



Test Ninjas

VOCABULARY STUDY SERIES

GMAT VOCABULARY

GMAT Vocabulary: Conflict, Strategy & Competition

55 focused words in Conflict, Strategy & Competition

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UNIQUE WORDS

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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 acrimony *noun*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Bitterness or ill feeling; harsh and angry language or behavior

The **acrimony** between the two factions made any compromise impossible.

MEMORY CUE: Acrimony turns a disagreement into bitter, acid-tasting hostility.

002 adversarial *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Involving conflict or opposition between parties

The **adversarial** nature of the two-party system often prevents meaningful legislative compromise.

MEMORY CUE: Adversarial parties face each other as adversaries, ready to oppose.

003 antipathy *noun*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

A deep-seated feeling of dislike; aversion

His **antipathy** toward modern art was well known among his colleagues.

MEMORY CUE: Antipathy is an anti-feeling: deep dislike pushing someone away.

004 antithetical *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Directly opposed or contrasted; mutually incompatible

The two philosophers held **antithetical** views on free will, yet their debates advanced the field enormously.

MEMORY CUE: Antithetical ideas stand at opposite ends of a seesaw.

005 at odds *idiomatic phrase*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

In conflict or disagreement

The committee's recommendations were **at odds** with the conclusions reached by the independent auditors.

MEMORY CUE: Two people at odds pull opposite ends of the same rope.

006 belies *verb (third person singular of "believe")*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Contradicts; gives a false impression of; misrepresents

The calm surface of the lake **belies** the powerful currents that have claimed several swimmers over the years.

MEMORY CUE: A cheerful mask belies the sadness concealed behind it.

007 besieged *verb (past participle)*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Surrounded and harassed; troubled persistently

Besieged by reporters after the verdict, the attorney offered only a brief statement before retreating indoors.

MEMORY CUE: A besieged castle is surrounded while attacks and pressure never stop.

008 capitulate *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To cease to resist an opponent or an unwelcome demand; to surrender

After months of negotiation, the company finally **capitulated** to the union's demands.

MEMORY CUE: Capitulate by dropping the shield and raising a surrender flag.

009 coerce *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To persuade someone to do something by using force or threats

The regime **coerced** citizens into signing loyalty pledges under threat of imprisonment.

MEMORY CUE: To coerce someone, replace free choice with force or threats.

010 collision *noun*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

A conflict between opposing ideas, interests, or forces

The **collision** between traditional farming practices and modern agribusiness reshaped the rural economy.

MEMORY CUE: A collision occurs when opposing forces or ideas crash together.

011 conciliatory *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Intended to placate or pacify; aimed at making peace

After days of heated debate, the leader struck a **conciliatory** tone in his closing remarks.

MEMORY CUE: A conciliatory gesture extends a peaceful hand to reduce hostility.

012 consensus *noun*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

General agreement among a group of people

After three days of debate, the committee reached a **consensus** that the endangered species deserved full legal protection.

MEMORY CUE: Consensus is a circle of different hands all pointing to the same checked answer.

013 contended *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Asserted or maintained as a position in an argument

The defense attorney **contended** that the prosecution's timeline was physically impossible given the distance involved.

MEMORY CUE: The debater contended, firmly maintaining a position against opposing claims.

014 contentious *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Causing or likely to cause an argument; controversial

The **contentious** proposal to rezone the neighborhood divided the community.

MEMORY CUE: A contentious proposal becomes a tug-of-war rope because it is likely to provoke disagreement.

015 counterproductive *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Having the opposite of the desired effect; tending to hinder rather than help

Punishing employees for honest mistakes proved **counterproductive**, as it discouraged them from reporting errors.

MEMORY CUE: A counterproductive action walks backward from the very goal it seeks.

016 debunking *verb (present participle)*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Exposing the falseness or hollowness of a myth, belief, or idea

The scientist devoted her career to **debunking** pseudoscientific claims about the healing powers of crystals.

MEMORY CUE: Debunking pops a false belief like an empty, overinflated balloon.

017 deflect *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To turn aside or cause to change direction; to divert

The spokesperson attempted to **deflect** attention from the scandal by emphasizing the company's charitable donations.

MEMORY CUE: A shield deflects an arrow by turning it aside.

018 discordant *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Disagreeing or incongruous; characterized by conflict

The **discordant** views within the committee made it impossible to reach consensus.

MEMORY CUE: Discordant notes clash rather than agreeing in harmony.

019 discredited *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Caused to seem false or unreliable; undermined the good reputation of

The theory was thoroughly **discredited** after multiple laboratories failed to replicate the original results.

MEMORY CUE: Once discredited, a claim loses both trust and its good reputation.

020 discrediting *verb (present participle)***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Causing harm to the good reputation of; proving unworthy of trust

The leaked emails played a role in **discrediting** the organization's claims of political neutrality.

MEMORY CUE: Discrediting evidence punches holes in a source's reliability and reputation.

021 dispelled *verb (past tense)***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

To cause to vanish; to drive away (a doubt, feeling, or belief)

The discovery of the fossil record **dispelled** the long-held belief that the species had originated on a different continent.

MEMORY CUE: Morning sunlight dispelled the fog, causing it to vanish.

022 dissent *noun***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

The expression or holding of opinions at variance with those previously held or officially sanctioned

The lone **dissent** on the court argued that the majority opinion fundamentally misread the constitutional provision.

MEMORY CUE: One opinion arrow pointing away from the majority shows dissent.

023 dissimilar *adjective***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Not alike; different

Although the two ecosystems appear **dissimilar** on the surface, they share remarkably similar food web structures.

MEMORY CUE: Dissimilar objects share no matching pattern and look clearly different.

024 dissonance *noun***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Lack of harmony or agreement; a tension between conflicting elements

The cognitive **dissonance** experienced by voters who supported contradictory policies was widely studied.

MEMORY CUE: Dissonance sounds like musical notes grinding without harmony or agreement.

025 divergence *noun***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

The process or state of separating or moving apart; difference of opinions

The **divergence** in economic performance between the two regions widened dramatically after the trade agreement took effect.

MEMORY CUE: At divergence, two paths separate and move farther apart.

026 divergent *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Tending to develop in different directions; differing from each other

The committee members held such **divergent** opinions that reaching a unanimous recommendation proved impossible.

MEMORY CUE: Divergent paths separate and develop in different directions.

027 divestiture *noun*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

The sale or disposal of a business unit, asset, or investment.

The board approved the **divestiture** of its shipping division so management could concentrate on software services.

MEMORY CUE: DIVEST means remove an investment; a divestiture sends one business piece out the door.

028 eschew *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To deliberately avoid using; to abstain from

The author chose to **eschew** conventional narrative structure in favor of a fragmented approach.

MEMORY CUE: To eschew sweets, deliberately step around every dessert tray.

029 foment *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To instigate or stir up an undesirable sentiment or course of action

The propaganda was designed to **foment** distrust among different ethnic groups.

MEMORY CUE: To foment unrest, fan small sparks until public trouble catches fire.

030 forsake *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To abandon or renounce; to give up or turn away from

The scientist refused to **forsake** her unpopular theory, and vindication came when new evidence proved her right.

MEMORY CUE: To forsake a cause, abandon it and turn away.

031 fractious *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Easily irritated; unruly and difficult to control

The **fractious** coalition threatened to splinter over disagreements about tax policy.

MEMORY CUE: A fractious child resists control and erupts into irritable quarrels.

032 iconoclastic *adjective***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Attacking or challenging cherished beliefs or established institutions

The filmmaker's **iconoclastic** approach to the genre earned equal measures of praise and condemnation.

MEMORY CUE: An iconoclastic argument attacks a belief others treat as untouchable.

033 implacable *adjective***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Unable to be placated or appeased; relentless

The **implacable** opposition of the conservative faction doomed the reform effort.

MEMORY CUE: An implacable enemy cannot be soothed, persuaded, or stopped.

034 infringe *verb***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

To actively break the terms of a law or agreement; to violate

The patent holder argued that the competitor's product would **infringe** on intellectual property rights worth millions.

MEMORY CUE: To infringe a right, cross its legal boundary and violate it.

035 inhibited *verb (past tense)***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Hindered, restrained, or prevented (an action or process)

Fear of public ridicule **inhibited** many scientists from pursuing research on topics considered fringe.

MEMORY CUE: An inhibited performer freezes inside an invisible cage of self-consciousness.

036 inhibiting *verb***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Hindering or restraining; preventing or holding back

The regulation had the unintended effect of **inhibiting** the very innovation it was supposed to promote.

MEMORY CUE: An inhibiting force acts like a brake, restraining movement or development.

037 intolerance *noun***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Unwillingness to accept views, beliefs, or behavior that differ from one's own

The regime's **intolerance** of dissent extended even to the mildest criticism published in obscure academic journals.

MEMORY CUE: Intolerance closes the door on beliefs or behavior different from one's own.

038 intractable *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Hard to control or deal with; stubbornly resistant

The conflict proved **intractable**, resisting decades of peace negotiations and international intervention.

MEMORY CUE: An intractable problem fights every attempt to control or solve it.

039 merger *noun*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

The combination of two companies into a single business organization.

Regulators reviewed the **merger** to determine whether the combined company would reduce competition in regional markets.

MEMORY CUE: Two company logos flow into one new logo during a merger.

040 negate *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To make ineffective; to nullify; to deny the existence or truth of

One weak link in the chain of evidence was enough to **negate** the prosecution's entire argument.

MEMORY CUE: A large zero cancels the statement and negates its effect.

041 opportunity *noun*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

A favorable set of circumstances that makes a beneficial action or outcome possible.

Falling equipment prices created an **opportunity** for the manufacturer to automate without increasing its total budget.

MEMORY CUE: An opportunity is an open door that conditions have made worth entering.

042 polemical *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Relating to a strong verbal or written attack; strongly critical or controversial

The pamphlet was **polemical** in tone, attacking the opposition with a ferocity that left no room for nuance.

MEMORY CUE: A polemical essay enters verbal combat with a strong controversial attack.

043 preclude *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To prevent; to make impossible in advance

A prior conviction does not automatically **preclude** a defendant from receiving a lenient sentence.

MEMORY CUE: A locked gate precludes entry by making it impossible beforehand.

044 prevailed over *verb phrase*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Proved more powerful than; triumphed over

Reason and evidence ultimately **prevailed over** superstition, though the process took the better part of a century.

MEMORY CUE: The stronger force prevailed over its opponent and ultimately triumphed.

045 rancor *noun*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Bitterness or resentfulness, especially long-standing

Despite the **rancor** of the election campaign, the two candidates shook hands and pledged to work together.

MEMORY CUE: Rancor stores old bitterness until resentment has become long-standing.

046 recalcitrant *adjective*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Having an obstinately uncooperative attitude; stubbornly resistant to authority or control

The **recalcitrant** student refused to follow the dress code, viewing it as an infringement on personal expression.

MEMORY CUE: A recalcitrant mule locks its feet and stubbornly resists every command.

047 recant *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To say that one no longer holds an opinion or belief, especially one considered heretical

Under enormous political pressure, the scientist **recanted** his controversial findings.

MEMORY CUE: Recant a belief by publicly crossing out and withdrawing the former claim.

048 reiterated *verb (past tense)*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

Stated again or repeatedly, for emphasis or clarity

The health official **reiterated** the importance of vaccination, repeating the message at every press conference for weeks.

MEMORY CUE: Reiterated words return again for added emphasis or clarity.

049 repudiate *verb*

CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION

To refuse to accept or be associated with; to deny the truth or validity of

The organization **repudiated** the extremist views expressed by its former member.

MEMORY CUE: Repudiate a claim by pushing it away and refusing association with it.

050 scalability *noun***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

The capacity of a system or business to handle substantial growth without losing efficiency.

Investors questioned the restaurant's **scalability** because each new location required years of specialized staff training.

MEMORY CUE: Scalability lets a small ladder extend upward without its rungs breaking under added weight.

051 schism *noun***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

A split or division between strongly opposed sections or parties

The **schism** within the party left it unable to present a unified front in the general election.

MEMORY CUE: A schism cracks one group into strongly opposed sections.

052 subversion *noun***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

The undermining of the power and authority of an established system

The novel's **subversion** of fairy-tale conventions challenges readers to question the stories they were raised on.

MEMORY CUE: Subversion quietly digs beneath an established system to undermine its authority.

053 subvert *verb***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

To undermine the power and authority of; to overthrow

The satirist used humor to **subvert** the official narrative promoted by state media.

MEMORY CUE: To subvert a structure, weaken its foundations from below.

054 synergy *noun***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

An added benefit created when combined parts perform better together than they would separately.

The merger promised **synergy** by pairing one company's distribution network with the other's popular product line.

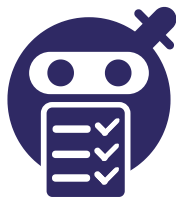
MEMORY CUE: Two gears interlock and produce more motion together; that extra joint effect is synergy.

055 undermines *verb***CONFLICT, STRATEGY & COMPETITION**

Weakens the foundation of; gradually erodes the strength of

Persistent corruption **undermines** public trust in institutions and discourages civic participation.

MEMORY CUE: Water undermines a wall by gradually weakening its hidden foundation.



GMAT VOCABULARY

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Vocabulary grows through repeated exposure and deliberate use.
Revisit this list, write with the words, and practice recognizing their
meaning in context.

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