ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Fewer or Less Quiz: 20 Questions with Answers

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Explanations

1. I'm trying to spend ___ money on snacks this month.
✔ **A) less**
Money is uncountable: we ask how much money, so we use less.

2. In careful writing: there were ___ people on the bus today than yesterday.
✔ **B) fewer**
People is a plural you can count, so careful writers use fewer. Dictionaries record less with plurals too, and less people is common in speech, but it is usually corrected.

3. The film lasted ___ than two hours.
✔ **C) less**
Two hours here is one amount of time, so we say less than two hours.

4. Our new car uses ___ petrol than the old one.
✔ **C) less**
Petrol is uncountable, so we use less, the opposite of much.

5. Great, that's one ___ thing to remember!
✔ **A) less**
One less thing is the normal fixed phrase. One fewer is also correct, but it sounds formal.

6. In careful writing: which team let in the ___ goals all season?
✔ **D) fewest**
Goals are countable, so the superlative is fewest. Least goes with uncountable nouns, like the least time.

7. This jacket is ___ expensive than the blue one.
✔ **B) less**
Only less can go before an adjective: less expensive, less difficult.

8. In careful writing: no ___ than 400 runners took part in the race.
✔ **A) fewer**
Runners are counted, so careful writing uses no fewer than. Dictionaries also record less with numbers like this, and no less than is common.

9. ___ than half of the class handed in their homework on time.
✔ **C) Less**
Half is a fraction, which is an amount, so less than half is the usual choice.

10. In careful writing: ___ children walk to school these days than in the past.
✔ **B) Fewer and fewer**
Children are counted, so careful writing uses fewer and fewer for a number that keeps falling. Dictionaries record less with plurals too, but careful writers avoid it.

11. Children ___ than five years old travel free on the train.
✔ **D) less**
Age is an amount, like money, time and distance, so we say less than five years old (or under five).

12. Which sentence is correct?
✔ **D) I have less homework than you.**
Homework is uncountable: it has no plural, and it takes less.

13. Which ending follows the strict rule on a supermarket sign? "10 items or ___"
✔ **B) fewer**
Items are countable, so the strict rule asks for 10 items or fewer. Many signs say or less, and Merriam-Webster's usage guide prefers less in phrases like 3 items or less.

14. After we changed the menu, we had far ___ complaints.
✔ **A) fewer**
Complaints is a countable plural, so we use fewer. Before fewer, say far, many or a lot, not much.

15. A short warm-up can ___ the risk of injury.
✔ **C) lessen**
After can we need a verb. Lessen is the verb: it means make smaller or weaker.

16. My bag is heavy, but I have ___ luggage than you.
✔ **D) less**
Luggage is uncountable: we ask how much luggage, so we use less. Compare fewer suitcases.

17. The job is almost finished: it's more or ___ done.
✔ **B) less**
More or less is a fixed phrase. It means almost or roughly.

18. It will take at ___ an hour to get there.
✔ **D) least**
At least is a fixed phrase, and it is correct with any noun, countable or not.

19. Which of these cars uses the ___ fuel?
✔ **C) least**
Fuel is uncountable, so the superlative is least. Fewest goes with plural nouns, like the fewest goals.

20. A late bus or a long walk in the rain? The bus is the ___ of two evils.
✓ C) lesser
The lesser of two evils means the less bad choice. Lesser is a formal adjective meaning smaller or less important.

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