ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Irrelevant Sentences Advanced Level Test – Quiz (Online Exercise With Answers) 2

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Explanations

1. *(Question with a long text: see the questions PDF.)*
✔ **B) II**
The paragraph is about ostrich farming in **Texas** and why it pays so well. Sentence II moves to ostrich farms in **Europe**, a different place, and breaks the link between I and III. Sentence III ('so many farmers in Texas') follows naturally from I, and IV–V give the money reasons.

2. (I) In general, style is the way a writer picks words and puts them together. (II) The style usually tells you whom the writer expects to read the work. (III) If the sentences are long and the words are difficult, the writer expects an educated reader. (IV) Some writers pick words with deep emotional appeal in order to urge their readers to act. (V) If the language is rich in slang expressions and current phrases, the writer is talking to a more general group.
✔ **D) IV**
The topic is how a writer's **style** shows **who the expected reader is**. Sentences III and V give the two contrasting cases: an educated reader versus a more general group. Sentence IV is about using emotional words to **persuade readers to act**. That is the writer's purpose, not the audience, so it does not belong.

3. (I) Many observers have pointed out that students are not very efficient career planners. (II) Career planning does not necessarily follow routine or logical steps. (III) Each of us places weight on different factors and may consider certain phases of career planning at different times. (IV) Thus, career planning includes gathering information about ourselves and about occupations, estimating the probable outcomes of various courses of action. (V) And finally, such planning leads us to choose alternatives that we find attractive and feasible.
✔ **A) I**
Sentences II–V describe the **process of career planning**: it is not routine, people weigh different factors, they gather information and estimate outcomes, and **finally** they choose. Sentence I judges **students** as poor planners. None of the other sentences picks up this idea, so it is the odd one out.

4. (I) Outlining is a more organized form of note-taking. (II) In an outline, a system of numbering and indenting entries helps to organize and label the levels of importance of ideas. (III) Another way to help you interpret what you read is to develop skills in generalizing. (IV) The main ideas are placed at the left margin in an outline and numbered with Roman numerals. (V) Supporting ideas, indented under the main ideas, are marked with capital letters.
✔ **C) III**
The paragraph explains **outlining**. Sentence I introduces it, II gives the system, and IV and V describe where main and supporting ideas go. Sentence III changes the subject to a different skill, **generalizing**, and breaks the description between II and IV. Not I: it is the topic sentence that the rest of the paragraph develops.

5. (I) In a general sense, sociology can be considered a science. (II) Like other scientific disciplines, it engages in an organized, systematic study of phenomena in order to enhance understanding. (III) All scientists, whether studying mushrooms or murderers, attempt to collect precise information through methods of study which are objective. (IV) They rely on a careful recording of observations and accumulation of data. (V) Of course, there is a great difference between psychology and astronomy.
✔ **E) V**
The paragraph argues that sociology is a **science** because, like all sciences, it studies phenomena in an **organized, systematic** and **objective** way. Sentences II–IV all stress what the sciences have **in common**. Sentence V suddenly points out a **difference** between two other fields, psychology and astronomy, which does not support the main idea.

6. (I) The Egyptians were one of the first settled civilizations. (II) They wrote down what they knew, so ideas could be passed on. (III) The Egyptians' religious practices both helped and hindered scientific advances. (IV) This writing, combined with plentiful archaeological remains, makes it easier for historians to know about Egyptian medicine. (V) By means of the remains, the progress in surgery and anatomy made by the Egyptians has been revealed.
✔ **C) III**
Sentence IV begins with **This writing**, which refers back to sentence II ('They wrote down what they knew'). Sentence III, about **religious practices**, sits between them and breaks this link. The paragraph is about how writing and remains tell us about Egyptian medicine, not about religion.

7. (I) Scientists believe that the first Americans came from Northeast Asia. (II) These people were probably hunters from what is now northern China, Japan, or Siberia. (III) Many thousands of years ago, they crossed over from Asia to what is now Alaska. (IV) Anthropologists found the teeth of some very early Indians. (V) From there, they spread all through North and South America.

✔ **D) IV**

The paragraph traces the **route** of the first Americans: from Northeast Asia, across to Alaska, and **From there** through the Americas. **From there** in V refers to Alaska in III. Sentence IV, about anthropologists finding **teeth**, interrupts this sequence and is about evidence, not the migration route.

8. (I) Sao Paulo is the largest city in Brazil and also the largest city in South America. (II) Many very poor people in Sao Paulo do not have any place to live. (III) The official population of the city is 10 million, but the real population is probably more like 13 million. (IV) This is partly because the city is growing very quickly. (V) Every year hundreds of thousands of people move there.

✔ **B) II**

The paragraph is about the size and growth of Sao Paulo's population: the largest city, 10 or 13 million people, fast growth and hundreds of thousands of new arrivals each year. Sentence II, about homeless people, is a different topic. Not IV: **This is partly because…** explains the population figure in III.

9. (I) For many years, alligator skin was popular in the United States for making fashionable leather shoes and purses. (II) From 1870 to 1965 at least ten million alligators were killed in the United States for leather. (III) Then, in 1967, the government made laws against hunting alligators. (IV) After that, the alligator population began to grow again. (V) Alligators are often confused with crocodiles, which have longer, narrower snouts.

✔ **E) V**

The paragraph tells the story of **alligator hunting and population**: popular leather, millions killed, a law in 1967, and **After that** the population grew again. Sentence V moves to a different subject, **how to tell alligators from crocodiles**, which has nothing to do with hunting or numbers. Not IV: 'After that' links it directly to the 1967 law in III.

10. (I) The Los Angeles Lakers are a championship basketball team. (II) Their home court is the Crypto.com Arena, a modern stadium in downtown Los Angeles, not far from Hollywood. (III) Among their fans are many big names in the entertainment industry, including Jack Nicholson and Leonardo DiCaprio. (IV) Most basketball teams are based in large cities. (V) Whenever the Lakers play home games, they can be sure of a few movie stars to cheer for them.

✔ **D) IV**

The paragraph is about the Lakers and their famous fans: a home court near Hollywood, celebrity fans and movie stars at home games. Sentence IV makes a general statement about where **most basketball teams** are based. It tells us nothing about the Lakers or their fans, and it breaks the link between III and V.

11. (I) In many parts of the world, people take naps in the middle of the day. (II) This is especially the case in warmer climates, where the heat makes work difficult in the early afternoon. (III) Researchers are now saying that naps are good for everyone in any climate. (IV) First of all, a daily nap means a more rested body and mind and many health benefits. (V) A nap that lasts too long will also make it difficult for you to sleep at night.

✔ **E) V**

From sentence III onwards the paragraph argues that naps are good for everyone and lists their benefits (**First of all, … many health benefits**). Sentence V gives a disadvantage of long naps, which goes against this main idea. Its word **also** does not fit either, because nothing negative comes before it.

12. (I) One of the oldest themes in literature is the love triangle. (II) This theme has inspired some of the world's classics. (III) However, it has also inspired some very poor writing. (IV) The ending is almost always tragic. (V) Romeo and Juliet, fortunately, falls into the first category.

✔ **D) IV**

Sentences II and III set up two categories: love triangles have inspired classics and also very poor writing. Sentence V refers back to this with **the first category**. Sentence IV, about the tragic ending, comes between them and breaks the link, so V no longer clearly refers to anything.

13. (I) While shopping malls have changed American life, not all of their effects have been positive. (II) That is because you can almost always find whatever you like. (III) First of all, they've taken away customers from smaller shops in the area and forced them to close. (IV) They are usually far from any town centre, so people must use cars to get there. (V) In addition, malls are harmful to the environment because they cover large areas with buildings instead of trees.

✔ **B) II**

The topic sentence says **not all effects of malls have been positive**, and III–V list the negative effects: small shops close, people must drive, and the environment suffers. Sentence II gives a **positive** point ('you can almost always find whatever you like'). It contradicts the purpose of the paragraph, and its 'That is because' does not logically follow I.

14. (I) Rafting is a sport that almost anyone can do. (II) Maine contains large areas of wilderness. (III) There you can enjoy a new and exciting sport: white water rafting. (IV) In the past, this sport was practised only in the western states. (V) But now, several outdoor travel companies offer weekend rafting trips.

✔ **A) I**

The paragraph is about white water rafting **in Maine**. **There** in III refers to Maine's wilderness in II, and III presents rafting as a **new** sport. Sentence I makes a general claim that anyone can raft. It does not connect to Maine, and it introduces rafting before III presents it as something new.

15. (I) It may be possible in the future to choose the sex of your child. (II) Researchers in France believe that they've found a way to influence the sex of the unborn child. (III) Malnutrition also leads to an unhealthy pregnancy. (IV) However, other researchers are doubtful about this. (V) They say that the process is really much more complex than the French think.
✔ **C) III**
The paragraph is about French research on **influencing the sex of an unborn child** and other researchers' doubts about it. **However** in IV contrasts directly with the French claim in II. Sentence III, about **malnutrition and unhealthy pregnancy**, is a different topic. Its 'also' has nothing to refer back to.

16. (I) There are various factors that cause the decrease in educational standards. (II) Some people say that overcrowding and lack of discipline are major factors. (III) Others say that too much importance has been given to subjects like art and drama. (IV) For many teachers, on the other hand, the problem is not of falling standards but of rising expectations of parents and employers. (V) Schools must take the demands of employers and parents into consideration.
✔ **E) V**
The paragraph presents different **opinions about the causes** of falling standards: **Some people say…**, **Others say…**, **For many teachers, on the other hand…**. Sentence V is not an opinion about causes. It gives **advice** on what schools must do, so it does not fit the pattern of the paragraph.

17. (I) Monarch butterflies are often seen in swarms of hundreds of thousands, for the Monarch is one of the many butterflies that migrate. (II) Some travel from Canada to Florida and back again, a distance of more than 2,000 miles. (III) Great flocks move southward in autumn. (IV) The Monarch is found in many parts of the world apart from North America. (V) Smaller numbers – only those few that survive – return in spring.
✔ **D) IV**
The paragraph describes the Monarch's **migration**: the journey from Canada to Florida, flocks moving **southward in autumn**, and smaller numbers returning **in spring**. Sentence IV is about **where in the world** the Monarch lives, not its migration, and it separates the autumn and spring sentences, which belong together.

18. (I) Few people realise that dolphins are part of the whale clan. (II) Porpoises also belong to the whale family and are very much like dolphins. (III) In fact, many people do not realise that dolphins aren't fish. (IV) Fish breathe through gills and spawn but the dolphin does neither. (V) Dolphins, like all members of the whale clan, are mammals and they breathe air.
✔ **B) II**
The paragraph explains that dolphins are **mammals**, not fish: they don't have gills, they don't spawn, and they breathe air. Sentence II moves to **porpoises** and how similar they are to dolphins. This does not support the point that dolphins are not fish.

19. (I) When a computer stops working or is replaced, one of three things can happen to it. (II) It might be fixed up and given to someone else who can use it. (III) It could be taken apart and the various parts could be recycled. (IV) Computer technology is growing faster nowadays. (V) The greatest possibility is that it might be sent to the dump.
✔ **D) IV**
Sentence I promises **three things** that can happen to an old computer, and II, III and V give them: reuse, recycling and the dump. Sentence IV, about **technology growing faster**, is not one of the three possibilities and interrupts the list.

20. (I) The biggest obstacle now facing bicycles of all kinds is the unpriced free-for-all on most roads. (II) On the walls of a factory in West London are some of the oddest-looking bicycles ever made. (III) They are the prototypes that Andrew Ritchie welded together from scrap metal and spare parts when trying to make a bike that would fold. (IV) Twenty years and tens of thousands of sales later, the Brompton is the trendiest bike in London and selling fast in Japan and America too. (V) Brompton-toters can travel into town by train or bus, unfold them and then speed through metropolitan traffic.
✔ **A) I**
Sentences II–V tell the story of the **Brompton folding bike**: the first prototypes, Andrew Ritchie's design, its success, and how owners use it. Sentence I talks about a general problem for **all bicycles**, the **free-for-all on most roads**. It has nothing to do with the Brompton, and **They** in III clearly refers to the bicycles in II, not to anything in I.

21. (I) In the past, black always stood for what was feared or hated. (II) For the Christians of the Middle Ages, it was the colour of night and of death. (III) It was the colour of the Devil, of witches and black magic. (IV) Many common expressions, such as 'black sheep' and 'blacklist', still reflect this negative meaning. (V) Since black was worn by monks and nuns and by the clergy, it was associated with piety and self-sacrifice.
✔ **E) V**
The topic sentence says black **always stood for what was feared or hated**, and II–IV support this with night, death, the Devil and negative expressions. Sentence V gives a **positive** meaning of black (**piety and self-sacrifice**), which contradicts 'always' in I. It would need a contrast word such as **However** to fit, so it is the sentence that does not belong.

22. (I) The yew tree is one of three conifers native to Britain and one tree in Scotland may be the oldest tree in Europe. (II) The way to decide how old a yew tree is is to measure its width. (III) The use of the term “native” in this context means that the trees were already growing in the British Isles when the first inhabitants arrived. (IV) Since then these trees have always had great religious significance. (V) People have long followed the custom of planting them in holy places set aside for burial such as churchyards.
✔ **B) II**
Sentence III explains the word **native** from sentence I, so they belong together. IV (**Since then**) and V continue the history and religious role of the yew. Sentence II, about **how to measure a yew's age**, breaks the link between **native** in I and its explanation in III. It is not developed anywhere else in the paragraph.

23. (I) Memories of our first history lessons at school tend to run to extremes. (II) The enthusiastic few recalled them as a window opening out onto an endlessly fascinating past illuminated by colourful personalities and full of interesting events. (III) The National Curriculum changed the way that history was taught in schools. (IV) For the vast majority, however, they were characterised by boring sequences of names and dates to be memorised. (V) Therefore, as soon as the course was over, they were conveniently forgotten.

✔ **C) III**

Sentence I says memories of history lessons **run to extremes**. Sentences II and IV give the two extremes: **the enthusiastic few** and, contrasted with **however**, **the vast majority**. Sentence V follows from IV. Sentence III, about the **National Curriculum changing** how history was taught, is a different topic. It interrupts the contrast between II and IV.

24. (I) The kidnap had clearly been planned meticulously. (II) As I was taking my usual evening stroll with the dog, a rather well-dressed man came up to me and asked me to direct him to the local church hall. (III) I was just turning round to point up the road when a wet cloth was pressed over my nose. (IV) In the USA people are mostly kidnapped for ransom rather than for any other reason. (V) That was the last I knew until I came to in the back of a large van of some kind.

✔ **D) IV**

The paragraph is a **first-person story** of one kidnapping, told in order: the stroll, the stranger, the wet cloth, waking up in a van. Sentence IV gives a general **fact about kidnapping in the USA**. It breaks the story between III and V, which are directly connected ('That was the last I knew').

25. (I) That the great boom in television's popularity is destroying "the art of conversation" seems to be at best irrelevant, and at worst demonstrably false. (II) The average man or woman spends about a third of his or her life asleep, and a further third at work. (III) In the remaining time, people are free to occupy themselves in any way they see fit. (IV) In our great-grandfathers' days, the choice of entertainment was strictly limited in leisure time. (V) But nowadays there is an enormous variety of things to do whenever you're free.

✔ **A) I**

Sentences II–V form a clear line about **leisure time**: a third asleep, a third at work, **the remaining time** free, and the choice of entertainment then (**In our great-grandfathers' days**) and **nowadays**. Sentence I is about television destroying **conversation**. That idea is never picked up in the other sentences, so it does not belong to this group.

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