ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

400 Must-Have Words for the TOEFL Lesson 28 (Investigating Crimes): Vocabulary Test

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Explanations

1. Forensic scientists ___ the soil on the suspect's boots to find out which field it had come from.
✔ **B) analyze**
To analyze something is to examine it closely, part by part, in order to understand it. The scientists study the soil to learn where it came from. (British English: analyse.)

2. During the trial, the defence lawyer ___ the witness with question after question about the night of the robbery.
✔ **D) assailed**
To assail someone is to attack them strongly, with blows or, as here, with words. "Assail someone with questions" is a common phrase.

3. The new evidence was ___ to everything the detectives had believed about the case until then.
✔ **A) contrary**
Contrary to means opposite to or completely different from. The new evidence pointed the other way from what the detectives believed.

4. Without a single witness, the detectives could only ___ a possible sequence of events, which they hoped the lab results would confirm.
✔ **C) hypothesize**
To hypothesize is to put forward an idea as a possible explanation that still has to be tested. The detectives' version of events is waiting for the lab results. (British English: hypothesise.)

5. Lack of sleep can seriously ___ a witness's memory, so statements taken late at night are checked with extra care.
✔ **B) impair**
To impair something is to damage it or make it weaker, so that it does not work as well. Tired witnesses may remember events less clearly.

6. From the muddy footprints by the back door, the detective drew the ___ that the thief had come in from the garden.
✔ **D) inference**
An inference is a conclusion you reach from the facts you have. "Draw an inference" is the usual phrase; the footprints are the evidence, not the conclusion.

7. A good investigator tries to look at the facts ___, setting aside any personal feelings about the people involved.
✔ **C) objectively**
Objectively means without letting personal feelings or opinions affect your judgement. Intuitively would be the opposite: trusting a feeling rather than the facts.

8. Airport staff called the police because the unattended bag looked ___: nobody had come back for it in over an hour.
✔ **D) suspicious**
Suspicious here means giving people the feeling that something could be wrong or unsafe. A bag left alone for an hour seemed worrying.

9. The head of the laboratory would not ___ careless handling of evidence, since one mistake could ruin a whole case.
✔ **C) tolerate**
To tolerate something is to allow it or put up with it, even when you do not like it. The head refused to accept any carelessness at all.

10. The final of the inter-college debating contest, the medical school ___ the law school, filled the main hall to the doors.
✔ **D) versus**
Versus means against and is placed between the two sides in a contest or a legal case. In writing it is often shortened to v or vs.

11. "Investigators spent weeks analyzing bank records to trace where the missing money had gone." In this sentence, the word "analyzing" is closest in meaning to
✔ **D) examining closely**
Analyze means to study something in detail in order to understand it. The investigators went through the records carefully to follow the money. (British English: analyse.)

12. "Critics assailed the police report, saying it had ignored several important witnesses." In this sentence, the word "assailed" is closest in meaning to
✔ **C) attacked**
To assail is to attack, here with strong criticism. Praised is the opposite meaning.

13. "Contrary to what many people think, most fingerprints found at a crime scene are too smudged to be useful." In this sentence, the word "contrary" is closest in meaning to
✔ **B) opposite**
Contrary to means opposite to. The facts about fingerprints go against what many people believe.

14. "The historian hypothesized that the famous jewel theft had been planned by someone inside the museum." In this sentence, the word "hypothesized" is closest in meaning to
✔ A) proposed as a theory
To hypothesize is to suggest an idea that may explain something but has not yet been proved. (British English: hypothesise.)

15. "Even small amounts of alcohol can impair a driver's judgement and slow down reaction times." In this sentence, the word "impair" is closest in meaning to
✔ A) weaken
To impair is to make something weaker or worse. Alcohol makes a driver's judgement less reliable.

16. "The jury was told not to draw any inference from the fact that the accused chose not to speak." In this sentence, the word "inference" is closest in meaning to
✔ C) conclusion
An inference is a conclusion reached from the facts. The jury must not decide anything just because the accused stayed silent.

17. "Judges must weigh the evidence objectively, giving equal attention to both sides of the case." In this sentence, the word "objectively" is closest in meaning to
✔ D) without bias
Objectively means without being influenced by personal feelings. Giving both sides equal attention is judging without bias.

18. "The bank manager became suspicious when the same customer tried to cash three large cheques on one day." In this sentence, the word "suspicious" is closest in meaning to
✔ A) distrustful
Suspicious can also describe a person who feels that something is wrong. The manager began to doubt the customer's honesty.

19. "The new principal made it clear that the school would not tolerate cheating in exams." In this sentence, the word "tolerate" is closest in meaning to
✔ B) allow
To tolerate something is to allow it or accept it. The school will not accept any cheating.

20. "The study compared the cost of prison versus community service for young first-time offenders." In this sentence, the word "versus" is closest in meaning to
✔ B) as opposed to
Versus here means as opposed to or compared with. It sets two choices side by side.

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