ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Irrelevant Sentences Advanced Level Test – Quiz (Online Exercise With Answers) 1

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Explanations

1. *(Question with a long text: see the questions PDF.)*
✔ **B) II**
The passage is about the long history of hoop games. Sentence I gives the main idea, III gives an example from ancient Egypt, and IV and V describe the 14th-century English craze and its injuries. Sentence II comments on the **word** 'hula hoop' and adds nothing to this history, so it breaks the flow. Not V: **at the time** refers back to the 14th century in IV, so V continues the same point.

2. (I) The legendary jazzman Charlie Parker, popularly known as “Bird”, was born in Kansas City, Kansas in 1920. (II) When he was 7, his family moved across the river to Kansas City, Missouri. (III) Charlie played tuba in his high school band, but his mother thought it looked funny and bought him a saxophone instead. (IV) Kansas City was one of the great jazz centres of the time. (V) Because he was self-taught on this instrument, he developed a strange but highly original style.
✔ **D) IV**
The sentences follow Parker's early life step by step. Sentence III ends with him getting a saxophone, and V continues with **this instrument**, the saxophone. Sentence IV moves to Kansas City as a jazz centre and separates V from the sentence it refers back to.

3. (I) Few would dispute V. S. Naipaul's status as probably the greatest modern writer of Indian origin. (II) Indeed, some would go further and argue that he is the greatest modern writer of English prose. (III) Moreover, his views are taken very seriously, and for good reason. (IV) He is a writer whose fiction and nonfiction form a body of work of great brilliance. (V) Therefore, he displays an immoral and humiliated style.
✔ **E) V**
Sentences I–IV all praise Naipaul. He is the greatest modern writer of Indian origin, perhaps even of English prose. His views are respected, and his work is brilliant. Sentence V suddenly criticises his style and contradicts this praise. The linker **Therefore** is also illogical, because nothing earlier leads to that conclusion.

4. (I) Popular literature includes both those writings intended for the masses and those that find favour with large audiences. (II) It can be distinguished from artistic literature in that it is designed primarily to entertain. (III) Unlike high literature, which seeks a high degree of formal beauty or subtlety, popular literature is generally aimed to be simple enough to be understood by the average reader. (IV) In this way, high literature aims to appeal to ordinary readers. (V) Therefore, the growth of popular literature has paralleled the spread of literacy through education.
✔ **D) IV**
The passage contrasts popular literature, which is simple and written for ordinary readers, with high literature, which seeks formal beauty. Sentence IV says **high literature** aims to appeal to ordinary readers. That contradicts sentence III and the main idea. Sentence V correctly links popular literature to the spread of literacy.

5. (I) Worrying news comes from Britain about the high school curriculum. (II) In the country that discovered gravity, evolution and DNA, the popularity of Maths and Science is on the decline. (III) In the short term, it may be necessary to make use of the universities' resources. (IV) The number of secondary school pupils who choose to study these subjects is falling due to their difficulty. (V) The authorities' response is to make the courses a lot easier starting next year.
✔ **C) III**
The passage follows one chain of ideas. Maths and Science are becoming less popular in British schools (II), fewer pupils choose them because they are hard (IV), and the authorities plan to make the courses easier (V). Sentence III, about using universities' resources, is not connected to this chain and separates II from IV.

6. (I) The telephone companies in North America have a major problem. (II) They're running out of numbers for their customers. (III) The system now in use was invented in 1947. (IV) No one then had any idea how fast the population would grow. (V) Many people today prefer sending text messages to making phone calls.
✔ **E) V**
The passage explains why telephone companies are running out of numbers. The numbering system dates from 1947 (III), and nobody expected the population to grow so fast (IV). Sentence V is about people's habits, preferring texts to calls, and has nothing to do with the shortage of numbers.

7. (I) Many scientists, including Charles Darwin, wondered why we cry tears. (II) But, in fact, animals cry, too. (III) What is the biological or evolutionary purpose of tears? (IV) We could just as well cry without any tears falling. (V) Despite his further studies, Darwin couldn't find the answer to this crying matter.
✔ **B) II**
The passage asks why humans cry **tears**, and what their purpose is. Sentence III asks the question, IV shows why it is puzzling (we could cry without tears), and V says even Darwin found no answer. Sentence II switches to animals and is not linked to the question about the purpose of human tears. Not IV: it supports the question in III.

8. (I) Some of the most famous classical composers died quite young. (II) Most of the musicians died in their beds while sleeping. (III) Among these, for example, were Schubert and Mozart, who both died very early in their thirties. (IV) But not all composers have had short lives. (V) Bach lived until age 65 and Haydn until age 77.
✔ **B) II**
The topic is how long famous composers lived: some died young (I, III) and others lived long lives (IV, V). Sentence II is about **how** musicians died, in their sleep, and has nothing to do with age. It also separates **Among these** in III from the composers it refers to in I.

9. (I) Exercising in your home may be good for your health, but it may not be good for your children. (II) In 1990, about 13,000 children were hurt by exercise equipment. (III) The exercise bicycle was the most common cause of injury. (IV) Age 3 is considered to be too early for the kids to start kindergarten. (V) Many children lost a finger or a toe in the wheels of these bicycles.
✔ **D) IV**
The passage is about children hurt by home exercise equipment, especially exercise bicycles (II, III, V). Sentence IV talks about the right age to start kindergarten, a completely different subject.

10. (I) Why do we grow old? (II) This is a question that people have asked since the beginning of history. (III) Now biologists are looking for scientific answers to this question. (IV) They think that ageing is part of our genetic program. (V) Most of the baboons die younger than the chimpanzees.
✔ **E) V**
The passage is about why humans grow old and how biologists now study ageing as part of our genetic program. Sentence V compares the lifespans of baboons and chimpanzees, which is not connected to the question of why we age.

11. (I) By 1984, NASA, the United States space program, had carried out many successful flights of the space shuttle. (II) In fact, Americans were beginning to take the whole NASA program for granted. (III) Then, the president announced that the next shuttle would carry a school teacher into space. (IV) Thousands of teachers from all parts of the country applied for the job. (V) Early in the morning, the Challenger crew had a good breakfast and discussed their plans.
✔ **E) V**
The passage describes how a school teacher came to be chosen for a shuttle flight. Shuttle flights had become routine (I, II), the president announced the plan (III), and thousands of teachers applied (IV). Sentence V suddenly jumps to the crew's breakfast on one particular morning. This detail does not follow from the selection story.

12. (I) Many working people, unfortunately, have no time to take naps. (II) The people in these experiments almost always followed a similar sleeping pattern. (III) If you do have the possibility, however, here are a few tips about making the most of your nap. (IV) Remember that the best time to take a nap is about eight hours after you get up. (V) A nap too late in the day may only make you feel more tired and sleepy afterwards.
✔ **B) II**
The passage gives tips on taking naps for working people (I, III, IV, V). Sentence II refers to **these experiments**, but no experiments have been mentioned. It does not fit between the problem in I and the tips that start in III.

13. (I) By the 1910s, Coca-Cola had become a popular drink and a kind of symbol of American culture. (II) You can find Japanese drink and food all around the world. (III) In the next decade, the Coca-Cola Company began exporting to Europe and other countries. (IV) The drink was soon in great demand around the world. (V) But it was very expensive because of the demand.
✔ **B) II**
Every sentence except II is about Coca-Cola. The passage covers its popularity in America, its export abroad, and the demand for it and its price. Sentence II is about Japanese food and drink, a different subject. It breaks the story of Coca-Cola's spread, and **In the next decade** in III no longer follows directly from I.

14. (I) The Chinese were the first people to make a book. (II) They discovered how to make paper and how to print books more than a thousand years ago. (III) At that time, there was almost no contact between Europe and China. (IV) Among the many Europeans who travelled to China was Marco Polo. (V) Hence, it was difficult for Europeans to learn about books from the Chinese.
✔ **D) IV**
The argument is that the Chinese made books first, but Europe and China had almost no contact (III), **hence** Europeans could not learn from them (V). Sentence IV, about the many Europeans who travelled to China, contradicts the idea of 'almost no contact'. It also separates **Hence** in V from the reason it depends on in III.

15. (I) A young child's untreated ear infection can lead to serious consequences. (II) The infection can spread to the throat and cause a general illness. (III) Adults with frequent or untreated ear infections cannot hear well. (IV) It can also do permanent damage to a child's hearing ability. (V) Perhaps the least-known consequence of untreated ear infection involves language development.

✔ **C) III**

The passage lists the consequences of an untreated ear infection in a **young child**: general illness (II), hearing damage (IV) and problems with language development (V). Sentence III is about **adults**, so it moves away from the topic. It also breaks the link between II and IV, where **It can also** continues the list.

16. (I) High school graduates are sometimes nervous about attending college because they fear that everything will be different. (II) In fact, there are some important similarities between college and high school. (III) Colleges demand more efficient work whereas high schools are much easier. (IV) In both places, academic success depends on being a responsible student. (V) This means attending classes regularly, doing your homework, and studying new materials carefully.

✔ **C) III**

Sentence II announces the topic: the **similarities** between college and high school. Sentences IV and V describe one of them, being a responsible student. Sentence III describes a **difference** (college is harder), which goes against the point the paragraph is making.

17. (I) Can you think of anything that Ukraine and Japan have in common? Not much, except for one surprising aspect of their cooking. (II) Ukrainians are fond of a dish called pelmeni. (III) It's made of pieces of flat pastry folded around a spicy meat filling. (IV) The Japanese make a dish that is remarkably like it, only they call it gyoza. (V) In both countries, furthermore, people prefer living in flats to living in houses.

✔ **E) V**

Sentence I says the two countries share **one** thing: an aspect of their cooking. Sentences II–IV describe that similar dish, pelmeni and gyoza. Sentence V adds a second similarity about housing, which contradicts 'except for one' in I and is not about food.

18. (I) After several decades, jogging is still a very popular activity in the United States. (II) Many people like to go jogging early in the morning before work or after work in the evening. (III) But running in the streets instead of parks may increase the risk of accidents. (IV) However, in the winter months especially, it may be dark during those hours. (V) To help these joggers a sports shoe manufacturer has invented a new kind of jogging shoes which have little red lights on the back of the heels.

✔ **C) III**

The logic runs: people jog early in the morning or in the evening (II), it may be dark at those times in winter (IV), so a company has made shoes with lights to help **these joggers** (V). Sentence III, about streets versus parks, interrupts this chain. **However** in IV only makes sense directly after II.

19. (I) Have you ever noticed how much of the potato is wasted when you peel it? (II) Now, new technology may bring an end to that loss. (III) When you're peeling just a few potatoes for your dinner, this does not matter, of course. (IV) But just imagine what happens when potatoes are peeled in factories. (V) Industrial potato peelers, in fact, waste an average of 15% of the potato.

✔ **B) II**

The passage builds up the problem of potato waste. It starts with the question (I), says waste doesn't matter at home (III), but it does in factories (IV), where 15% is lost (V). In III, **this** refers to the waste in I. Sentence II jumps ahead to a solution before the problem has been explained, so it breaks the flow.

20. (I) The problem of air pollution has turned up on every continent on Earth - even Antarctica. (II) Winter Quarters Bay, on Antarctica, is the site of an important scientific station. (III) This bay, in fact, is as polluted as many city harbours. (IV) The reason is that for a long time people at the station dumped garbage into the sea. (V) Now, however, that has stopped because an international agreement has limited the dumping of garbage in Antarctica.

✔ **A) I**

Sentences II–V describe **water** pollution in Winter Quarters Bay, caused by people dumping garbage into the sea. Sentence I talks about **air** pollution, which is never mentioned again. So it does not match the rest of the paragraph, even though it comes first.

21. (I) Statistics show that teenage mothers in the United States often have unhealthy babies. (II) These babies often weigh less than normal. (III) They also are generally less intelligent than babies of older mothers. (IV) Doctors have wondered about the reasons for these statistics. (V) The researchers believe that this is probably true for animals.

✔ **E) V**

The passage is about statistics on the babies of teenage mothers in the United States and why doctors are interested in them. Sentence V suddenly mentions animals and refers to **the researchers**, who have not been introduced. It does not follow from IV.

22. (I) Rubber is made from latex, a white liquid found in certain plants. (II) Most of the world's supply of rubber comes from the para rubber tree. (III) When latex was discovered by Europeans, they soon found many uses for it. (IV) This tree originally came from the Amazon Valley in Brazil. (V) The Indians of that area used the latex from the rubber tree to make statues, cups and shoes.

✔ **C) III**

Sentence II introduces the para rubber tree, and IV continues with **This tree**, saying it came from the Amazon. Sentence V then describes how local people used its latex. Sentence III, about Europeans discovering latex, breaks the link between II and IV, so **This tree** no longer has a clear reference.

23. (I) The game of croquet was probably invented in France. (II) In the 13th century, the French villagers played something they called “Paille-maille.” (III) Now it is played everywhere, from the United States to India and Australia. (IV) From there, the game travelled to Ireland, where they called it “crooky.” (V) In the mid-19th century, some people in England began playing “crooky”, and it quickly became popular all around the world.

✔ **C) III**

The passage traces croquet's history in time order: France in the 13th century (II), then Ireland (IV), then England in the mid-19th century (V). Sentence III jumps to the present day. It separates **From there** in IV from France, the place it refers to.

24. (I) The connection between sunlight and cancer has been known for a long time. (II) Doctors usually say that people who are at risk for heart disease should be careful about their diet. (III) They should not eat foods that have a lot of fat. (IV) That means they should not eat nuts, since nuts contain 70-90% fat. (V) Recent research, however, has shown that this advice may be wrong since people who eat nuts seem to have fewer heart problems.

✔ **A) I**

Sentences II–V are about advice on diet for people at risk of **heart disease**, and new research about nuts. Sentence I is about sunlight and **cancer**, a completely different health topic.

25. (I) One of the most important principles in biology is that all living things must come from other living things. (II) This principle was not widely accepted until the 19th century. (III) Before that, people believed that life could come from other kinds of matter. (IV) In other words, a human being can come from a chimpanzee. (V) For example, they thought that worms could come from meat.

✔ **D) IV**

The passage explains that people once believed life could come from non-living matter (III), and V gives an example: worms from meat. Sentence IV is about one living species coming from another, which has nothing to do with life arising from non-living matter. It is not a restatement of III, so **In other words** is misleading, and it separates III from the example in V.

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