ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Advanced Grammar MCQ Test With Answers + PDF Exercise 07

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Explanations

1. **(Please note: The following questions are part of a cloze test. They are interrelated, meaning that the information provided in each question is connected to the others.)**

I can clearly remember the first time I _____ Mr Andrews, my old headmaster, _____ _____.
✓ A) met
We **meet** someone when we see and talk to them for the first time, so **the first time I met Mr Andrews** is the natural collocation. Not **knew**: **know** is a state verb and is not used for the moment of first contact. **Found** and **discovered** are for things or facts, not for first meetings with people.

2. I can clearly remember the first time I _____ Mr Andrews, my old headmaster, _____ _____.
✓ C) although
Although introduces a clause of contrast: I remember it clearly, **although** it was a long time ago. Not **in spite**: it needs **of** and a noun or **-ing** form (**in spite of the time**). **Even** alone cannot join clauses (you would need **even though**), and **nevertheless** is an adverb, usually placed after a full stop or semicolon.

3. I can clearly remember the first time I _____ Mr Andrews, my old headmaster, _____ _____.
✓ B) it's over 20 years ago now
Ago counts back from now to a past moment: **it's over 20 years ago now**. **Since** goes with a starting point (**since 2003**), not with a length of time, so **since over 20 years** is wrong. **It makes 20 years** is a direct translation from other languages and is not English.

4. During the war, I had been _____ school in the north of England but my family had just returned to London.
✓ C) at
Be at school (no article) means being a pupil, attending school as an institution. Not **at the school**: **the** would refer to one particular school building already mentioned. **In school** is mainly American and does not fit with **in the north of England** in this British text.

5. _____ for children to go to and my father had to go from _____ asking them _____ _____ pupil.
✓ A) There were not enough schools left
Left here means remaining, after the others were gone (many schools were damaged in the war): **There were not enough schools left**. Not **rested**: **rest** means relax, not remain (a false friend). **There didn't stay** is not used with **there**, and **not still** is the wrong word order and meaning.

6. _____ for children to go to and my father had to go from _____ asking them _____ _____ pupil.
✓ A) one to another
The fixed phrase is **from one (school) to another**, meaning visiting them in turn. Not **each to other** or **one to other**: **other** needs **an** here (**another**). **The ones to the others** is not idiomatic.

7. _____ for children to go to and my father had to go from _____ asking them _____ _____ pupil.
✓ D) to take me
The pattern is **ask someone to do something**: **asking them to take me**. Not **for taking me** or **for to take me**: **ask for** is followed by a noun (**ask for help**), and **for to** is never correct. **That they took me** is also wrong after **ask them**.

8. _____ for children to go to and my father had to go from _____ asking them _____ _____ pupil.
✓ B) as a
As shows a real role or function: I would actually be a pupil, so **take me as a pupil**. A singular countable noun needs **a**. Not **like a pupil**: **like** means similar to, which would suggest I only looked or behaved like a pupil.

9. I used to go with him but he had _____ hard time trying to persuade people _____ him that I seldom had to do _____.
✓ B) such a
Such a comes before adjective + singular countable noun: **such a hard time**. **So** goes with an adjective alone (**so hard**), and **a so** is never correct.

10. I used to go with him but he had _____ hard time trying to persuade people _____ him that I seldom had to do _____.
✓ D) even to see
The pattern is **persuade someone to do something**, and **even** adds emphasis: people would not **even** agree **to see** him. Not **even seeing**: **persuade** takes the infinitive, not the **-ing** form. **For to see** is never correct.

11. I used to go with him but he had _____ hard time trying to persuade people _____ him that I seldom had to do _____.
✓ C) any test
Seldom has a negative meaning, so it is followed by **any**, as in other negatives: **I seldom had to do any test**. Not **no test**: this would make a double negative with **seldom**. **Some** is used in positive sentences.

12. We had been to all the schools _____ we lived, but _____ my father argued, the more impossible it became.
✔ **A) near where**
Near needs an object, and here the object is a clause: **near where we lived** (= near the place where we lived). Not **near** or **near to** alone: they cannot be followed directly by **we lived**. **Near the place there** is ungrammatical.

13. We had been to all the schools _____ we lived, but _____ my father argued, the more impossible it became.
✔ **B) the more**
This is the double comparative **the more … , the more …**, showing that two things change together: **the more my father argued, the more impossible it became**. Both parts must use **the** + comparative, so **the most** and **how much** are wrong.

14. In the end, we went to a school _____ from home.
✔ **C) about five miles away**
Distance from a place is given with **away**: **about five miles away from home**. Not **five miles far**: **far** is not used after a measurement in positive sentences. **Five miles long** describes length, not distance.

15. The headmaster _____ for at least an hour.
✔ **B) kept us waiting**
The pattern is **keep someone + -ing**, meaning make someone wait for a long time: **kept us waiting**. Not **made us to wait**: **make** takes the bare infinitive without **to** (**made us wait**), and **make** + **-ing** is wrong.

16. While we were waiting, I looked around the _____, _____ was one of those old Victorian structures, completely _____ but still standing.
✔ **D) school building**
School building is a compound noun: the first noun says what kind of building it is (compare **office building**). Not **school's building**: the possessive **'s** shows ownership, not type. **Building of the school** sounds unnatural here.

17. While we were waiting, I looked around the _____, _____ was one of those old Victorian structures, completely _____ but still standing.
✔ **A) which**
After a comma we need a non-defining relative clause, and for things it starts with **which**: **the school building, which was …**. Not **that**: it cannot follow a comma in a non-defining clause. **What** does not refer back to a noun, and **it** would make a comma splice.

18. While we were waiting, I looked around the _____, _____ was one of those old Victorian structures, completely _____ but still standing.
✔ **D) out of date**
Out of date means old-fashioned or no longer modern: an old Victorian building that is **out of date but still standing**. The other options are not fixed English expressions (**past its date** is close to **past its sell-by date**, which is for food).

19. When the headmaster's secretary finally let us _____ his office, Mr Andrews spoke to me first.
✔ **D) into**
Let is followed by an object and the bare infinitive (**let us enter**), or simply by a preposition of movement: **let us into his office**. Not **to enter** or **to come into**: **let** never takes **to**.

20. "Why do you want to come here?" he said. I had been thinking _____ something about studying but I couldn't help _____ the boys outside.
✔ **A) of saying**
Think of + -ing means consider doing something: **I had been thinking of saying something**. Not **of telling something**: **tell** normally needs a person as object (**tell him something**), while **say something** needs none. **Think to say** is not the right pattern.

21. I had been thinking _____ something about studying but I couldn't help _____ the boys outside.
✔ **B) remembering**
Can't/couldn't help is followed by the **-ing** form: **I couldn't help remembering**. Not **reminding**: **remind** means make someone else remember (**remind me of**), so it doesn't fit here.

22. "I don't know _____ in London," I said.
✔ **D) anyone**
In negative sentences we use **anyone**: **I don't know anyone**. Not **no one**: **don't** + **no one** is a double negative. **Someone** is used in positive sentences.

23. "I'd like _____ with the other boys. I read a lot of books, too," I added.
✔ **C) to play**
Would like is followed by the **to**-infinitive: **I'd like to play**. Not **playing**: **like + -ing** expresses general enjoyment, but **would like** always takes **to** + verb.

24. "All right," Mr Andrews said. "We have one place free, _____."
✔ **C) in fact**
In fact adds information or emphasis, meaning really or actually: **We have one place free, in fact.** The other options are not natural fixed phrases in this position (**in truth** is formal and rare; **it's the truth** would need a new sentence).

25. My two years at that school were among the _____ of my life.
✔ **B) happiest**
Among the … needs a superlative, and **happy** forms it with **-iest**: **among the happiest of my life**. Not **happier**: a comparative compares only two things. **Most happiest** is wrong because it uses **most** and **-est** together.