ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Essential Words for the TOEFL Lesson 8 Vocabulary Test

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1	C	2	D	3	D	4	A	5	B	6	B	7	A	8	C	9	A	10	D
11	B	12	B	13	D	14	A	15	D	16	D	17	A	18	C	19	D	20	B

Explanations

1. **Choose the synonym.**
flaw
✓ **C) defect**
A **flaw** is a fault or weakness in something, so its synonym is **defect**: **The vase was cheap because of a small flaw in the glass.** A **particle** is a tiny piece, not a fault.

2. dictate
✓ **D) impose**
To **dictate** means to give orders or set rules that others must follow, which is the meaning of **impose**: **The company dictates strict working hours.** Not **engender**, which means to cause or produce something.

3. hasten
✓ **D) accelerate**
To **hasten** means to make something happen faster or sooner, so it is closest to **accelerate**: **The rain hastened the end of the game. Crawl** means the opposite, to move very slowly.

4. crop
✓ **A) harvest**
A **crop** is the plants a farmer grows and gathers, or the amount gathered in one season, so it is closest to **harvest**: **This year's wheat crop was very large.**

5. fragment
✓ **B) particle**
A **fragment** is a small piece broken off something larger, so its synonym is **particle**: **fragments of broken glass**. The other options have no connection with small pieces.

6. mammoth
✓ **B) enormous**
Mammoth used as an adjective means extremely large, so its synonym is **enormous**: **a mammoth task**. Not **minuscule**, which means the opposite, extremely small.

7. manageable
✓ **A) docile**
Manageable here means easy to control or handle, which is the meaning of **docile**: **a docile horse** is calm and easy to control. Not **relaxed**, which describes how someone feels, not how easy they are to control.

8. discriminate
✓ **C) distinguish**
To **discriminate** (between things) means to see or recognise the difference between them, so it is closest to **distinguish**: **Some people cannot discriminate between red and green.** Not **distort**, which means to change the shape or meaning of something.

9. reflect
✓ **A) mirror**
To **reflect** means to show an image of something, or to show its character, which is the meaning of **mirror**: **The lake reflected the mountains.** Not **confirm**, which means to show that something is true.

10. derive
✓ **D) obtain**
To **derive** something means to get or take it from a source, so it is closest to **obtain**: **Many English words are derived from Latin. Discard** means the opposite, to throw something away.

11. Testing metals for quality assurance can be accomplished by several methods. One common nondestructive technique, used to locate surface cracks and **flaws** in metals, employs a penetrating liquid. Normally this fluid is brightly dyed or fluorescent. After being spread over the surface of the material, it soaks into any tiny cracks. The liquid is cleaned off, allowing cracks and blemishes to be easily seen.

The word **flaws** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
✓ **B) defects**
Flaws are faults or weaknesses, so the closest meaning is **defects**. The passage puts **surface cracks and flaws** together and later calls them **cracks and blemishes**, which are both kinds of fault. **Cavities** and **dents** are only particular types of damage, not general faults.

12. An important task of management is to motivate individual workers to coordinate their collective efforts to achieve an organization's goals. The concepts and methods used to structure work and to design organizations have changed considerably. An organization's age can often be predicted by the way work is structured. Work practices tend to **reflect** the organization's design theory present at the time the organization was founded.

The word **reflect** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
✓ **B) mirror**
To **reflect** here means to show or copy the character of something, so the closest meaning is **mirror**. The passage says work practices show the design theory that existed when the organisation was founded. Not **influence**, because the practices do not change the theory; they copy it.

13. The Mayflower Compact was a document signed by 41 of the male passengers on the Mayflower before their landing at Plymouth, Massachusetts. The passengers, concerned that some members of the company might leave the group and settle on their own, **negotiated** laws amongst themselves to create the document. The Mayflower Compact created a political body whose purpose was to form a simple government. Those who signed the compact pledged to abide by any future laws and regulations.

In stating that the settlers **negotiated**, the author means that _____.
✓ **D) they reached a compromise**
To **negotiate** means to discuss something with others until everyone accepts an agreement, so the settlers **reached a compromise**. The passage says they negotiated laws **amongst themselves** to create a shared document. Not **agreed immediately**, because negotiation involves discussion and give-and-take.

14. Before the invention of electroacoustic equipment that generates and measures sound, the available hearing tests gave approximate results in the best cases. A person's hearing could be explained in terms of the ability to **distinguish** between the ticking of a watch and the clicking of coins or to determine the distance at which conversational speech or a whispered voice could no longer be understood.

The word **distinguish** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
✓ **A) discriminate**
To **distinguish** between two things means to notice the difference between them, which is also the meaning of **discriminate**. The passage describes telling the ticking of a watch apart from the clicking of coins. Not **listen**, because you can listen without noticing a difference.

15. When DNA is subjected to restriction-enzyme activity, **fragments** of various sizes are formed. This process reveals a unique pattern of restriction-enzyme DNA. This specific DNA pattern found in each human genetic lineage is unique, because each person, except for identical twins, is formed from different combinations of the genetic material from two family lines. The pattern of sizes of the DNA from an individual is unique and can serve as a "DNA fingerprint" of that person.

The word **fragments** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
✓ **D) particles**
Fragments are small pieces of something larger, so the closest meaning is **particles**. The passage says the enzyme activity breaks DNA into pieces **of various sizes**. **Flaws** are faults, not pieces.

16. The invention of the airplane was a **crushing blow** for proponents of hot air ballooning. Early advocates of ballooning such as Jean-Pierre Blanchard and John Jeffries thought it would transform international travel. Instead, the cost of launching a balloon, the problem of controlling a balloon in high winds, and the instant attractiveness of more stable airplane travel have kept ballooning from becoming more than a hobby for a limited number of wealthy adventurers.

In stating that the airplane's invention was a **crushing blow** for proponents of ballooning, the author means that it _____.
✓ **D) kept ballooning from becoming more popular.**
A **crushing blow** is a severe setback that badly damages someone's hopes or plans. The passage explains that the airplane's attractiveness, together with the cost and difficulty of ballooning, **kept ballooning from becoming more than a hobby**. So the airplane stopped ballooning from becoming more popular.

17. Farming continues to be an important activity on the eastern shore of Maryland. The eastern shore specializes in chickens for urban markets along the East Coast. Although market vegetables are also produced for the same urban markets, corn and soybeans continue to be the two most important crops **cultivated** on Maryland's eastern shore.

The word **cultivated** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
✓ **A) grown**
To **cultivate** crops means to plant and look after them as they grow, so the closest meaning is **grown**. The passage is about corn and soybeans farmed in Maryland. Not **gathered**, which refers only to collecting the crop at harvest time.

18. The earliest grain mills were hand-powered devices. Querns, which have been used for centuries to **crush** grains, are examples of such milling devices. A quern has an upper grinding stone with a handle. This handle rotates inside another stone, which contains the grain.

The word **crush** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
✓ **C) grind**
To **crush** grain means to press it into small pieces or powder, which is the meaning of **grind**. The passage mentions **an upper grinding stone** that turns against the grain. **Roughen** means to make a surface rough, not to break something into powder.

19. Creating chocolate is an involved process. First, the cacao beans must be meticulously harvested from the cacao tree. The irresistible chocolate candies we are familiar with are **derived** from these beans. The cacao beans must be crushed and then go through a process known as tempering—a repeating cycle of warming and cooling of the liquefied product.

The word **derived** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.
✓ **D) obtained**
Derived from means taken or made from a source, so the closest meaning is **obtained**. The passage says chocolate candies come **from these beans** after they are crushed and tempered. **Separated** does not mean coming from a source.

20. The economic depression that plagued the United States in the 1930s was unique in its size and its consequences. During the worst period of the Depression, in 1933, one in every four American workers was out of a job. The great industrial slump **engendered** extreme hardship throughout the world that persisted throughout the 1930s.

The word **engendered** in the passage is closest in meaning to _____.

✔ **B) produced**

To **engender** means to cause or bring something into existence, so the closest meaning is **produced**. The passage says the industrial slump caused extreme hardship around the world. Not **accelerated**, because the hardship did not exist before the slump, so it was not just made faster.

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