

# Synonym vs. Meaning-Match Practice Set

## 25 Questions to Avoid the Synonym Trap

*Instructions: Each question has 6 choices. Choose TWO answers that create equivalent sentence meanings (not just synonym words).*

1. Although the professor's lecture was \_\_\_\_ in tone, it was supported by meticulous evidence.  
(A) caustic (B) biting (C) methodical (D) systematic (E) frivolous (F) speculative
2. The committee praised the proposal's ambition but criticized its \_\_\_\_ timeline, which ignored basic logistical constraints.  
(A) realistic (B) feasible (C) implausible (D) untenable (E) meticulous (F) painstaking
3. The novelist's style is deceptively \_\_\_\_, using plain sentences to convey complex ideas.  
(A) ornate (B) baroque (C) unadorned (D) spare (E) volatile (F) capricious
4. Because the witness's account shifted repeatedly, the jury found her testimony \_\_\_\_.  
(A) credible (B) trustworthy (C) erratic (D) inconsistent (E) lucid (F) coherent
5. The scientist remained \_\_\_\_ about the early results, refusing to make broad claims from a small sample.  
(A) dogmatic (B) unyielding (C) circumspect (D) guarded (E) jubilant (F) exuberant
6. The manager's feedback was \_\_\_\_: direct enough to be useful, but not harsh.  
(A) tactful (B) diplomatic (C) scathing (D) caustic (E) vague (F) nebulous
7. Despite his reputation for generosity, he was \_\_\_\_ about lending money, even to close friends.  
(A) lavish (B) munificent (C) stingy (D) miserly (E) punctual (F) timely
8. The author's argument is \_\_\_\_; it relies on emotional anecdotes rather than verifiable data.  
(A) empirical (B) evidence-based (C) specious (D) flimsy (E) robust (F) sturdy
9. The CEO's apology sounded \_\_\_\_—as if written by lawyers rather than felt personally.  
(A) contrite (B) penitent (C) formulaic (D) canned (E) spontaneous (F) impulsive
10. The intern was \_\_\_\_ in meetings, rarely speaking unless asked a direct question.  
(A) reticent (B) reserved (C) garrulous (D) talkative (E) incisive (F) astute
11. The critic admired the painting's technical precision but found its subject matter \_\_\_\_ and emotionally distant.  
(A) moving (B) poignant (C) sterile (D) clinical (E) vivid (F) colorful
12. To avoid a biased conclusion, the team sought a more \_\_\_\_ sample that reflected the entire population.  
(A) representative (B) typical (C) idiosyncratic (D) eccentric (E) glossy (F) polished

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## Questions 13–25 + Answer Key (Condensed)

13. The historian's account is \_\_\_\_ with detail, to the point that the main narrative is hard to follow.  
(A) replete (B) abounding (C) threadbare (D) scant (E) skeptical (F) dubious
14. Her reasoning was \_\_\_\_: each claim followed logically from the previous one.  
(A) coherent (B) consistent (C) haphazard (D) random (E) luminous (F) radiant
15. Because the medication is new, doctors remain \_\_\_\_ about long-term side effects.  
(A) blasé (B) nonchalant (C) wary (D) cautious (E) certain (F) confident
16. The startup's success seemed \_\_\_\_; one regulatory change could unravel its entire business model.  
(A) precarious (B) fragile (C) inevitable (D) certain (E) bountiful (F) plentiful
17. The professor's questions were \_\_\_\_; they forced students to clarify vague assumptions.  
(A) probing (B) incisive (C) superficial (D) shallow (E) placid (F) tranquil
18. His explanation was \_\_\_\_—it omitted key steps that would make the conclusion understandable.  
(A) comprehensive (B) thorough (C) incomplete (D) fragmentary (E) energetic (F) vigorous
19. The novelist's characters are \_\_\_\_; they feel like real people rather than stereotypes.  
(A) nuanced (B) complex (C) one-dimensional (D) flat (E) fleeting (F) ephemeral
20. The policy memo was \_\_\_\_ and to the point, avoiding unnecessary background.  
(A) succinct (B) concise (C) diffuse (D) rambling (E) haughty (F) supercilious
21. The lab's equipment is \_\_\_\_; it breaks down so often that experiments are delayed weekly.  
(A) reliable (B) dependable (C) temperamental (D) finicky (E) lavish (F) opulent
22. Her praise was \_\_\_\_; it sounded sincere, not like empty flattery.  
(A) genuine (B) authentic (C) glib (D) slick (E) rigid (F) inflexible
23. The speaker's conclusions were \_\_\_\_ by the data; every claim could be traced to a specific result.  
(A) corroborated (B) supported (C) undermined (D) refuted (E) delayed (F) postponed
24. The editor cut several paragraphs to make the argument less \_\_\_\_ and easier to follow.  
(A) convoluted (B) tortuous (C) straightforward (D) clear (E) obsolete (F) dated
25. Because the contract terms were \_\_\_\_, both sides interpreted them differently during the dispute.  
(A) unambiguous (B) explicit (C) equivocal (D) vague (E) fervent (F) zealous

### Answer Key (Condensed)

- 1: A,B — A/B both mean sharply critical; contrast is with the careful evidence. Trap C,D.
- 2: C,D — C/D both mean not workable; the timeline ignores constraints. Trap E,F.
- 3: C,D — C/D both mean plain or stripped down. Trap A,B.
- 4: C,D — C/D match the idea of shifting repeatedly. Trap A,B.
- 5: C,D — C/D both mean cautious in judgment. Trap E,F.
- 6: A,B — A/B both imply considerate directness—fits “not harsh.” Trap C,D.
- 7: C,D — C/D both mean unwilling to give—contrast with “generosity.” Trap A,B.
- 8: C,D — C/D both suggest weak/unsound reasoning. Trap E,F.
- 9: C,D — C/D both mean overly standard or prepackaged. Trap E,F.
- 10: A,B — A/B both mean quiet or reluctant to speak. Trap C,D.
- 11: C,D — C/D convey coldness/lack of warmth, matching “emotionally distant.” Trap A,B.
- 12: A,B — A/B both mean broadly reflective of the whole. Trap C,D.
- 13: A,B — A/B both mean full of/overflowing with detail. Trap C,D.
- 14: A,B — A/B indicate logical unity and lack of contradiction. Trap C,D.
- 15: C,D — C/D match prudent concern about unknown effects. Trap A,B.
- 16: A,B — A/B both mean unstable/easily disrupted. Trap C,D.
- 17: A,B — A/B both mean sharply analytical. Trap C,D.
- 18: C,D — C/D indicate missing pieces. Trap A,B.
- 19: A,B — A/B suggest layered, realistic portrayal. Trap C,D.
- 20: A,B — A/B both mean brief and clear. Trap C,D.
- 21: C,D — C/D mean prone to malfunction or requiring constant adjustment. Trap A,B.
- 22: A,B — A/B both mean real/sincere. Trap C,D.
- 23: A,B — A/B align with “could be traced” and backed by results. Trap C,D.
- 24: A,B — A/B both mean overly complex or hard to follow. Trap C,D.
- 25: C,D — C/D indicate unclear wording leading to multiple interpretations. Trap A,B.