Vocabulary Skill Check

Grade 10 · Meaning from context · Try 1

Name or code _____ Date _____

Read each passage. Circle the letter that gives the best meaning in that passage.

Passage 1

I had practiced defending our original route so often that I could repeat the argument while washing dishes. The new measurements sat beside my notebook, and I kept glancing at them as if the numbers might rearrange themselves.

The wider displays could not pass through the doorway our route required. My partner asked whether our position was still **tenable**. Our earlier reasoning had depended on dimensions we had copied incorrectly. Repeating the argument with greater confidence would not make those dimensions fit.

“We can keep the destination,” my partner said, moving a ruler across the map. I wanted the group to know how much work I had done, but I also wanted the exhibition to reach the hall.

I crossed out the disputed entrance and began sketching the longer corridor. The erased line remained faintly visible beneath the new path, which finally matched the measurements on the table.

1. What does “tenable” most nearly mean in this passage?

Circle ONE letter.

A defensible in light of the available evidence

B widely accepted without examination

C brief enough to explain without supporting details

D guaranteed to remain true under every condition

Passage 2

I arrived at the first planning meeting carrying the camera I had promised to lend. By the end, I had somehow been assigned the interviews, editing and every equipment delivery.

I needed to separate lending equipment from accepting responsibility for the entire production. Those tasks had different demands, and nobody had asked whether I had time for all of them. My sister asked me to **delineate** what I had actually agreed to do before resentment replaced my original excitement. A vague promise to help had expanded each time another person mentioned an unfinished job.

“Write the boundaries before you argue about them,” she said, turning my notebook to a clean page. I listed the original offer, then the additional tasks that still needed someone to accept them.

At the next meeting, I placed the list beside the camera case. The conversation began with the duties on the page rather than the anger I had rehearsed on the way there.

2. What does “delineate” most nearly mean in this passage?

Circle ONE letter.

A erase distinctions to produce one broad category

B hint at the topic without detail

C defend a preference while avoiding its practical limits

D describe the boundaries or features clearly

Passage 3

At the rehearsal schedule meeting, the student designer argued for an additional evening in the hall. The coordinator explained that another group already held the booking. The designer examined the calendar.

He stopped objecting and accepted the earlier finish without pretending that he preferred it. The decision did not mean that the missing time had become unimportant. It meant that he would work within an arrangement he had been unable to change.

His decision to **acquiesce** left the unfinished work in his notes, not in the approved schedule. The group shortened one scene transition and moved part of its practice to a classroom. The designer helped revise the list, then asked that future schedules include planning time before dates were promised.

When the meeting ended, he copied the approved hours onto the workshop door. His original request remained clipped beneath the calendar rather than being torn up or crossed out.

3. Which meaning of “acquiesce” fits the writer’s account?

Circle ONE letter.

A approve enthusiastically after winning agreement

B withdraw entirely without accepting any terms

C accept reluctantly without continuing to resist

D pretend not to understand the decision being discussed

Passage 4

I waited outside the rehearsal room with the acceptance form folded into a narrow strip. My partner had promised to tell me whether he would join the festival entry. He balanced his instrument case against the wall while I explained the deadline. His **equivocal** reply sounded encouraging until I tried to write down exactly what he had agreed to do. Without his decision, I could not tell the organizer how many performers to expect.

He praised the idea but left my direct request for a commitment unanswered. I could have mistaken his enthusiasm for a promise, yet the space for his signature remained empty between us. “I need an answer before I send this,” I said, smoothing the paper against the case. He asked for one more evening to decide, and I penciled a reminder beside the submission date.

4. As used here, “equivocal” suggests which meaning?

Circle ONE letter.

A clearly promising to join the performance

B flatly refusing to take part in the performance

C lacking key facts needed to understand the offer

D unclear about the position being taken

Passage 5

The auditorium echoed whenever the debate team rehearsed. Our coach brought several movable screens from the storage room on Friday. She hoped the arrangement would **mitigate** the problem before the visiting team arrived for the practice exchange. Until then, I had kept rubbing a sore place behind my ear after trying to hear my partner over the returning sound. I had agreed to present the opening argument, which depended on the audience hearing clearly.

At rehearsal, I could follow the argument without asking for every sentence to be repeated. Voices still echoed at the far end of the hall, so nobody claimed that the room had become quiet.

“Leave the center aisle open,” the coach reminded us as we adjusted the last screen. I marked the useful positions on our room sketch, then helped return the unused stands to the cupboard.

5. What does “mitigate” most nearly mean in this passage?

Circle ONE letter.

A hide the problem from public attention

B make an adverse effect less severe

C accept the harm as unavoidable

D remove all sources of a problem at once

Passage 6

The school archive displayed a sequence of photographs showing the same public square over several decades. Students compared the images while preparing captions for a small exhibition. The captions were due that afternoon, and an inaccurate date would be difficult to correct later. An archivist placed a handwritten list of dates beside the photographs on the table. One photograph drew their attention.

Its building arrangement differed from every photograph assigned to the same period. A closer examination also revealed a shop sign associated with a later renovation, giving the students a reason to check the label rather than accept it.

That image appeared **anomalous** within the sequence, although its label looked as convincing as the others. The archivist asked them to search for a second copy before replacing the date. They carried the image to the reading desk, where a padded stand held the next box of photographs.

6. Which meaning of “anomalous” fits the writer’s account?

Circle ONE letter.

A inconsistent with the surrounding pattern

B consistent with its assigned date

C typical of the other photographs

D confirmed by several independent copies or records

Teacher use: ____ / 6