3.5 Antonyms and Contrast: 30-minute Pack

about 30 minutes

Total Marks

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

The Workshop and the Kitchen

Source written for Revision Library (original, copyright-free). Written specifically for this worksheet as a short reflective narrative extract for practising contrast as a rhetorical and structural device.

My grandfather's workshop stood at the bottom of the garden, a low brick building with a green door that never quite closed. Inside, everything had a place: chisels hung in size order along one wall, jam jars of screws stood labelled and dust-free on a shelf, and the single window let in a steady, even light that never seemed to change with the weather outside. He worked without hurry, sanding a table leg for twenty minutes at a time, stopping only to hold it up to that grey window light and turn it, slowly, in his enormous, patient hands.

Fifty feet away, through the back door and across the yard, the kitchen was a different country entirely. Three radios and two televisions competed for attention from separate rooms; my mother shouted timings up the stairs while my brother shouted louder replies back down; toast burned, unnoticed, under a grill nobody was watching. Where the workshop offered silence you could almost touch, the kitchen offered a noise that never fully stopped, only rose and fell, rose and fell, like a tide that had forgotten how to go out.

My grandfather built things that were made to last a hundred years; my family, it sometimes seemed to me, built nothing except noise, and even that only lasted until the next noise arrived to replace it. And yet I loved both rooms without contradiction, the way you can love winter and summer, or silence and music, without ever wanting to choose between them for good.

It was in the workshop, aged eleven, that I first understood what my grandfather meant when he said that a good joint holds two different pieces of wood together without either one losing its own grain. Stillness and hurry, I have since decided, can be joined in exactly the same way. I have spent every year since trying to build the joint myself: one foot in the workshop's patient quiet, the other in the kitchen's endless, overlapping noise, and somehow, most days, still standing.

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1 Look at these four extracts based on the source text. Identify which contrast technique each one demonstrates. Choose from: antithesis (a single sentence built from two grammatically balanced, opposing halves), juxtaposition (two contrasting images or ideas placed side by side, without being directly linked by a connective), oppositional imagery (a pattern of images that oppose each other across a whole text, such as light and dark, or noise and silence), or a contrastive connective (a linking word or phrase that signals a shift into contrast, such as however or whereas).

(a) 'My grandfather built things that were made to last a hundred years; my family... built nothing except noise.' **(1)**

(b) The whole of paragraph one (the calm, ordered workshop) placed immediately before paragraph two (the noisy, chaotic kitchen), with no comment linking them. **(1)**

(c) The word 'Where' at the start of 'Where the workshop offered silence you could almost touch, the kitchen offered a noise that never fully stopped.' **(1)**

(d) The recurring pairs of silence and noise, stillness and hurry, and permanence and impermanence that run from the opening paragraph to the closing paragraph. **(1)**

(Total for Question 1 is 4 marks)

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2 Explain how the structure of the whole text creates a sense of contrast between the two rooms.

(Total for Question 2 is 4 marks)

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3 Write two short sentences of your own that create contrast through juxtaposition alone (placing two contrasting images next to each other, with no connecting word such as 'but', 'however' or 'whereas') on the theme of a busy train station at rush hour and an empty platform at midnight.

(Total for Question 3 is 2 marks)

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4 This sentence contains a contrast, but the two halves are not grammatically balanced. Rewrite it as a single, concise sentence of antithesis with two parallel halves: 'He liked to work slowly and carefully, but his sister was always in a massive rush and getting stressed out about everything.'

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

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5 Write a pair of contrasting image-based sentences (one built around light, one built around dark) that could open and close a paragraph about a stormy night, without ever using the words 'light' or 'dark' themselves.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

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6 This sentence is meant to be an antithesis, but the two halves are not grammatically parallel. Identify the problem, then rewrite the sentence so both halves match: 'My grandfather worked with endless patience, while my family was always rushing around and never seemed to calm down.'

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

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7 Read this short paragraph, which is trying to contrast two houses but does so weakly.

'The house was old. It had been in the family for years. It was quiet and slow. There was also a new estate nearby. People there had modern kitchens and new cars. It was quite different really.'

Identify one structural weakness in how this paragraph handles contrast, then rewrite it so that the contrast between the two houses is made clear and deliberate, using a clear pivot point and a contrastive connective.

(Total for Question 7 is 4 marks)

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8 Below is a paragraph with several errors of punctuation and capitalisation. Rewrite it correctly, correcting every error you can find.

'the workshop was calm however the kitchen was loud my grandfather never seemed to mind the noise on the other hand my mother found the silence of the workshop strange.'

(Total for Question 8 is 6 marks)

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9 Write your own single sentence of antithesis on ONE of the following themes: two generations of the same family; two seasons; or two versions of the same place, years apart. Make sure the two halves of your sentence are grammatically parallel.

(Total for Question 9 is 2 marks)

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10 Read this short extract, written for this exercise.

'The old man walked as though each step cost him something he could not afford to lose; the child beside him ran in circles, spending energy like a currency that would never run out.'

Analyse how the writer uses contrast to convey the difference between the old man and the child in this extract.

(Total for Question 10 is 8 marks)

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Mark scheme · 3.5 Antonyms and Contrast: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

(a) antithesis **B1**

(a) Answer: Antithesis

(b) juxtaposition **B1**

(b) Answer: Juxtaposition

(c) a contrastive connective **B1**

(c) Answer: A contrastive connective

(d) oppositional imagery **B1**

(d) Answer: Oppositional imagery

Question 2

identifies that paragraph one is devoted entirely to the calm, ordered workshop before the kitchen is mentioned at all **B1**

identifies that paragraph two opens with a structural pivot ('Fifty feet away... a different country entirely'), placing the kitchen directly against the already-established workshop **B1**

identifies that paragraph three makes the contrast explicit through direct antithesis, before undercutting it with the turn 'And yet I loved both rooms without contradiction' **B1**

identifies that the final paragraph resolves the contrast through the extended joint metaphor, structurally uniting the two opposing rooms rather than leaving them opposed **B1**

Answer: The text is structured so paragraph one establishes the workshop alone, paragraph two pivots sharply into the contrasting kitchen, paragraph three states the contrast directly before undercutting it with 'And yet', and the final paragraph resolves the opposition through the extended metaphor of the joined wooden joint.

Question 3

two sentences are given that clearly contrast in image, mood or activity **B1**

no explicit contrastive connective is used between the two sentences, so the contrast is created purely by their placement, cao **B1**

Answer: Sample answer (indicative, not the only acceptable response): 'At rush hour, the station roared with announcements, wheeled suitcases and shouted goodbyes. At midnight, a single pigeon walked the length of the empty platform, and nobody was there to notice.'

Question 4

identifies/removes the wordy, unbalanced second half of the original sentence **B1**

correct concise rewrite in which both halves share the same grammatical structure, cao **B1**

Answer: He worked slowly and carefully; his sister worked quickly and carelessly.

Question 5

one sentence creates a clear image suggesting light (e.g. through brightness, colour, visibility) without naming the word 'light' **B1**

one sentence creates a clear image suggesting dark (e.g. through shadow, dimness, colour) without naming the word 'dark', and the two sentences oppose one another, cao **B1**

Answer: Sample answer (indicative, not the only acceptable response): 'Lightning split the sky into a hundred white cracks, and for a second the whole street stood revealed.' Then: 'By morning, every window was a dull grey square, and the street had folded itself back into shadow.'

Question 6

identifies that the first half is a short, concise phrase ('with endless patience') while the second half is a long, loosely structured clause, breaking the balance **B1**

correct rewrite in which both halves share the same concise grammatical structure, cao **B1**

Answer: My grandfather worked with endless patience; my family lived with endless noise.

Question 7

identifies that the two houses are simply listed one after another as separate facts, rather than being deliberately opposed **B1**

identifies that the contrast is only announced at the very end ('It was quite different really') instead of being signalled clearly at the point where the second house is introduced **B1**

rewrite introduces a clear structural pivot at the point the new estate is introduced (e.g. beginning that sentence with a contrastive connective) **B1**

rewrite is fluent and grammatically correct throughout, with the contrast now clearly signalled rather than left implicit, cao **B1**

Answer: Sample answer (indicative, not the only acceptable response): 'The house was old, quiet and slow, and had belonged to the family for years. In contrast, the new estate nearby was full of modern kitchens and new cars, a different world only a street away.'

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Question 8

Level 0 No accurate corrections made; errors remain uncorrected or new errors introduced. **0**

Level 1 One or two errors corrected (e.g. the opening capital letter), with limited overall accuracy. **1-2**

Level 2 Most errors corrected, including at least one connective correctly punctuated, with generally secure sentence demarcation. **3-4**

Level 3 All errors corrected accurately, demonstrating secure control of sentence demarcation and connective punctuation throughout. **5-6**

Indicative content:

- Capital letter added for 'The' at the start of the sentence
- Sentence boundary (full stop or semicolon) inserted before 'however', with a comma after it: '...calm; however, the kitchen...'
- Sentence boundary inserted before 'my grandfather', since 'the workshop was calm however the kitchen was loud' and 'my grandfather never seemed to mind the noise' are separate ideas run together
- Sentence boundary and comma correctly added around 'on the other hand', which introduces the final contrasting idea about the mother
- Overall rewrite reads as three or four clearly demarcated sentences rather than one long, unpunctuated run-on

Question 9

the sentence expresses a clear, genuine opposition between its two halves **B1**

the two halves are grammatically parallel and correctly punctuated (e.g. with a semicolon, or a comma before a coordinating conjunction), cao **B1**

Answer: Sample answer (indicative, not the only acceptable response): 'My grandmother remembers a village with one telephone; my niece has never known a moment without one in her pocket.'

Question 10

Level 1 Simple, limited identification of the contrast, with little or no use of subject terminology. **1-2**

Level 2 Some relevant identification of the contrast, with some use of subject terminology and some comment on effect. **3-4**

Level 3 Clear explanation of how the writer's methods create contrast, using relevant subject terminology accurately, with clear comment on effect. **5-6**

Level 4 Detailed and perceptive analysis of the methods used to create contrast, using precise subject terminology, exploring the effect on the reader in depth. **7-8**

Indicative content:

- The sentence is built as antithesis, with two grammatically balanced independent clauses joined by a semicolon, giving both figures equal grammatical weight despite their opposite states.
- The extended financial metaphor of 'currency' running through both halves (cost he could not afford to lose / spending energy... that would never run out) creates oppositional imagery of scarcity versus abundance.
- The verb choices contrast physical states: 'walked' (slow, effortful) against 'ran in circles' (energetic, repetitive, purposeless), reinforcing age against youth.
- The circular structure of the child's movement ('ran in circles') can be read as a structural echo of endlessness, opposing the linear, diminishing image of the old man's countable, costly steps.
- The single sentence structure (rather than two separate sentences) suggests the two figures, though opposite, are inseparably linked, walking side by side even as they experience the walk in entirely different ways.

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