ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

General ESL Vocabulary MCQ Test With Answers – Upper Intermediate Level Exercise 06

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11	**D**	12	**B**	13	**D**	14	**A**	15	**C**	16	**A**	17	**E**	18	**D**	19	**A**	20	**A**

Explanations

1. It seems to me that they never gave a thought to _____ future problems when the plans were being laid down five years ago.
✔ **C) probable**
Probable means likely to happen. Planners should think about problems that will **probably** come in the future. **Unbelievable**, **impossible** and **unreasonable** do not describe problems you should plan for.

2. My _____ objection to the new plan is that it is far too expensive.
✔ **E) principal**
Principal is an adjective meaning main or most important: **my principal objection** = my main objection. Not **principle**: that is a noun meaning a basic rule or belief, and it sounds the same, so the two are easy to confuse.

3. Every substance has a melting point and a boiling point. The former is the temperature at which it changes from solid to liquid. The _____ is the temperature at which it changes from liquid to gas.
✔ **E) latter**
The former … the latter refers to the first and the second of two things just mentioned. Here **the latter** means the boiling point. Not **later**: that word is about time (**see you later**).

4. You could _____ to be a little bit more friendly, couldn't you?
✔ **E) afford**
You could afford to + verb is an informal way to say that someone should do something more, and that it would not cost them anything: **You could afford to be more friendly**. **Afford** is followed by **to** + infinitive. The other options do not fit this pattern.

5. People become quite _____ when it comes to discussing the differences between the sexes.
✔ **A) illogical**
Illogical means not reasonable or not based on clear thinking. People often become emotional and **illogical** about sensitive topics. **Illiterate** (unable to read), **illegible** (impossible to read) and **illegal** (against the law) do not fit the meaning.

6. I think it was a gross _____ to condemn her.
✔ **B) injustice**
A gross injustice is a strong collocation meaning a very unfair act. Condemning someone unfairly is an **injustice**. **Impartiality** and **fairness** have the opposite meaning, and **penalty** does not go with **gross** here.

7. I resent your last remarks and certainly demand an apology. Sir, we're running a _____ business here!
✔ **D) respectable**
Respectable means honest, proper and socially acceptable: **a respectable business**. The speaker is offended because the remarks suggested the business was not honest. **Remarkable** means unusual or impressive, which does not fit.

8. Both countries have declined to _____ the treaty on the nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, partly out of concern for the other's supposed intentions.
✔ **D) endorse**
To **endorse** a treaty means to officially approve or support it. The countries **declined**, meaning they refused to give that approval. **Advocate** means to speak publicly in favour of an idea, but countries formally approve treaties, so **endorse** is the better word.

9. Precautions of this sort are necessary, for it is next to impossible to _____ the exact nature of the difficulties which will confront us.
✔ **E) foretell**
Foretell means to say what will happen in the future. It is almost impossible to **foretell** exactly what difficulties will come, so precautions are needed. Not **forewarn**: you forewarn a person (**forewarn someone of danger**), not a difficulty.

10. She is very _____. You just couldn't make her walk under a ladder.
✔ **E) superstitious**
A **superstitious** person believes in luck and magic signs. Many people believe that walking under a ladder brings bad luck. Not **credulous**: that means believing things too easily in general, while the ladder is a typical superstition.

11. In the medical profession, men _____ women by two to one.
✔ **D) outnumber**
To **outnumber** means to be greater in number. **By two to one** is a clue that we are counting people: there are twice as many men as women. **Outlive**, **outdo** and **outshine** are not about numbers.

12. Severe difficulties must be _____ before cloning can be done with mammals and humans.
✔ **B) overcome**
To **overcome** a difficulty means to deal with it successfully: **overcome difficulties/problems** is a common collocation. The difficulties must be solved before cloning is possible. **Aggravated** means made worse, which is the opposite.

13. He was quite contented; he led a (an) _____ life.
✓ **D) orderly**
An orderly life is a calm, well-organised life, which matches **quite contented**. The gap needs an adjective before **life**. **Happily** and **prosperously** are adverbs, and **miserable** contradicts **contented**.

14. The bridge is so immensely long that the shape of the earth had to be _____ by its designer as an essential part of the project.
✓ **A) taken into account**
To **take something into account** means to consider it when planning or deciding. The bridge is so long that the designer had to consider the curve of the earth. **Given an account of** means described, which does not fit.

15. Despite these overwhelmingly difficult trading conditions, the company has _____ produced outstanding results.
✓ **C) nevertheless**
Nevertheless means 'in spite of this' and shows contrast. The clue is **Despite** plus **outstanding results**: good results came even though conditions were difficult. **Therefore**, **accordingly** and **consequently** show a result, not a contrast.

16. It suddenly _____ to me that Mr Izbul was the greatest dramatist ever who had never written a play!
✓ **A) occurred**
It occurred to me that… means a thought suddenly came into my mind. Not **dawned**: the correct form is **it dawned on me**, not **dawned to me**. **Happened to me** is about events, not thoughts.

17. Scientists admit they are still _____ by the new disease which is, superficially, not so different from so many other respiratory ailments.
✓ **E) intrigued**
Intrigued means very interested because something is strange or puzzling. Scientists find the new disease puzzling, so they are **intrigued by** it. **Checked** (stopped or examined) does not fit the meaning.

18. After visiting the Archaeological Museum in the morning, the Izbuls kindly _____ us to lunch at a local shish-kebab restaurant.
✓ **D) treated**
To **treat someone to something** means to pay for a meal or an activity for them as a kind gesture: **They treated us to lunch**. The word **kindly** is the clue. **Rewarded** suggests payment for something we did, which is not the meaning here.

19. I've listened to your argument. It's neither here nor there. In other words, it's quite _____.
✓ **A) irrelevant**
Neither here nor there is an idiom meaning not important or not connected to the matter. So the argument is **irrelevant**. The other adjectives describe feelings or size, not relevance.

20. "Have you anything to _____?" said the young customs officer, looking me straight in the eye.
✓ **A) declare**
At customs you **declare** goods, which means you officially tell the officers about things you are bringing into the country that may need tax. **Anything to declare?** is the standard question. Not **hide**: an officer would not ask you what you want to hide.

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