



Test Ninjas

VOCABULARY STUDY SERIES

GMAT VOCABULARY

GMAT Vocabulary: Argument & Evidence

55 focused words in Argument & Evidence

55

UNIQUE WORDS

1

CATEGORIES

GMAT

EXAM FOCUS



About this study guide

This vocabulary guide was prepared and published by Test Ninjas as an independent study resource. It is designed to help students build the precise word knowledge needed for demanding academic reading and reasoning.

How to use this guide

Study in short, repeated sessions. Read each definition, say the word aloud, and use the example to understand how the word functions in context. Return to unfamiliar words until you can explain them without looking at the definition.

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001 aberrant *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Departing from what is normal or expected; deviating from the standard

The scientist noted the **aberrant** data point and investigated whether it was caused by equipment malfunction.

MEMORY CUE: An aberrant arrow strays outside the normal target rings.

002 allegations *noun (plural)***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Claims or assertions, typically without proof, that someone has done something wrong

The **allegations** of financial impropriety forced the university president to resign before any formal investigation began.

MEMORY CUE: Allegations point accusing fingers before proof has established the claims.

003 apocryphal *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Of doubtful authenticity, although widely circulated as being true

The story about the cherry tree is almost certainly **apocryphal**, yet it persists in popular culture.

MEMORY CUE: An apocryphal tale circulates widely while its truth remains doubtful.

004 ascribed *verb (past participle)***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Attributed to or regarded as belonging to

Historians have long **ascribed** the empire's decline to military overextension, though economic factors also played a role.

MEMORY CUE: A signature ascribed the anonymous painting to a particular artist.

005 beguiling *verb (present participle)***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Charming or enchanting, often in a deceptive way

The **beguiling** simplicity of the theory concealed deep mathematical complexities that took decades to unravel.

MEMORY CUE: A beguiling smile charms you while quietly hiding deceptive intentions.

006 benchmark *noun***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

A reference point or standard used to compare and evaluate results.

The industry average provides a **benchmark** for judging whether the firm's operating costs are unusually high.

MEMORY CUE: A benchmark is the marked line on a workbench against which every new result is measured.

007 bogus *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Fake; not genuine; fraudulent

The academic journal retracted the paper after discovering that its data was entirely **bogus**.

MEMORY CUE: A bogus bill looks official but is completely fake.

008 candor *noun*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

The quality of being open and honest in expression; frankness

Voters appreciated the candidate's **candor**, even when his views were controversial.

MEMORY CUE: Candor removes the curtain and speaks with open, direct honesty.

009 cloak *verb*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

To cover or conceal; to hide or disguise

Diplomatic language can **cloak** aggressive intentions behind a veneer of cooperation and goodwill.

MEMORY CUE: To cloak an intention, wrap and conceal it from view.

010 cloaked *verb*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Covered or concealed; disguised

The proposal was **cloaked** in the rhetoric of fiscal responsibility, but its true aim was to cut social services.

MEMORY CUE: A cloaked motive remains covered beneath a respectable-looking disguise.

011 conceal *verb*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

To keep from sight or discovery; to hide

The dense canopy of the rainforest can **conceal** entire species from researchers working at ground level.

MEMORY CUE: Pull a curtain over an object to conceal it from view and keep it secret.

012 counterpoint *noun*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

A thing that forms a pleasing or notable contrast to something else; a complementary or opposing element

The novel uses the daughter's optimism as a **counterpoint** to the father's deep-rooted cynicism.

MEMORY CUE: A dark tower creates counterpoint against the pale, open landscape.

013 culpable *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Deserving blame; at fault

The investigation found the supervisor equally **culpable** for the safety violations.

MEMORY CUE: A culpable person carries blame because they are at fault.

014 deceptive *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Giving an appearance or impression different from the truth; misleading

The **deceptive** calm of the river masked a treacherous undertow that had caught many swimmers off guard.

MEMORY CUE: A deceptive mask shows a pleasant face while hiding a different truth underneath.

015 derivative *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Imitative of the work of another; not original; lacking originality

Critics dismissed the album as **derivative**, noting its heavy borrowing from earlier jazz recordings.

MEMORY CUE: A derivative result follows an origin arrow from an earlier source.

016 disguise *verb*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

To conceal the true nature of something

Satire can **disguise** serious political commentary as humor, reaching audiences that might otherwise tune out.

MEMORY CUE: A disguise is a mask that changes appearance to conceal identity.

017 disingenuous *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Not candid or sincere; giving a false appearance of simple frankness

The company's claim to have discovered the contamination voluntarily struck regulators as **disingenuous**, given the pending lawsuit.

MEMORY CUE: A disingenuous smile hides insincerity and pretended ignorance behind a mask.

018 disinterested *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Not influenced by considerations of personal advantage; impartial and unbiased

The dispute required a **disinterested** mediator who had no stake in the outcome.

MEMORY CUE: A disinterested judge has no personal stake and remains impartial.

019 distortion *noun***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

The act of twisting or altering something from its true meaning or proportions

The memoir's critics accused it of deliberate **distortion**, claiming key events were presented out of context.

MEMORY CUE: A funhouse mirror creates distortion by twisting true proportions.

020 dubious *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Hesitating or doubting; not to be relied upon; of questionable value

The startup's claims of revolutionary technology struck investors as **dubious** once they examined the patents more closely.

MEMORY CUE: A dubious claim wobbles beneath a question mark and cannot earn confidence.

021 enigmatic *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Difficult to interpret or understand; mysterious

The Mona Lisa's **enigmatic** smile has inspired countless interpretations, none of which has achieved scholarly consensus.

MEMORY CUE: An enigmatic figure stands behind a question-mark mask that resists interpretation.

022 exonerate *verb***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

To absolve someone from blame for a fault or wrongdoing

The inquiry completely **exonerated** the officer of any misconduct.

MEMORY CUE: To exonerate someone, erase blame after proving they were not responsible.

023 extrapolate *verb***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

To estimate an unknown value or future pattern by extending a trend beyond observed data.

Analysts should not **extrapolate** national demand from one unusually wealthy neighborhood without making careful adjustments.

MEMORY CUE: Extend a data line past its last dot to extrapolate beyond what was directly observed.

024 fabricated *verb***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Invented or concocted in order to deceive; manufactured artificially

The journalist was fired after editors discovered that key quotes in the article had been **fabricated**.

MEMORY CUE: A fabricated story is manufactured from invention rather than truth.

025 fanciful *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Imaginative and unrealistic; existing only in fantasy; over-elaborate

The architect's **fanciful** design featured towers shaped like seashells and bridges that mimicked ocean waves.

MEMORY CUE: A fanciful castle floats beautifully in imagination but not reality.

026 fantastical *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Imaginative or fanciful; remote from reality; bizarre

The novel's **fantastical** elements—talking animals, floating cities—serve as allegories for real political struggles.

MEMORY CUE: A fantastical creature belongs to fantasy, far from ordinary reality.

027 forecast *noun*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

A reasoned estimate of future conditions, demand, revenue, or other results.

The revised **forecast** predicts slower growth after accounting for higher borrowing costs and weaker consumer demand.

MEMORY CUE: Like a weather map for business, a forecast estimates conditions that have not arrived yet.

028 forthright *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Direct and outspoken; straightforward and honest

Her **forthright** assessment of the problem, though uncomfortable, was exactly what the team needed.

MEMORY CUE: A forthright answer travels in a straight line from honest thought to speech.

029 fortuitous *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Happening by accident or chance rather than design; fortunate

The discovery of the manuscript in a secondhand bookshop was entirely **fortuitous**—no one had been looking for it.

MEMORY CUE: A fortuitous find arrives by lucky chance beneath a four-leaf clover.

030 furtive *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Attempting to avoid notice or attention, typically because of guilt; secretive

The **furtive** glances between the two executives suggested they were concealing something.

MEMORY CUE: A furtive figure glances around while sneaking beneath cover.

031 guile *noun*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Sly or cunning intelligence; craftiness

The negotiator used **guile** rather than force to achieve favorable terms.

MEMORY CUE: Guile hides a clever trap beneath a sly, innocent-looking smile.

032 hermetic *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Complete and airtight; insulated or protected from outside influences

The community maintained a **hermetic** existence, cut off from modern society.

MEMORY CUE: A hermetic seal shuts outside air and influence completely away.

033 idealized *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Regarded or represented as perfect or better than in reality; simplified beyond practical use

The poet's **idealized** vision of rural life bore little resemblance to the harsh realities faced by actual farmers.

MEMORY CUE: An idealized portrait polishes away flaws until reality looks perfect.

034 impartiality *noun*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Equal treatment of all sides; lack of bias or prejudice

The tribunal's **impartiality** was called into question when one of the judges was found to have a financial interest in the outcome.

MEMORY CUE: Impartiality keeps the judge's scales level for every side.

035 improbable *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Not likely to be true or to happen; unexpected

The novel's plot hinges on an **improbable** coincidence that stretches the reader's willingness to suspend disbelief.

MEMORY CUE: An improbable event sits far outside the circle of likely outcomes.

036 inscrutable *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Impossible to understand or interpret; mysterious

The judge's **inscrutable** expression gave no indication of how she would rule.

MEMORY CUE: An inscrutable face is sealed so tightly that meaning cannot escape.

037 manifest *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Clear or obvious to the eye or mind

The flaws in the original design became **manifest** only after the building had been occupied for several years.

MEMORY CUE: What was hidden becomes manifest when it steps into a bright, revealing spotlight.

038 misrepresentation *noun*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

A false or misleading account of something

The lawsuit alleged that the advertisement constituted a deliberate **misrepresentation** of the product's effectiveness.

MEMORY CUE: Misrepresentation bends an account away from the truth into something misleading.

039 nonpartisan *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Not biased toward any particular political party or viewpoint

The research institute maintains a **nonpartisan** stance, publishing findings regardless of which political party they favor.

MEMORY CUE: A nonpartisan referee wears no political team's colors.

040 notoriety *noun*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

The state of being famous or well known, typically for some unfavorable quality or deed

The forger achieved a perverse **notoriety** when his fakes were found hanging in several major museums.

MEMORY CUE: Notoriety is fame stained by an unfavorable deed or quality.

041 notoriously *adverb*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

In a way that is famous or well known, typically for something bad

The mountain pass is **notoriously** dangerous in winter, claiming several lives in avalanches each year.

MEMORY CUE: A notoriously unreliable clock is widely known for a bad reason.

042 obscure *verb*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

To make unclear, indistinct, or difficult to understand; to conceal

Jargon can **obscure** meaning rather than clarify it, especially when used to impress rather than inform.

MEMORY CUE: Fog obscures an object until it is hard to see, understand, or recognize.

043 opaque *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Not able to be seen through; not transparent; hard to understand

The company's **opaque** financial reporting raised suspicions among regulators.

MEMORY CUE: An opaque wall blocks both light and clear understanding.

044 partisan *adjective/noun***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

A strong supporter of a party, cause, or person; showing strong, biased support

The report was dismissed by opponents as a **partisan** document designed to advance one party's agenda.

MEMORY CUE: A partisan wears one party's badge and supports it with bias.

045 probity *noun***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

The quality of having strong moral principles; honesty and decency

The auditor's **probity** was beyond question, which is precisely why the board entrusted her with the sensitive investigation.

MEMORY CUE: Probity is moral uprightness supported by sturdy honesty and decency.

046 qualitative *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Describing qualities, meanings, or experiences rather than measuring them numerically.

Managers combined quantitative sales figures with **qualitative** feedback from customers who had abandoned their purchases.

MEMORY CUE: Qualitative begins with QUALITY: it describes character and experience instead of counting amounts.

047 reputable *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Held in high esteem; having a good reputation

Only data from **reputable**, peer-reviewed journals were included in the systematic review.

MEMORY CUE: A reputable name carries strong stars earned from others' trust.

048 sham *adjective/noun***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Bogus; something that is not what it purports to be; a fraud

The election was widely condemned as a **sham**, with opposition candidates barred from running and ballots pre-filled.

MEMORY CUE: A sham wears a convincing costume but is actually a fraud.

049 spurious *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Not being what it purports to be; false or fake; based on false reasoning

The correlation between ice cream sales and drowning deaths is **spurious** —both are driven by warm weather, not by each other.

MEMORY CUE: A spurious coin looks genuine until its fake coating peels away.

050 subjective *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Based on personal feelings, opinions, or interpretations rather than external facts

Taste in art is inherently **subjective**, which is why critics so often disagree about the same work.

MEMORY CUE: A subjective judgment is filtered through personal feeling and interpretation.

051 superficial *adjective***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Existing or occurring at or on the surface; lacking depth of character or understanding

A **superficial** reading of the text misses the irony that runs beneath the narrator's seemingly straightforward account.

MEMORY CUE: A superficial shell covers only the surface and has no depth beneath it.

052 tradeoff *noun***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

A balance in which gaining one benefit requires giving up another benefit or accepting a cost.

The faster delivery plan creates a **tradeoff** between customer convenience and the company's transportation expenses.

MEMORY CUE: A tradeoff is a seesaw: raising one benefit often lowers another.

053 veracity *noun***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

Conformity to facts; accuracy; habitual truthfulness

The historian devoted years to verifying the **veracity** of the sources before including them in the definitive account.

MEMORY CUE: Veracity keeps speech aligned with facts and habitual truthfulness.

054 vindicate *verb***ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE**

To clear of accusation or blame; to show to be right or justified

The subsequent discovery **vindicated** the researcher whose hypothesis had been dismissed for years.

MEMORY CUE: Evidence erases the blame mark and vindicates the accused.

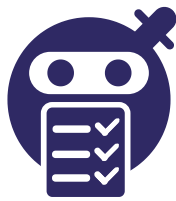
055 **warranted** *adjective*

ARGUMENT & EVIDENCE

Justified or authorized; having good reason

The investigation determined that the officer's use of force was **warranted** under the circumstances.

MEMORY CUE: Warranted concern carries a valid reason authorizing it.



GMAT VOCABULARY

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Revisit this list, write with the words, and practice recognizing their
meaning in context.

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