ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Prepositions (Intermediate / Upper-Intermediate) Test 3

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Explanations

1. Divide 16 _____ 4. 4 is the square root _____ 16.
✔ **A) by / of**
In maths we **divide** one number **by** another: **Divide 16 by 4**. A square root is the square root **of** a number: **4 is the square root of 16**.

2. Write these exercises either _____ ink or _____ pencil.
✔ **B) in / in**
We say **in ink** and **in pencil**, with no article, to say what something is written in: **Write these exercises either in ink or in pencil.** With a tool and an article we can use **with**: **write with a pencil**. Not **by** or **of**, which are not used to say what you write in.

3. Bill was too ill to travel _____ a doctor or a nurse.
✔ **B) without**
Without means not having someone with you. Bill was so ill that he could only travel if a doctor or nurse went with him, so he could not travel **without** one.

4. _____ Denmark, teachers are _____ the best-paid workers.
✔ **B) In / among**
We use **in** with countries: **in Denmark**. **Among** means 'one of a larger group': teachers are **among** the best-paid workers. Not **between**, which is normally used for two separate people or things.

5. Many countries today are suffering _____ lack of food, and unfortunately some people have to do _____ food for several days.
✔ **A) from / without**
We **suffer from** a problem or illness: **suffering from lack of food**. **Do without** something means manage when you don't have it: **do without food for several days**. Not **suffer of**, which is a common mistake.

6. If, _____ smoking cigarettes, more people smoked a pipe, they would be more likely to go through the day _____ eating.
✔ **D) instead of / without**
Instead of + -ing means 'in place of doing something': **instead of smoking cigarettes**. **Without** + -ing means not doing something: **go through the day without eating**.

7. There is an interesting article _____ pensions _____ today's newspaper.
✔ **B) on / in**
An article **on** (or **about**) a subject tells us its topic: **an article on pensions**. We read something **in** a newspaper: **in today's newspaper**. Not **of**, which does not show the topic.

8. He became addicted _____ computer games and his school marks went from bad _____ worse.
✔ **C) to / to**
We are **addicted to** something: **addicted to computer games**. The fixed phrase **go from bad to worse** means 'become even worse than before'.

9. Flu and measles are both caused _____ a virus.
✔ **A) by**
In the passive, **by** introduces the cause or the doer: **caused by a virus**. Not **with**, which is used for tools or instruments.

10. I reminded her _____ her promise.
✔ **D) of**
We **remind someone of** something they should remember: **I reminded her of her promise**. Compare **remind someone to do** something.

11. He recovered _____ his illness only last week.
✔ **D) from**
We **recover from** an illness: **He recovered from his illness**. Not **over**: we say **get over** an illness, but not **recover over**.

12. He is longing _____ the day when he will be able to earn his own living.
✔ **B) for**
Long for something means want it very much: **He is longing for the day when …**

13. The boy who got full marks was suspected _____ cheating.
✔ **C) of**
We **suspect someone of** doing something wrong: **suspected of cheating**. Not **for**, which we use with **blame** or **punish**, not **suspect**.

14. She complained _____ pains in her back.
✔ **D) about**
We **complain about** (or **of**) a problem: **She complained about pains in her back**. **Complain of** is especially common for illness and pain.

15. _____ her fine clothes, everyone knows how poor she is.
✔ **D) In spite of**
In spite of + noun shows a contrast: her clothes are fine, but she is poor. Not **because of**, **due to** or **thanks to**, which give a reason, not a contrast.

16. _____ the day he read the article on lung cancer _____ the day he died, he didn't touch another cigarette.
✔ **B) From / till**
From … till/until … shows the start and end of a period: **from the day he read the article till the day he died**. Not **on**, which is used for a single day.

17. I'm very obliged _____ her for helping me to get that job.
✔ **B) to**
Be obliged to someone for something is a formal way of saying 'be grateful to someone': **I'm very obliged to her for helping me**. Not **for**, because **for** already goes before the reason (**for helping**).

18. This year there has been an increase _____ the number of books sold.
✔ **C) in**
We use **in** after **increase** to name what goes up: **an increase in the number of books sold**. Not **of**, which we use for the amount: **an increase of 10%**.

19. The government imposed a new tax _____ luxuries.
✔ **D) on**
A tax is put **on** things: **a tax on luxuries**, **impose a tax on** something.

20. His efforts resulted _____ success.
✔ **A) in**
Result in shows the effect: **His efforts resulted in success** (the efforts caused success). Not **result from**, which shows the cause: **Success resulted from his efforts**.

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