



Test Ninjas

VOCABULARY STUDY SERIES

SAT VOCABULARY

SAT Vocabulary: Clarity & Obscurity

57 focused words in Clarity & Obscurity

57

UNIQUE WORDS

1

CATEGORIES

SAT

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.

Copyright and permitted use

© 2026 Test Ninjas. All rights reserved. A lawful purchaser may print this document for personal study or for students in one class directly taught by that purchaser. Redistribution, resale, public posting, dataset extraction, and use for training or evaluating automated systems are prohibited without written permission.

Independent publication. SAT, ACT, GRE, GMAT, and LSAT are trademarks of their respective owners. Their owners are not affiliated with, and do not endorse, Test Ninjas.

001 ambiguity *noun*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

the quality of being open to multiple interpretations; uncertainty

The **ambiguity** of the contract led to a legal dispute between the parties, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: AMBI means both: ambiguity leaves two meanings pointing in different directions.

002 ambiguous *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

having more than one possible meaning; unclear

His **ambiguous** response left everyone wondering what he really meant, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: An ambiguous road sign points both left and right, leaving more than one possible meaning.

ALSO · ADJECTIVE: open to more than one interpretation

003 arcane *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

understood by only a few; mysterious or secret

The **arcane** rituals of the ancient society remained a mystery, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An arcane book is locked in a secret room and understood by only a few.

004 conceal *verb*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

to hide or keep secret

He tried to **conceal** his disappointment with a forced smile, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

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

005 concealed *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

hidden from view; kept secret

The entrance was **concealed** behind a bookshelf, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: A concealed object sits behind a curtain or camouflage cloak, hidden from view.

ALSO · ADJECTIVE: kept from sight; hidden

006 confusing *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

difficult to understand; bewildering

The **confusing** instructions made assembly nearly impossible, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: Confusing directions point every way at once and leave the traveler bewildered.

007 disorienting *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

causing confusion about position, direction, or situation

The maze was deliberately **disorienting**, with identical corridors at every turn, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: A spinning compass makes direction and position disorienting and confusing.

008 explicable *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

able to be explained or accounted for

The phenomenon is entirely **explicable** through basic physics, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An explicable mystery has a clear chain of reasons that accounts for it.

009 exposed *verb/adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

revealed or uncovered; left unprotected or vulnerable

The investigation **exposed** widespread corruption within the organization, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: Removing a protective cover leaves what was hidden visible and vulnerable.

010 hidden *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

kept out of sight; concealed

The **hidden** treasure remained undiscovered for centuries, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: A hidden object waits behind a curtain, kept completely out of sight.

011 hiding *verb*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

the action of concealing something or oneself

The cat was **hiding** under the bed during the thunderstorm, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: Hiding means moving oneself or an object behind cover to avoid being seen.

012 impenetrable *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

impossible to pass through or enter; impossible to understand

The dense jungle was nearly **impenetrable** without proper equipment, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An impenetrable wall allows neither a person nor an explanation to pass through.

013 inconspicuousness *noun*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

the quality of not being easily noticed or attracting attention

The spy's **inconspicuousness** allowed him to blend into any crowd, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: Inconspicuousness is a gray camouflage cloak that attracts no attention.

014 indecipherable *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

impossible to read or understand

The ancient manuscript was written in an **indecipherable** script, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: Indecipherable writing looks like a locked code that neither eyes nor mind can read.

015 indistinct *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not clear or sharply defined; vague

The figure in the fog was **indistinct** and hard to identify, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An indistinct outline dissolves into fog without a clear edge.

016 inexplicable *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

unable to be explained or accounted for

The **inexplicable** disappearance baffled investigators for years, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An inexplicable mystery has broken every chain of explanation and remains beneath question marks.

017 intangible *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

unable to be touched or grasped; not having physical presence

Trust is an **intangible** asset that takes years to build, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: A hand passes through an intangible idea cloud because it has no physical presence.

018 latent *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

existing but not yet developed or manifest; hidden or dormant

Her **latent** artistic talent emerged after she took a painting class, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: A latent seed waits hidden underground, present but not yet developed.

019 **manifest** *verb*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

to display or show clearly; to become apparent or evident

Her anxiety began to **manifest** as physical symptoms like headaches and insomnia, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

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

ALSO · ADJECTIVE: clear or obvious to the eye or mind

020 **obscure** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not clearly understood or easily seen; not well-known

The professor specialized in **obscure** medieval manuscripts, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

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

ALSO · ADJECTIVE: not clearly expressed or easily understood

021 **obvious** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

easily perceived or understood; clear and evident

It was **obvious** from her expression that she was disappointed, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: An obvious answer glows in huge letters directly under the spotlight.

022 **opaque** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not transparent; difficult to understand

The **opaque** glass provided privacy while still allowing light through, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

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

023 **overtly** *adverb*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

in an open and observable manner; not secretly

The company **overtly** discriminated against older workers, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: An action performed overtly occurs on an open stage with no curtain or secrecy.

024 **reveal** *verb*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

to make known something previously secret or unknown

The investigation will **reveal** the truth about what happened, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: Pull away the curtain to reveal what was secret or unknown.

025 **secretive** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

inclined to conceal feelings and intentions; not open or forthcoming

He became **secretive** about his whereabouts after the incident, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: A secretive person locks intentions in a box and keeps feelings behind a curtain.

026 **subtle** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

so delicate or precise as to be difficult to analyze or describe; not obvious

There was a **subtle** change in her attitude after the meeting, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: A subtle change is one faint shade between two nearly identical colors.

027 **transparent** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

allowing light to pass through so objects can be seen clearly; open and honest

The company promised to be **transparent** about its financial dealings, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: Transparent glass lets light and sight pass through; transparent speech hides nothing.

ALSO · ADJECTIVE: easy to perceive; obvious

028 **unmistakable** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not able to be mistaken for anything else; very distinctive

The **unmistakable** sound of thunder signaled the approaching storm, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: One blazing red triangle among circles is unmistakable and cannot be confused.

029 **unobtrusive** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not conspicuous or attracting attention; subtle

The security cameras were designed to be **unobtrusive** and blend into the decor, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: An unobtrusive object blends quietly into the background and draws no attention.

030 **vague** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

of uncertain, indefinite, or unclear character or meaning

His **vague** response left everyone wondering what he actually meant, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: A vague message has blurred edges and disappears into uncertain fog.

031 **vivid** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

producing powerful feelings or strong, clear images in the mind; intensely bright

She gave such a **vivid** description that we could picture the scene perfectly, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: A vivid image glows in intensely bright color and remains sharply clear in the mind.

ALSO · ADJECTIVE: producing powerful feelings or clear images

032 **elucidate** *verb*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

to make something clear; to explain

The professor **elucidated** the complex theory for her students, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: Elucidate by switching on a light that makes the explanation clear.

033 **obfuscate** *verb*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

to make unclear or confusing

The politician tried to **obfuscate** the issue with technical jargon, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: Obfuscate a clear sign by surrounding it with thick confusing fog.

034 **cryptic** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

having a meaning that is mysterious or obscure

She left a **cryptic** message that no one could understand, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: A cryptic message hides its meaning inside a locked puzzle box.

035 **lucid** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

expressed clearly; easy to understand

His **lucid** explanation made the complex topic accessible, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: A lucid explanation shines like a clear lamp with no fog around it.

036 **coherent** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

logical and consistent; clear

She presented a **coherent** argument that convinced the jury, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: A coherent argument links each logical step into one clear, unbroken chain.

037 incomprehensible *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not able to be understood

The professor's lecture was **incomprehensible** to beginners, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: An incomprehensible message remains locked behind symbols the mind cannot open.

040 tangible *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

perceptible by touch; clear and definite

We need **tangible** evidence before making accusations, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: A tangible idea becomes a solid object that the hand can grasp.

038 intelligible *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

able to be understood

Please speak in a way that is **intelligible** to non-experts, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: An intelligible message passes through a clear doorway into understanding.

041 abstract *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

existing in thought but not having physical existence

The concept of justice is **abstract** but essential, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An abstract idea floats inside a thought bubble without a physical body.

039 explicit *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

stated clearly and in detail

The contract contains **explicit** terms and conditions, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An explicit instruction labels every detail clearly and leaves nothing hidden.

042 incoherent *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

expressed in an unclear way; hard to understand

The witness gave an **incoherent** account of events, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: An incoherent message has broken links and cannot form a clear chain.

043 **garbled** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

confused and distorted

The **garbled** transmission was impossible to understand, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: A garbled transmission twists clear words into confused, distorted noise.

044 **enigmatic** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

difficult to interpret or understand; mysterious

The **enigmatic** smile revealed nothing, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

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

045 **pellucid** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

easily understood; clear

Her **pellucid** prose made complex ideas accessible, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: A pellucid explanation is as clear as glass and easy to see through.

046 **inconspicuous** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not clearly visible or noticeable

He tried to remain **inconspicuous** in the crowd, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An inconspicuous object blends into the background beneath camouflage.

047 **overt** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

done or shown openly

There was no **overt** sign of conflict, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: An overt action takes place openly under full lights.

048 **blatant** *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

done openly without shame

His **blatant** disregard for rules was shocking, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: A blatant act happens beneath a giant OPENLY sign without shame.

049 evident *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

clearly seen or understood

It was **evident** that she was upset, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An evident fact stands clearly visible beneath a bright light.

052 covert *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not openly acknowledged or displayed

The **covert** operation was kept secret, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: A covert operation remains hidden behind an unmarked door.

050 veiled *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not openly stated or declared

His **veiled** criticism hurt her feelings, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: A veiled message hides its real statement behind a thin curtain.

053 unambiguous *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

not open to more than one interpretation

The instructions were **unambiguous**, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: An unambiguous sign has one clear arrow and only one meaning.

051 conspicuous *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

standing out so as to be clearly visible

The **conspicuous** sign was easy to find, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: A conspicuous red umbrella stands out in a gray crowd.

054 nebulous *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

vague or ill-defined

The **nebulous** plan lacked specifics, giving observers more context for judging what could be seen or understood.

MEMORY CUE: A nebulous idea floats as a vague cloud without defined edges.

055 palpable *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

able to be touched or felt

The tension in the room was **palpable**, making its degree of transparency or comprehensibility clearer from the surrounding details.

MEMORY CUE: Palpable tension becomes so strong it feels like a rope you can touch.

056 murky *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

dark and gloomy; not clear

The **murky** water concealed dangers, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: Murky water hides objects in dark, unclear gloom.

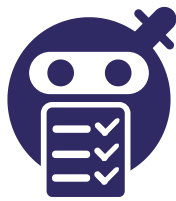
057 patent *adjective*

CLARITY & OBSCURITY

easily recognizable; obvious

His **patent** dishonesty fooled no one, shaping how easily the relevant information could be perceived and interpreted.

MEMORY CUE: A patent fact is immediately recognizable beneath an obvious sign.



SAT VOCABULARY

Keep building your edge.

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

More focused practice at test-ninjas.com