



Prefixes:

Advanced Academic Prefixes: counter-, pseudo-, neo- & More

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- The committee's decision to cut funding proved ____, as it ultimately led to higher costs in the long term.
a) unproductive
b) counterproductive
c) nonproductive
d) antiproduative
- The researcher dismissed the study as ____, arguing that it lacked proper methodology and peer review.
a) pseudoscience
b) antiscience
c) non-science
d) quasi-science
- The tribunal operates as a ____ body, with some but not full judicial authority over commercial disputes.
a) semi-judicial
b) pseudo-judicial
c) neo-judicial
d) quasi-judicial
- The city's ____ architecture blends ancient Greek columns with modern glass and steel structures.
a) preclassical
b) neoclassical
c) ultraclassical
d) pseudoclassical
- Patients suffering from ____ may experience persistent headaches, blurred vision, and shortness of breath if the condition is left untreated.
a) overtension
b) supertension
c) ultratension
d) hypertension
- The party's ____ stance on immigration has drawn criticism from both moderate voters and human rights organisations.
a) ultra-conservative
b) overconservative
c) hyperconservative
d) superconservative
- The professor encouraged her students to develop ____ skills so they could reflect critically on their own learning processes.
a) precognitive
b) supercognitive
c) overcognitive
d) metacognitive
- The government plans to ____ the telecommunications industry to encourage competition among service providers.
a) unregulate
b) disregulate
c) deregulate
d) misregulate

20. The journalist accused the company of engaging in ____, claiming their charitable donations were merely a strategy to avoid taxes.

a) ultra-philanthropy

b) neo-philanthropy

c) pseudo-philanthropy

d) counter-philanthropy



Answers

1. b) counterproductive
2. a) pseudoscience
3. d) quasi-judicial
4. b) neoclassical
5. d) hypertension
6. a) ultra-conservative
7. d) metacognitive
8. c) deregulate
9. a) amoral
10. b) counter-terrorism
11. c) pseudo-intellectual
12. d) quasi-governmental
13. a) hyperactivity
14. b) asymmetric
15. d) privatisation
16. a) underlying
17. b) counterargument
18. c) interplay
19. c) revitalise
20. c) pseudo-philanthropy



Explanations

1. “counterproductive” (b)

Counterproductive means having the opposite of the desired effect. While 'unproductive' simply means not productive, 'counterproductive' specifically implies that the action works against its intended goal — cutting costs actually increased them.

2. “pseudoscience” (a)

Pseudoscience (pseudo- = false, pretending) refers to claims or practices that are presented as scientific but lack genuine scientific evidence. 'Non-science' simply means not science; 'pseudoscience' implies something falsely claims to be science.

3. “quasi-judicial” (d)

Quasi- means 'resembling but not truly being'. A quasi-judicial body has some characteristics of a court but is not a full court. 'Semi-judicial' (half) is less precise; 'pseudo-judicial' would imply it is fake, which is not the intended meaning.

4. “neoclassical” (b)

Neoclassical (neo- = new) describes a revival of classical styles. It is a genuine artistic movement, not a fake one (pseudo-), and refers to a renewed use of classical forms, not something that existed before them (pre-).

5. “hypertension” (d)

Hypertension (hyper- = excessively above normal) is the medical term for abnormally high blood pressure. In medical and scientific terminology, hyper- is the standard prefix for 'above normal', not over- or super-.

6. “ultra-conservative” (a)

Ultra- means 'beyond, extreme'. Ultra-conservative describes an extremely conservative position that goes beyond mainstream conservatism. While 'hyper-' can mean excessive, 'ultra-' is the established prefix for extreme political positions.

7. “metacognitive” (d)

Metacognitive (meta- = about itself) refers to awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes. 'Precognitive' would mean knowing something before it happens, which is entirely different.

8. “deregulate” (c)

Deregulate (de- = remove, reverse) means to remove government regulations. This is the standard term in economics and policy. 'Unregulate' and 'disregulate' are not established English words.

9. “amoral” (a)

Amoral (a- = without, from Greek) means lacking any moral sense or being indifferent to morality. It differs from 'immoral' (violating moral rules). The Greek privative prefix a- indicates complete absence, not negation.

10. “counter-terrorism” (b)

Counter-terrorism refers to active measures taken to combat terrorism (counter- = against, in response to). Anti-terrorism typically refers to defensive measures or general opposition. In military and policy contexts, 'counter-' implies active, strategic response rather than mere opposition.

11. “pseudo-intellectual” (c)

Pseudo-intellectual (pseudo- = false) describes someone who pretends to be intellectual but is not genuinely so. 'Anti-intellectual' means opposed to intellectualism, which is a different meaning. The fabricated credentials confirm the 'false pretence' meaning of pseudo-.

12. “quasi-governmental” (d)

Quasi-governmental (quasi- = resembling, seemingly) describes an organisation that has some government-like features but is not part of the government. 'Semi-governmental' could also work in some contexts, but 'quasi-governmental' is the established formal term in institutional and legal language.

13. “hyperactivity” (a)

Hyperactivity (hyper- = excessively above normal) is the established medical term in ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder). Over- is used in everyday language, but hyper- is standard in medical and scientific nomenclature for conditions involving excessive activity.

14. “asymmetric” (b)

Asymmetric (a- = without, from Greek) means lacking symmetry. This is the standard term in design, mathematics, and science. 'Unsymmetric' is occasionally used in technical contexts but 'asymmetric' is far more established.

15. “privatisation” (d)

Privatisation does not take an additional prefix here. The sentence describes the process of transferring state ownership to private hands, which is simply 'privatisation'. 'Deprivatisation' would mean reversing privatisation, and 'reprivatisation' would mean privatising again — neither fits the context of first-time transfer.

16. “underlying” (a)

Underlying (under- = beneath) means existing beneath the surface or not immediately obvious. The sentence specifies 'beyond the obvious', pointing to hidden, deeper effects. 'Overriding' means most important, which contradicts 'beyond the obvious'.

17. “counterargument” (b)

Counterargument (counter- = against, in opposition) means an argument made in opposition to another argument. The CEO argued against the board's proposal, and the revenue surge proved her right. 'Anti-argument' is not a standard English word.

18. “interplay” (c)

Interplay (inter- = between) means the way two things interact with and affect each other. This is a C1-level collocation commonly found in academic and policy writing. 'Counterplay' is used in chess, not economics.

19. “revitalise” (c)

Revitalise (re- = again) means to give new life or energy to something. After a crisis, the government wants to restore economic vitality. 'Devitalise' means to drain vitality — the opposite of what is needed.

20. “pseudo-philanthropy” (c)

Pseudo-philanthropy (pseudo- = false) describes charitable giving that is not genuinely altruistic but serves an ulterior motive. The journalist claims the donations are a tax avoidance strategy, implying the philanthropy is fake or insincere.