7.6 Antonyms and Nuance: 30-minute Pack

about 30 minutes

Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / _____

Answer ALL questions.

1 The words 'slim' and 'skinny' can both function as antonyms of 'plump', but they create very different impressions of a person. Explain the difference in connotation between describing someone as slim and describing them as skinny.

(2)

2 Rewrite this sentence, replacing 'unhelpful' with a more precise antonym of 'helpful' so that the manager sounds harshly critical rather than just mildly negative: 'The manager was unhelpful when we asked for extra time.'

(2)

3 Which sentence uses the most precisely nuanced antonym for 'polite' to describe someone who is aggressively disrespectful, rather than just plainly rude?

- [ ] A) The customer was impolite.
- [ ] B) The customer was blunt.
- [ ] C) The customer was rude.
- [ ] D) The customer was insolent.

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4 Each sentence below uses an antonym or negative word that does not fit its context or register. Identify the problem and suggest a better word.

(a) The five-star restaurant's dessert was not nice. **(1)**

(b) The soldier's actions were described as very brave, but really he was un-brave. **(1)**

(c) Despite the tragic news, she felt very unsad. **(1)**

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5 Identify and correct the error in this sentence: 'The plan was very unlegal, so the council rejected it.'

(2)

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6 Below is a paragraph from a theatre review with several vague or wrongly formed word choices. Rewrite it, replacing each underlined issue with a more precise, correctly formed antonym or word choice, so the review shows real control of nuance.

'The critics said the play's ending was very not good and left the audience feeling flat. One reviewer called the acting inconvincing, while another said the set design was unenergy and lifeless. The director disagreed, insisting the show was the total opposite of borING and that ticket sales had been very not bad.'

(6)

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7 Which pair of words is a genuine pair of antonyms, rather than a pair of synonyms or two unrelated words?

- ☐ A) start / begin
- ☐ B) huge / gigantic
- ☐ C) ancient / modern
- ☐ D) quick / rapid

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8 Write two short paragraphs (approximately 40-50 words each) describing the SAME cafe: once making it sound wonderful, and once making it sound terrible. Change only your word choices, using precise antonyms and near-antonyms rather than simply adding 'not' or 'very' (for example: spacious / cramped, welcoming / hostile, fragrant / fetid). Underline at least four antonym pairs used across your two paragraphs.

(10)

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9 Many antonyms are formed by adding a negative prefix to a word. Add the correct negative prefix from the word bank to each word below to form its antonym. Each prefix is used exactly once.

un-	**in-**	**im-**	**il-**
ir-	dis-	non-	mis-

(a) happy **(1)**

(b) correct **(1)**

(c) possible **(1)**

(d) legal **(1)**

(e) responsible **(1)**

(f) honest **(1)**

(g) fiction **(1)**

(h) understand **(1)**

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10 Which word correctly uses a negative prefix to form the antonym of 'possible'?

- [ ] A) unpossible
- [ ] B) inpossible
- [ ] C) impossible
- [ ] D) dispossible

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11 Each sentence below needs the antonym or near-antonym that best matches its context and tone. Choose the best word from the options given.

(a) The chef's failed dessert was, frankly, ___ (the opposite of delicious). **(1)**

- [ ] A) unpleasant
- [ ] B) disgusting
- [ ] C) not very nice

(b) Unlike his boisterous brother, Tom was remarkably ___ (the opposite of loud and outgoing). **(1)**

- [ ] A) silent
- [ ] B) reserved
- [ ] C) mute

(c) The politician's speech felt ___ (the opposite of genuine) - full of empty promises. **(1)**

- [ ] A) untrue
- [ ] B) insincere
- [ ] C) wrong

(d) After the marathon, the runner felt ___ (the opposite of energetic) and could barely stand. **(1)**

- [ ] A) unfit
- [ ] B) exhausted
- [ ] C) weak

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Mark scheme · 7.6 Antonyms and Nuance: 30-minute Pack

Question 1

identifies that 'slim' has a positive or flattering connotation, suggesting an attractively slender build — **B1**

identifies that 'skinny' has a negative connotation, suggesting an unhealthily or unattractively thin build (oe) — **B1**

Answer: **'Slim' has a positive, flattering connotation, suggesting an attractively slender build, whereas 'skinny' has a negative connotation, suggesting a build that is unhealthily or unattractively thin.**

Question 2

replaces 'unhelpful' with a more precise, harshly negative antonym/near-antonym, e.g. obstructive, dismissive, uncooperative (oe) — **B1**

resulting sentence is grammatically complete and correctly punctuated, cao — **B1**

Answer: **The manager was obstructive when we asked for extra time.**

Question 3

D — **B1**

Answer: **D**

Question 4

(a) identifies that 'not nice' is too vague and informal for a restaurant review, and replaces it with a precise antonym such as disappointing/underwhelming/mediocre (oe) — **B1**

(a) Answer: **disappointing**

(b) identifies that 'un-brave' is not a standard English word, and replaces it with the correct antonym 'cowardly' (oe) — **B1**

(b) Answer: **cowardly**

(c) identifies that 'unsad' is not a standard English word, and replaces it with a suitable word such as indifferent/unmoved/unaffected (oe) — **B1**

(c) Answer: **unmoved**

Question 5

identifies that 'unlegal' is not a real negative prefix form; 'legal' takes the prefix il-, not un- — **B1**

correct rewrite: The plan was illegal, so the council rejected it, cao — **B1**

Answer: **The plan was illegal, so the council rejected it.**

Question 6

Level 0 No accurate corrections made; vague phrases and invented words remain uncorrected, or new errors are introduced. — **0**

Level 1 One or two vague phrases or invented words replaced with more precise antonyms, with limited overall accuracy. — **1-2**

Level 2 Most vague phrases and invented words replaced with reasonably precise antonyms, with generally secure spelling and capitalisation. — **3-4**

Level 3 All vague phrases and invented words replaced with precise, well-chosen antonyms that show a clear sense of nuance and register throughout. — **5-6**

Indicative content:

- 'very not good' replaced with a single precise antonym, e.g. disappointing/poor, avoiding the vague double negative
- 'inconvincing' corrected to the standard prefix form 'unconvincing'
- 'unenergy' (an invalid word formation) replaced with a precise adjective, e.g. lifeless/flat
- the random mid-word capital in 'borING' corrected, and the vague phrase 'total opposite of boring' replaced with a precise antonym, e.g. captivating/riveting
- 'very not bad' replaced with a single precise antonym, e.g. strong/healthy, avoiding the vague double negative
- overall rewrite is fluent, uses precisely chosen antonyms throughout, and maintains a consistent, appropriately critical review register

Question 7

C — **B1**

Answer: **C**

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Question 8

AO5: Content and organisation (AO5)

Level 1 Simple description of the cafe; little sense of two genuinely contrasting versions or clear organisation. **1-2**

Level 2 Some relevant, engaging description of the cafe in both versions; ideas are mostly sequenced clearly, with a reasonable sense of contrast. **3-4**

Level 3 Clear, engaging and convincing description of the cafe in both versions, with a genuinely striking contrast between them; well organised throughout. **5-6**

AO6: Technical accuracy (precision and range of antonym choices) (AO6)

Level 1 Limited accuracy; fewer than four antonym pairs are used, or the contrast relies mainly on adding 'not' or 'very' rather than precise word choice. **1**

Level 2 At least four antonym pairs are used, mostly precisely and accurately, with occasional reliance on vague intensifiers. **2-3**

Level 3 At least four different, precisely chosen antonym pairs are used, clearly marked and consistently accurate, creating a controlled, effective contrast throughout. **4**

Indicative content:

- Both paragraphs describe recognisably the same cafe (same layout, staff, food), differing only in the writer's word choices
- At least four antonym pairs are used across the two paragraphs, precisely chosen rather than formed with 'not' or 'very'
- Positive paragraph uses words with clearly favourable connotation (e.g. welcoming, fragrant, spacious)
- Negative paragraph uses words with clearly unfavourable connotation (e.g. hostile, fetid, cramped)
- Each paragraph is coherently organised and roughly matches the target word count
- A genuine, controlled sense of contrast is created through precise vocabulary rather than simple negation

Question 9

(a) unhappy, cao **B1**

(a) Answer: **unhappy**

(b) incorrect, cao **B1**

(b) Answer: **incorrect**

(c) impossible, cao **B1**

(c) Answer: **impossible**

(d) illegal, cao **B1**

(d) Answer: **illegal**

(e) irresponsible, cao **B1**

(e) Answer: **irresponsible**

(f) dishonest, cao **B1**

(f) Answer: **dishonest**

(g) non-fiction, cao **B1**

(g) Answer: **non-fiction**

(h) misunderstand, cao **B1**

(h) Answer: **misunderstand**

Question 10

C **B1**

Answer: **C**

Question 11

(a) B **B1**

(a) Answer: **B**

(b) B **B1**

(b) Answer: **B**

(c) B **B1**

(c) Answer: **B**

(d) B **B1**

(d) Answer: **B**

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