ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Barron's 1100 Words You Need to Know (MCQ Test + PDF) Week 2 – Day 1

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Explanations

1. **TO THE POINT**
Calvin Coolidge, our thirtieth president, was named "Silent Cal" by reporters because of his **laconic** speech. One Sunday, after Mr. Coolidge had listened to an interminable sermon, a **throng** of newsmen gathered around him.
An **intrepid** reporter **accosted** the Chief Executive: "Mr. President, we know that the sermon was on the topic of sin. What did the minister say?" "He was against it," the **reticent** Coolidge replied.

Sample Sentences: Use the new words in the following sentences:

His speech was usually rambling, but this time I found it brief and _____.
✓ **D) laconic**
Laconic means using very few words but saying a lot. The clue is the contrast: his speech was usually **rambling** (long and wandering), but this time it was **brief and laconic**. In the passage, Coolidge is called "Silent Cal" because of his **laconic** speech. Not **reticent**, because that describes a person who does not want to talk, not a short, clear speech.

2. **If a surly panhandler should _____ you, keep on walking.**
✓ **A) accost**
Accost is a verb that means to come up to someone and speak to them, often in a bold or unwelcome way. The gap needs a verb after **should**, and only **accost** is a verb here. In the passage, an intrepid reporter **accosted** the President. Example: **A stranger accosted me in the street.**

3. **Even under repeated questioning, the witness remained _____.**
✓ **E) reticent**
Reticent means silent or unwilling to say much, especially about yourself or what you know. The clue is **even under repeated questioning**: the witness kept refusing to talk. Not **laconic**, because that means saying a lot in few words, while this witness did not want to say anything at all.

4. **A howling _____ of teenage girls surrounded the rap artists.**
✓ **C) throng**
Throng is a noun that means a large crowd of people. The structure **a howling _____ of teenage girls** needs a noun for a group. In the passage, **a throng of newsmen** gathered around Coolidge. Example: **A throng of fans waited outside the stadium.**

5. **The corporal received the Silver Star for his _____ deeds in combat.**
✓ **B) intrepid**
Intrepid means very brave and fearless. The clue is that the corporal received a medal, the Silver Star, for his deeds in combat, so they must have been brave. In the passage, an **intrepid** reporter boldly stopped the President to ask a question.

6. **Definitions:** Match the new words with their dictionary meanings.

laconic
✓ **A) expressing much in few words**
Laconic means expressing much in few words. Coolidge's two-word answer, "He was against it," is a perfect example of a **laconic** reply. Not **silent**: that is the meaning of **reticent**.

7. **throng**
✓ **D) crowd**
Throng means a crowd, a large number of people gathered together. Example from the passage: **a throng of newsmen gathered around him**.

8. **intrepid**
✓ **B) brave**
Intrepid means brave or fearless. Example: **an intrepid reporter** is not afraid to stop the President and ask him a question.

9. **accost**
✓ **C) to approach and speak to**
Accost means to approach someone and speak to them, often boldly. Example from the passage: **An intrepid reporter accosted the Chief Executive.**

10. **reticent**
✓ **E) silent**
Reticent means silent or unwilling to talk much. Example from the passage: **the reticent Coolidge** gave only a very short answer. Not **expressing much in few words**: that is the meaning of **laconic**.