

(A) We are all molistic in a way

Imagine that you have heard these sentences:

Jane is molistic and slatty.
Jennifer is cluvious and brastic.
Molly and Kyle are slatty but danty.
The teacher is danty and cloovy.
Mary is blitty but cloovy.
Jeremiah is not only sloshful but also weasy.
Even though frumsy, Jim is sloshful.
Strungy and struffy, Diane was a pleasure to watch.
Even though weasy, John is strungy.
Carla is blitty but struffy.
The salespeople were cluvious and not slatty.

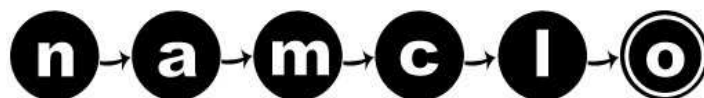
A1. Then which of the following would you be likely to hear?

- a. Meredith is blitty and brastic.
- b. The singer was not only molistic but also cluvious.
- c. May found a dog that was danty but sloshful.

A2. What quality or qualities would you be looking for in a person?

- a. blitty
- b. weasy
- c. sloshful
- d. frumsy

A3. Explain all your answers. (Hint: The sounds of the words are not relevant to their meanings)



(I) We Are All Molistic in a Way (I/I)

None of the adjectives are real English words. There are two classes of adjectives: "bad" and "good". We will refer to this property of adjectives as "polarity".

Each sentence links two or more adjectives as follows: "X and Y" indicates that X and Y have the same polarity. "X but Y" means that they have opposite polarities. Furthermore, "X and not Y" indicates opposite polarities, "even though X, Y" also indicates opposite polarities, while "not only X but also Y" associates adjectives of the same polarity. One can use a graph (see picture below) to keep track of these constraints.

The sentence about Diane shows that "strungy" and "struffy" are positive (desirable) qualities. By identifying other occurrences of the same words in other sentences, one can label each adjective as either positive or negative.

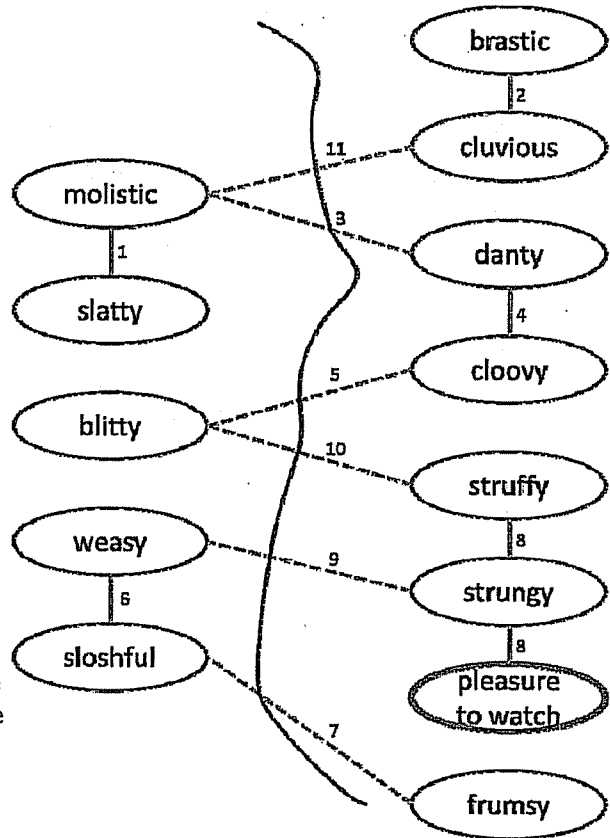
There are seven positive adjectives:

strungy
struffy
cloovy
frumsy
danty
cluvius
brastic

and five negative adjectives:

weasy
blitty
sloshful
slatty
molistic

Dashed lines link adjectives that have opposite polarities whereas solid lines are used to link items with the same polarity. The small numbers correspond to the sentence number with the relevant evidence. The curvy line in the middle is used to "cut" all negative links and keep all positive links. The oval around "pleasure to watch" is the only one whose polarity is known. It can be used to label all other ovals.



I.1. Only sentence c. connects adjectives of the right polarities.

I.2. Only answer d. ("frumsy") is on the positive list above.