

5. She was so determined that she managed to finish the marathon despite her injury.
(SHEER)
=> It was by ___ that she managed to finish the marathon despite her injury.

Section 3.4: Open Cloze Test

Instructions: Read the text and fill in each blank with ONE suitable word.

In an era of information overload, the ability to think critically has never been (101)___ vital. It is one thing to have access to a virtually infinite repository of data; it is quite (102)___ to possess the discernment to sift the wheat from the chaff. Critical thinking is not merely about cynicism or fault-finding; (103)___, it is a disciplined process of conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, and evaluating information. It requires one to question underlying assumptions, to be wary of rhetorical manipulation, and to recognize the limitations of one's (104)___ perspective. (105)___ this intellectual rigor, one is susceptible to misinformation and demagoguery, becoming a passive consumer of narratives rather than an active participant in democratic discourse.

Section 3.5: Word Choice & Idiomatic Language

Instructions: Choose the single word or phrase that best completes the sentence, paying close attention to nuance and idiomatic usage.

- The team's victory was a real shot in the ___ for the struggling club.
A. foot B. arm C. leg D. head
- His arguments, while eloquent, were ultimately ___ and lacked substance.
A. specious B. veritable C. factual D. authentic
- I wouldn't trust him; he's been known to play fast and ___ with the truth.
A. easy B. hard C. loose D. tight
- After the market crash, his ambitious plans came to ___ nothing.
A. less than B. little but C. naught D. barely
- Her promotion was a ___ conclusion, given her outstanding performance.
A. foregone B. preconceived C. predetermined D. fated
- The government's attempts to solve the crisis were seen as merely ___ with the problem.
A. tinkering B. grappling C. fighting D. settling
- The old traditions have largely fallen by the _____.
A. wayside B. roadside C. path D. street
- He has a ___ for saying the wrong thing at the wrong time.
A. habit B. penchant C. custom D. tendency