ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Essential Words for the TOEFL The iBT Practice Test

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Explanations

1. **Why does the author give the example of the car manufacturing process in paragraph 2?**
✓ B) To demonstrate how regional manufacturing strengths can contribute to the manufacturing process
Paragraph 2 says transportation can **link different steps in the production process**, each at a different site. The car example shows this: parts are made in different regions and then brought to one site for assembly, so each region's manufacturing strength adds to the final product. Not the options about **location**: the strategically located assembly site is only one detail of the example, not its purpose.

2. Look at the four squares [■] that show where the following sentence could be inserted into the passage:

Thanks to well-developed infrastructures, products such as fresh fruits and vegetables from around the world can be found on the shelves of many modern grocery stores.

Where could the sentence best be added? (A), (B), (C), or (D)

Click on a [■] to insert the sentence into the passage.

✓ B) [B ■]
Square B follows **Distances are erased by speedy means of transportation**, and the next sentence is **For example, air transport allows perishable foods to be distributed to larger market areas.** Fresh fruit and vegetables from around the world are a clear case of distances being erased, and the following perishable-food example then supports the new sentence. Square C is about competition, which does not match the new sentence.

3. The word **spurred** in paragraph 6 is closest in meaning to
✓ A) stimulated
To **spur** something means to encourage it or make it happen faster. The railroad **stimulated** the growth of towns, and those towns quickly became cities. **Hindered** means the opposite, and **spread** does not fit, because the towns grew; they did not spread out.

4. The phrase **This phenomenon** in paragraph 4 refers to
✓ C) the increase in the number of opportunities for trade.
This phenomenon points back to the previous sentence: a transportation system **widens the number of opportunities for suppliers and buyers to trade**. That increase in trade opportunities is what **increases availability and promotes pricing competition**. Not the pricing competition option, because pricing competition is the result of the phenomenon, not the phenomenon itself.

5. According to the passage, all of the following are mentioned as benefits of a good system of transportation EXCEPT:
✓ D) Good infrastructure may provide employment opportunities.
The passage mentions faster movement of goods (paragraph 3, **speedy means of transportation**), pricing competition and greater availability for consumers (paragraph 4). It says good roads help workers **reach their job sites** and improve productivity, but it never says infrastructure creates new jobs. So **employment opportunities** is not mentioned.

6. According to the author, what caused the expansion of the United States toward the West?
✓ C) The expansion of the railroad system
Paragraph 6 says that in the mid-nineteenth century **railways expanded westward, bringing with them development**, and that towns grew up around the railroad lines. Not the suburbs option: paragraph 7 describes a later move from the central city to areas just outside city limits, not an expansion toward the West. The high value of land is also part of this later growth of cities.

7. The term **on a regular basis** in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to
✓ A) daily
On a regular basis means happening repeatedly and routinely, again and again at normal intervals. Of the choices, **daily** is the only one that expresses this idea of regular repetition. **Effectively**, **well** and **productively** describe how well something is done, not how often.

8. Which of the following sentences best expresses the essential information in the sentence below? Incorrect answer choices omit important information or change the meaning of the original sentence in an important way.

In addition to well-developed systems of roads that allow workers to reach their job sites quickly and efficiently, thus enhancing the opportunities for improvements to worker productivity, a well-developed infrastructure also makes it possible to reach a larger number of markets over great distances.

✓ B) Along with the possibility of facilitating access to jobsites and enhancing worker productivity, a highly developed infrastructure gives businesses greater access to develop distant markets for their products.

The original sentence has two key ideas: good roads help workers reach their jobs and improve productivity, and infrastructure lets producers **reach a larger number of markets over great distances**. Only the second choice keeps both ideas. The first choice says markets are **limited**, which reverses the meaning. The third and fourth choices add ideas that are not in the original (a larger pool of employees, a **single** system).

9. According to the author, why was a system of interstate highways a necessity?

✓ C) There was an increase in car ownership and interstate commerce.

Paragraph 8 says the national road system **was ill-equipped to handle increasing volumes of auto traffic and commerce**, so a better system was needed. Not the Clay Committee option: the committee's recommendation came after the need was recognized; it did not create the need.

10. The word **fertile** in paragraph 5 is closest in meaning to

✓ D) productive

Fertile literally describes land where plants grow well. Used figuratively, **fertile ground** is a situation where ideas or businesses can develop successfully, so it means **productive**. The paragraph then says much economic growth came from transportation, which supports this meaning.

11. According to the definition of infrastructure in the passage, all of the following are examples of infrastructure EXCEPT:

✓ A) restaurants

Paragraph 1 defines infrastructure as **roadways, railroads, and ports, as well as the vehicles and vessels to use them**. Bridges are part of the road network, and bicycles and jets are vehicles. Restaurants are not part of a transportation network, so they are the exception.

12. Why does the author mention economies of scale in paragraph 3?

✓ B) To demonstrate how small businesses can grow into large companies

Paragraph 3 explains that infrastructure lets a producer reach more markets, so production **can be large enough to promote production economies of scale as companies can increase their customer base**. The author mentions economies of scale to show how businesses can grow larger thanks to wider markets. Price competition for consumers is discussed in paragraph 4, not here.

13. According to the passage, all of the following are true of Nightingale's views on nursing EXCEPT:

✓ C) Nursing had to be taught at universities.

Paragraph 6 says Nightingale wanted nursing to be done by **professionals with special preparation** and that schools of nursing should be set up **as part of the hospital workforce**. She did not say nursing had to be taught at universities; paragraph 8 describes the move to universities as a modern change. The other views are in the passage: she wrote about the **emergent role** of nursing and the changes it had to undergo (paragraph 3), and her work lowered death rates (paragraph 5).

14. The word **emergent** in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to

✓ A) developing

Emergent means just beginning to appear and still **developing**. Nightingale formed ideas about the new, growing role of nursing. **Increasing** describes amount or size, not something new taking shape.

15. Why does the author mention the "germ theory"?

✓ B) To illustrate an important step in the treatment and identification of diseases

Paragraph 1 says germs were found to be **the leading cause of death**, so the germ theory was developed and **methods of preventing and treating infectious diseases were discovered**. The author mentions it as an example of an important step in identifying and treating disease. Not the anesthesia option: anesthesia is mentioned as a separate discovery (**In addition**), not as a result of the germ theory.

16. Based on the information in the passage, which of the following can be inferred about nursing training before the nineteenth century?

✓ A) Nurses were poorly trained, receiving little or no professional preparation.

Paragraph 2 says nursing had **low status** and that **only less educated women elected to pursue nursing**. Paragraph 7 says the idea that nurses needed to be **educated and trained** spread only by the end of the nineteenth century. So we can infer that earlier nurses had little or no professional training. The liberal arts and community settings belong to modern nursing education (paragraph 8).

17. The word **sheer** in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to

✓ A) total

Sheer used before a noun of amount (**sheer volume**, **sheer size**) emphasizes how large it is, meaning complete or **total**. The total amount of medical knowledge made it hard for professionals to keep up.

18. Look at the four squares [■] that show where the following sentence could be inserted into the passage:

In fact, as a result of the advances in nursing, nurses have followed doctors into specialties, including pediatrics, surgery, orthopedics, ophthalmology, psychiatry, and public health.

Where could the sentence best be added?
✓ D) [D ■]
Square D comes right after **to prepare nurses for their expanded roles**. The new sentence, beginning **In fact**, explains what these expanded roles are: specialties such as pediatrics and surgery. The rest of paragraph 8 then explains why training had to change. At square C, the specialties would appear before the idea of expanded roles had been introduced.

19. Which of the following sentences best expresses the essential information in the sentence below? Incorrect answer choices omit important information or change the meaning of the original sentence in an important way.

The expanding mass of new medical and health knowledge to be applied by health services workers has compelled educational systems for physicians, nurses, and other healthcare providers to stay up-to-date, and has applied pressure on the delivery system of services to a public that is well informed about healthcare issues.
✓ C) The demands placed on healthcare workers and educational institutions by the mass of new healthcare information have led, in addition to patients who are better informed, to increased pressure on schools, clinics, and hospitals to deliver quality healthcare.
The original sentence has three key ideas: the mass of new knowledge pushes educational systems to stay up-to-date, it puts pressure on the delivery of services, and the public is well informed. Only this choice keeps all three. The first choice leaves out the pressure on delivering services and the informed public. The second adds an ageing public, and the last wrongly says the information is **available to the public**.

20. Based on the information in the passage, which of the following can be inferred about the results of Nightingale's work in other countries?
✓ B) The need for professional nursing training was acknowledged.
Paragraph 7 says that, largely because of Nightingale, **the idea that a nurse needed to be educated and trained had spread to most of the Western world**. So the need for professional nursing training was recognized. The passage does not say programs were set up **immediately**, and it does not discuss disease programs or clean water as results.

21. Based on the information in paragraph 1, which of the following best explains the term **to keep abreast of**?
✓ C) To stay up-to-date
To **keep abreast of** something means to **stay up-to-date** with the latest news or developments in it, e.g. **Doctors must keep abreast of new research.** The context supports this: medical knowledge keeps growing, so professionals must keep up with **the latest developments**.

22. All of the following statements apply to the field of medicine in the eighteenth century EXCEPT:
✓ D) Germs were discovered as the leading cause of death.
Paragraph 1 says there was **little advancement** in medical science until the eighteenth century, and that germs were discovered **during the nineteenth century**. So the discovery of germs does not apply to the eighteenth century. The other statements follow from the lack of medical knowledge at that time.

23. According to paragraph 8, which of the following is true about modern nursing training?
✓ B) Traditional nursing schools are being replaced by colleges and universities in many countries.
Paragraph 8 says nursing education is **increasingly found in academic rather than in clinical settings**, and in some countries it has moved **exclusively into universities**. This means traditional nursing schools are being replaced by colleges and universities. The other choices contradict the paragraph, which says clinical settings are losing importance.

24. The phrase **This perception** in paragraph 2 refers to
✓ B) the notion that nursing was not an important profession.
This perception refers back to the sentence before it: **nursing was viewed as a profession with low status**, meaning it was not seen as an important profession. Not the option about nurses not being well educated: that comes in the next sentence as a result of the perception, not as the perception itself.

25. What is the main topic of the passage?
✓ B) The skyscraper grew out of economic growth and technological innovation.
The passage explains how the skyscraper was born. Engineering advances (skeletal steel frames, paragraph 2) and Chicago's booming economy and high land values (paragraphs 3–4) made tall buildings possible and desirable. Not the European option: paragraph 2 says the new frames offered **a radical alternative** to European-style buildings. Chicago's economy and Louis Sullivan are only parts of the story, not the main topic.

26. Which factor made it technically possible to construct taller buildings?
✓ D) The development of skeletal framing construction methods
Paragraph 2 says that once the skeleton could be put up first and the exterior **hung** on it, buildings **could grow taller because their weight was suspended and distributed across a framework**. So skeletal framing made tall buildings possible. The need for space (expensive land) made tall buildings attractive, but it did not make them technically possible.

27. The word **striking** in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to
✓ B) prominent
Striking means very noticeable and impressive, so it is close to **prominent**, meaning standing out clearly. The skyscraper is described as architecture's most noticeable innovation. **Interesting** and **appealing** are about how pleasing something is, not how much it stands out.

28. The word **preeminence** in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to
✓ D) supremacy
Preeminence means being better or more important than all others, so it is close to **supremacy**. Chicago wanted to show it was the leading city, and the next sentence adds **It was time for Chicago to claim the heights. Position** is too general, because it does not mean being the best.

29. All of the following are mentioned in the reading as factors in the emergence of the skyscraper as a building type in the nineteenth century EXCEPT:
✓ B) Skeletal framing was used in building cathedrals.
The passage mentions the railroad's economic effect (paragraph 3), Sullivan's use of steel frames (paragraph 5), and capital investment (paragraph 4). Cathedrals appear only as European models for traditional buildings in paragraph 2. Skeletal framing was a new alternative, and the passage never says it was used for cathedrals.

30. Why does the author state that Chicago proved to be a tough survivor?
✓ C) Chicago endured difficult situations.
Paragraph 4 says **The city had grown up quickly, it had recovered from a fire, it had proven itself to be a tough survivor**. A **survivor** is someone or something that lives through hard times, so Chicago endured difficult situations such as the 1871 fire. Not the **thrived** option: it describes success, not surviving hardship.

31. The word **core** in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to
✓ D) center
The **core** of something is its central part. **The city's commercial core** is the business **center** of the city, where land was most expensive. **Business** is a tempting choice, but the word **commercial** already gives that meaning; **core** adds the idea of the center.

32. The word **expansion** in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to
✓ D) growth
Expansion means becoming larger, so it is close to **growth**. The city's continued westward expansion, meaning its growth to the west, **continued to fuel the city's robust economy**. **Movement** only means changing place; it does not include the idea of getting bigger.

33. In stating that **form follows function** in paragraph 5, the author means that the design of a building should
✓ B) stress purpose over appearance.
Paragraph 5 explains the axiom: architects should **start with the function of a building in mind, not its decorative potential**, and show that function honestly. So design should stress purpose over appearance. The opposite choice reverses this, and **hide or disguise** contradicts the idea of showing the function honestly.

34. With which of the following statements would the author of the reading passage most probably agree?
✓ B) Engineering can sometimes inspire architects.
Paragraph 2 shows that **advances in engineering** (skeletal frames) opened **a radical alternative** for architects, and Sullivan built on these structural innovations. So the author would agree that engineering can inspire architects. The other choices use extreme words such as **always** or **primary**, and the passage shows several causes working together, not a single one.

35. **Look at the four squares [■] that show where the following sentence could be inserted into the passage:**

These structures were typically made of stone and built from the ground up, like the pyramids, block by block.

Where could the sentence best be added?
✓ B) [B ■]
These structures must refer to buildings just mentioned. At square B, the previous sentence lists **townhouses, churches, and banks** in European styles. Describing them as stone buildings made **block by block** also creates a contrast with the next sentence, **Meanwhile**, which introduces steel frames as the new method.

36. What can be inferred from the passage about Chicago's economic success?
✓ A) Chicago would not have developed much without the presence of the railroad.
Paragraph 3 says **it was the railroad that … put the city on the map economically**, by moving cattle through Chicago to the East. So we can infer Chicago would not have developed much without the railroad. Not the architecture option: the passage says the economy led to new architecture, not the other way round.

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