ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Verbal Advantage – Level 09 Word 31 – Word 40 MCQ Test

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1	B	2	A	3	C	4	C	5	C	6	B	7	C	8	C	9	B	10	A

Explanations

1. ***Dilatory*** does NOT mean _____.
✓ **B) unwilling**
Dilatory means slow to act, causing delay, so it does mean **delaying** or **procrastinating**: **a dilatory response to the complaint**. It does not mean **unwilling**. A dilatory person may be perfectly willing but simply puts things off.

2. To ***vilify*** does NOT mean to _____.
✓ **A) expose**
To **vilify** is to speak or write about someone in an abusive, damaging way, so it does mean to **slander** or **defame**: **The press vilified the minister.** It does not mean to **expose**. Exposing reveals hidden facts, which may be true, while vilifying is malicious abuse whether or not anything is revealed.

3. ***Phlegmatic*** does NOT mean _____.
✓ **C) tedious and boring**
Phlegmatic describes a person who is **calm and unemotional**, not easily excited. In an older, more negative sense, it can also mean **sluggish and apathetic**. It describes a temperament, not a task or a text, so it does not mean **tedious and boring**: **his phlegmatic reaction to the bad news**.

4. ***Adventitious*** does NOT mean _____.
✓ **C) happening at the right time**
Adventitious means coming from outside, **not belonging naturally**, or **accidentally acquired**: **adventitious roots**, **an adventitious advantage**. It does not mean **happening at the right time**. That is **opportune** or **timely**. Learners may confuse it with **advantageous**.

5. ***Desiccated*** does NOT mean _____.
✓ **C) defunct**
Desiccated means having had all moisture removed, so it does mean **dehydrated** or **dried up**: **desiccated coconut**. It does not mean **defunct**, which means no longer existing or working: **a defunct company**.

6. ***Comity*** does NOT mean _____.
✓ **B) generosity**
Comity means **courtesy** and **civility**, polite and friendly respect, especially between nations: **the comity of nations**. It does not mean **generosity**, which is a willingness to give freely. Don't confuse it with **comedy**.

7. ***Specious*** does NOT mean _____.
✓ **C) unquestionably correct**
Specious means **apparently true** or **superficially reasonable** but actually wrong or misleading: **a specious argument**. So it is close to the opposite of **unquestionably correct**. The point of the word is that the correctness is only on the surface.

8. ***Noisome*** does NOT mean _____.
✓ **C) unmanageable**
Noisome means **harmful** or offensive, especially **foul-smelling**: **a noisome swamp**. It has nothing to do with noise and does not mean **unmanageable**. The word comes from **annoy**, in its old sense of 'harm'.

9. ***Calumny*** does NOT mean _____.
✓ **B) a terrible mistake**
Calumny is **a false and malicious statement** made to damage someone's reputation, that is, **defamation of character**: **a victim of calumny**. It does not mean **a terrible mistake**. Don't confuse it with **calamity**, a disaster.

10. To ***excoriate*** does NOT mean to _____.
✓ **A) reject completely**
To **excoriate** is to criticise someone very severely, so it does mean to **rebuke harshly** or **denounce severely**: **The report excoriated the management.** Its literal meaning is to strip off skin. It does not mean to **reject completely**. You can excoriate an idea without rejecting it, and you can reject something calmly.

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