Name _____ Date _____

Context Clues: Synonym and Antonym Clues With Signal Words

Directions: Each sentence holds a clue to the word in italics. A synonym clue is a nearby word or phrase with the same meaning. An antonym clue has the opposite meaning, and it often follows a signal word such as but, unlike or however.

1. "Ms. Ruiz praised Theo's *candid* answer because it was honest and direct."

Which words in the sentence are a synonym clue for *candid*?

A. praised
B. answer
C. because
D. honest and direct

2. "Rosa was *reluctant* to dive into the icy lake, and her brother was also unwilling to jump in."

The word *also* points to a synonym clue. What does reluctant mean?

A. Too cold to move
B. Not wanting to do something
C. Excited to try something new
D. Unable to swim

3. "The science lab keeps its *hazardous* chemicals in a locked cabinet, because dangerous materials must be kept away from students."

Which meaning of *hazardous* does the synonym clue support?

A. Safe to touch
B. Able to cause harm
C. Used every day
D. Very expensive

4. Find the synonym clue, then choose the meaning of *jubilant*.

"The fans were *jubilant* after the final whistle, just as joyful as the players who had won the championship."

A. Tired from cheering
B. Worried and nervous
C. Angry at the referee
D. Full of joy

5. "Aunt Bea is usually *frugal*, but on vacation she spent money freely on souvenirs."

What kind of context clue helps you figure out *frugal*?

A. A synonym clue, because spending money freely means the same as *frugal*
B. An example clue, because the sentence lists several souvenirs
C. An antonym clue, because *but* shows that spending freely is the opposite of *frugal*
D. A definition clue, because the sentence gives the dictionary meaning of *frugal*

6. "Unlike her *gregarious* brother, Maya is shy and likes to spend time alone."

Use the antonym clue. What does gregarious mean?

A. Older and taller
B. Shy and quiet
C. Liking to be around other people
D. Careful and serious

7. "The first half of the hike was *arduous*, but the second half was easy and relaxing."

Which meaning of *arduous* fits the antonym clue?

A. Hard and tiring
B. Easy and relaxing
C. Long and boring
D. Wet and muddy

8. "While most of the spellers were *apprehensive* before the contest, Jalen felt calm and sure of himself."

How did most of the spellers feel?

A. Proud of their last win
B. Calm and sure of themselves
C. Worried about what might happen
D. Bored and sleepy

9. "The lake was *placid* at sunrise; however, by noon the wind had whipped it into choppy waves."

Which word could replace *placid* without changing the meaning of the sentence?

A. calm
B. choppy
C. freezing
D. crowded

10. Each of these sentences has a synonym clue or an antonym clue. Match each sentence to the meaning of its word in italics.

Write the letter of the matching answer on each line.

1. _____ After the long car ride, the *drowsy* children were so sleepy that they nodded off at dinner.
2. _____ The desert looked *vast*, as huge as an ocean of sand.
3. _____ The old horse was *docile*, but the young colt refused to wear a saddle and kicked at anyone who tried.
4. _____ Although the bridge looked *sturdy*, it was actually weak and unsafe.
5. _____ The stray cat found only a *meager* meal, unlike the plentiful feast inside the house.

Choices for question 10

A. small and not enough
B. very large
C. close to falling asleep
D. wide awake and full of energy
E. calm and easy to handle
F. weak and easy to break
G. strong and solid