phrase such as 'got angry'.

Question 3

(a) any single word that is more precise/impactful than 'nice' and fits the sentence, e.g. captivating, gripping, mesmerising (oe) **B1**

(a) Answer: e.g. captivating / gripping / mesmerising

(b) any single word that is more precise/impactful than 'walked' and fits the sentence, e.g. strode, marched, crept (oe) **B1**

(b) Answer: e.g. strode / marched / crept

(c) any single word that is more precise/impactful than 'big' and fits the sentence, e.g. ferocious, violent, relentless (oe) **B1**

(c) Answer: e.g. ferocious / violent / relentless

(d) any single word that is more precise/impactful than 'bad' and fits the sentence, e.g. remorseful, ashamed, guilty (oe) **B1**

(d) Answer: e.g. remorseful / ashamed / guilty

(e) any single word that is more precise/impactful than 'good' and fits the sentence, e.g. delicious, exquisite, mouth-watering (oe) **B1**

(e) Answer: e.g. delicious / exquisite / mouth-watering

Question 4

Level 1 Simple, undeveloped evaluation, with little or no reference to specific vocabulary choices. **1-2**

Level 2 Some relevant evaluation of vocabulary choices, with limited supporting reference to the text. **3-4**

Level 3 Clear, developed evaluation of specific vocabulary choices and their effect, supported by well-chosen references to both versions. **5-6**

Level 4 Detailed and perceptive evaluation, exploring precisely how each vocabulary choice contributes to impact, with sustained and justified critical judgement. **7-8**

Indicative content:

- 'groaned' and 'juddered' personify the car with sounds and movements associated with pain or age, far more evocative than the flat adjectives 'noisy' and 'slow'.
- The simile 'wheezing like a tired animal' extends the personification, comparing the car's condition to a living creature, which builds sympathy and vivid sensory impact.
- 'given up hope of a rest' develops the personification further, adding a sense of weary resignation absent from the bland version.
- A balanced evaluation might note that the vivid version's sustained personification (groaned, juddered, wheezing, given up hope) works cumulatively, rather than any single word carrying the impact alone.
- The strongest evaluations reach a clear, justified judgement about effectiveness, rather than simply describing the differences between the two versions.

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