ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Noun Clauses and Auxiliaries Advanced Level MCQs Test With Answers 1

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Explanations

1. Jeremy was trying to assure me that Sarah _____ my ticket by 5 o'clock that day, as we _____ previously.
✔ **E) would have collected / had arranged**
The reporting verb (**was trying to assure**) is in the past, and **that day** shows the time reference is shifted back. So **will have collected** becomes **would have collected** (future perfect in the past, with **by 5 o'clock**). The arrangement happened before that, so it takes the past perfect: **had arranged**. Not **will have collected / have arranged**, because these forms are not backshifted after a past reporting verb.

2. The lady over there is asking whether the tennis club _____ lessons because she _____ to hire a private instructor for her daughter.
✔ **D) offers / wants**
The reporting verb **is asking** is in the present, so there is no backshift. The question is about a general fact, so the present simple **offers** fits. Her wish is a present state, so **wants** is also present simple. Not **has offered / wanted**, because a past tense for her wish doesn't match **is asking**.

3. Jack's mother asked me why I _____ in the previous week's match and wondered whether I _____ an injury then.
✔ **B) hadn't been playing / had had**
After the past reporting verbs **asked** and **wondered**, events in **the previous week** move back to the past perfect: **hadn't been playing** and **had had an injury**. Not **didn't play / was having**, because **have an injury** is a state and is not normally used in the continuous form.

4. Before we _____ home, our father instructed us again and again not to lose sight of each other while we _____ around the funfair.
✔ **C) left / were strolling**
This is a past narrative, so the time clause takes the past simple: **Before we left home**. The strolling was an activity in progress during the visit, so it takes the past continuous: **while we were strolling**. Not **would be strolling**, because time clauses with **while** do not use **would**.

5. On the first day of the course, the trainees _____ by the manager that they _____ to learn everything in a few days.
✔ **A) were informed / shouldn't expect**
The trainees received the information, so the verb is passive: **were informed by the manager**. The manager was telling them not to hope for something unrealistic, so **shouldn't expect** (advice) fits. Not **had informed**, because that is active and would mean the trainees did the informing.

6. We all wondered how Jack's wife _____ when she _____ about his new job in Outer Mongolia.
✔ **D) would react / heard**
We wondered is past, and the reaction was still in the future from that point, so we use the future in the past: **would react**. The time clause after **when** takes the past simple, **heard**, not **would hear**. Not **had reacted**, because the reaction had not happened yet.

7. I asked Jim whether he _____ his wife to the firm's annual party as well, and he said she _____ her sister's wedding ceremony then.
✔ **D) was bringing / would be attending**
In reported speech, the present continuous used for a future plan (**Are you bringing…?**) becomes **was bringing**. The future continuous **will be attending** (an activity in progress at that time) becomes **would be attending**. Not **is bringing / has attended**, because these are not backshifted after **asked** and **said**.

8. Because I'm repeatedly leaving things behind, my mother always tells me that I _____ that I _____ all my belongings in my bag before leaving the sports centre.
✔ **E) must check / have**
Always tells is present, so there is no backshift. The mother's strong advice is expressed with **must check**, and the thing to check is a present state: **that I have all my belongings**. Not **have to check / had had**, because the past perfect doesn't fit a present habit.

9. The art teacher _____ the headmaster that they _____ some good entries in the children's painting competition already.
✓ **A) informed / had received**
This is a past report: the teacher **informed** the headmaster. The entries arrived before that moment, and **already** signals completion, so the past perfect **had received** is needed. Not **had informed / will be receiving**, because **already** doesn't fit a future continuous.

10. I'm glad to tell you that we _____ our yearly target today, so new sales from now on _____ additional to the budget of our branch.
✓ **C) have reached / will be**
Today is an unfinished period and the result matters now, so the present perfect **have reached** is used. **From now on** points to the future, so **will be** is needed. Not **had reached**, because the past perfect needs another past point of reference.

11. Mr. Higgins phoned his wife to say that she _____ for him to eat dinner because he _____ home rather late.
✓ **C) didn't need to wait / was going to be**
He phoned in the past to say that waiting was unnecessary, so **didn't need to wait** is right. His late arrival was a plan or prediction seen from that past moment, so we use **was going to be**, the future in the past. Not **shouldn't have waited**, which criticises a past action that had already happened.

12. We asked the receptionist if they _____ any room available, and she replied that she _____ the last free room to another couple just ten minutes before.
✓ **D) had / had let**
The present simple **Do you have…?** is backshifted to **had**. The room was let **ten minutes before** the conversation, so the past perfect **had let** is used. Not **were having**, because **have** meaning possession is a state verb and is not used in the continuous.

13. What will you say if the interviewer _____ you why you _____ your present job?
✓ **A) asks / are leaving**
This is a first conditional (**What will you say if…**), so the if-clause takes the present simple **asks**. The interviewer's question, **Why are you leaving?**, refers to a current plan, so **are leaving** stays in the present. Not **will ask**, because **will** is not normally used in an if-clause.

14. Mrs. Smith complained to her husband that the bathroom _____ in a terrible state because the bathtub _____ for days.
✓ **C) was / had been leaking**
After **complained** (past), the present **is** becomes **was**. The leaking had continued up to that moment **for days**, so the past perfect continuous **had been leaking** is used. Not **was leaking**, because **for days** stresses duration up to a past point.

15. When I went to collect the car from the garage, the mechanic said that he _____ the engine the day before, but he _____ the brakes yet.
✓ **B) had fixed / hadn't checked**
The mechanic's words are reported after **said**, so **I fixed the engine yesterday** becomes **had fixed… the day before**. **I haven't checked the brakes yet** becomes **hadn't checked… yet**. Not **wouldn't have checked**, which wrongly suggests a future or hypothetical meaning.

16. Tim: I don't suppose you have seen my glasses, _____?

Ed: _____. Where did you last wear them?
✓ **E) have you / I'm afraid not**
With **I don't suppose…**, the tag matches the verb of the clause after it (**you have seen**) and is positive, because **don't suppose** already makes the sentence negative: **have you?** Ed hasn't seen them, so he politely says **I'm afraid not**. Not **haven't you**, because a negative sentence takes a positive tag.

17. Tim: I'm going to write about Franz Kafka for my literature essay. Ed: _____ I like his style and want to learn more about him.
✓ **B) So am I.**
Ed agrees with a positive statement that uses **be going to** (**I'm going to write…**), so he answers **So am I**: **so** + auxiliary **be** + subject. Not **Neither am I**, because **neither** answers negative statements.

18. The caretaker told us _____ in the sports hall with black-soled shoes on.
✓ **C) not to go**
A reported negative command follows the pattern **tell** + object + **not to** + infinitive: **told us not to go**. Not **don't go**, because direct imperatives are not kept after **told us**.

19. I think there was a demonstration in front of the university today, _____?
✓ **E) wasn't there**
After **I think…**, the question tag matches the clause that follows, here **there was**. A positive clause takes a negative tag, so the answer is **wasn't there?** Not **didn't there**, because the auxiliary must be **was**.

20. The headmaster told the boy _____ the top button of his shirt and _____ at attention.
✓ **E) to fasten / to stand**
Reported commands use **tell** + object + **to**-infinitive: **told the boy to fasten… and to stand**. The second infinitive follows the same pattern. Not **to be fastened**, because the boy does the action himself, so a passive form is wrong.

21. Tim: Jerry won't be taking his dog to Germany, will he?

Ed: _____ He was asking Roy whether he could look after her while he was away.
✓ **B) I don't expect so.**
Ed agrees that Jerry won't take the dog, and he gives the reason: Jerry has asked Roy to look after her. **I don't expect so** is a natural way to agree with a negative idea. Not **But he will**, because that contradicts the information that follows.

22. She hardly studies her lessons, _____?
✓ **B) does she**
Hardly has a negative meaning, so the sentence counts as negative and takes a positive tag: **does she?** Not **doesn't she**, because **hardly** already makes the statement negative.

23. What a shame! Our music lesson is cancelled. You were looking forward to it so much and, actually, _____ was I.
✓ **C) so**
To agree with a positive statement (**You were looking forward to it**), we use **so** + auxiliary + subject: **so was I**. Not **neither**, which is only for negative statements.

24. When we are on holiday, I love sunbathing on the beach, but my husband _____. He prefers to sit in the shade reading his book.
✔ **D) doesn’t**
Love sunbathing is in the present simple, so the contrasting short answer uses **does**. It must be negative because the husband prefers the shade: **doesn't**. Not **isn't**, because the main verb is **love**, not **be**.

25. He didn’t tell you that he was going to join us for the meal, _____ he?
✔ **E) did**
The tag matches the main clause, **He didn't tell you**, not the reported clause **was going to**. A negative main clause takes a positive tag: **did he?** Not **was**, because **was** belongs to the reported clause.

26. My parents, who were dancing and chatting all night, seemed to enjoy the anniversary party, _____.
✔ **A) but I didn’t**
The main verb is **seemed to enjoy**, in the past simple, so the short contrasting clause uses **did**: **but I didn't** means I didn't enjoy it. Not **and neither did I**, because **neither** follows a negative statement.

27. The newspaper doesn’t state why they have chosen to play the next national game in Bursa, _____?
✔ **A) does it**
The tag refers to the main clause, **The newspaper doesn't state**, so the subject is **it** and the auxiliary is **does**. A negative clause takes a positive tag: **does it?** Not **haven't they**, because that refers to the noun clause, not the main clause.

28. The swimming pool near our house opens in June, so after that, we can go swimming _____ we like.
✔ **B) whenever**
The context is about time (**opens in June, so after that**), so **whenever** (= at any time) fits: **we can go swimming whenever we like**. Not **wherever**, because the place is already fixed: the pool near our house.

29. Look at that ugly building! _____ designed it has no taste at all.
✔ **C) Whoever**
The clause is the subject of **has** and refers to an unknown person, so **Whoever** (= the person who, whoever it was) is needed: **Whoever designed it has no taste**. Not **Whatever**, because a building is designed by a person.

30. Good luck for the future! I wish you happiness in _____ you decide to do.
✔ **E) whatever**
The gap is the object of **decide to do**, meaning any thing or activity, so **whatever** is right: **in whatever you decide to do**. Not **however**, which refers to manner, not to a thing.

31. I’m sure you will do well, _____ university you decide to go to.
✔ **B) whichever**
Whichever + noun means 'it doesn't matter which one' from a limited set of choices: **whichever university you decide to go to**. Not **wherever**, because it cannot be followed directly by a noun like **university**.

32. We didn’t notice _____ we had strayed off the path until we were deep in the forest.
✔ **A) how far**
Strayed off the path and **deep in the forest** are about distance, so the noun clause begins with **how far**. Not **so far**, which is not a question word and cannot introduce the object clause of **notice**.

33. It’s going to be a long journey, _____ we travel, because we can only take the plane as far as the nearest airport, which is more than 200 miles away from the area, and then we will have to take the coach.
✔ **E) however**
However + clause means 'in whatever way': **however we travel**, the journey will be long. The rest of the sentence explains the different means of transport. Not **whichever**, which needs a noun (**whichever route we take**).

34. Why don’t you ask Auntie Doris? I’m sure she’ll know _____ to make an apple pie.
✔ **B) how**
Know how to + infinitive means knowing the method or way of doing something: **she'll know how to make an apple pie**. Not **what**, because **what to make** would need no object after **make**.

35. I don’t know _____ money to take on holiday with me because this is my first holiday abroad.
✔ **D) how much**
Money is uncountable, so we use **how much**: **I don't know how much money to take**. Not **how many**, which is used with plural countable nouns.

36. _____ you are going on holiday is probably the best place to go in Turkey at this time of year.
✔ **A) Where**
The noun clause is the subject of **is… the best place**, so it must refer to a place: **Where you are going on holiday**. Not **What**, because **going** would then need **to** (**what you are going to**).

37. It’s not clear in his will _____ is going to be the new owner of his house.
✔ **C) who**
The gap is the subject of the noun clause and refers to a person (**the new owner**), so **who** is needed. Not **whose**, which needs a noun after it (**whose son**).

38. _____ she wrote in reply to my question about her charity work was the most touching account I have ever read.
✔ **C) What**
The noun clause is the subject of **was** and is also the object of **wrote**, so **What** (= the thing that) is needed: **What she wrote… was…** Not **How**, because **how she wrote** refers to her manner of writing, not to the account itself.

39. He hasn’t explained to us yet _____ he sacked the secretary.
✔ **B) why**
An explanation gives a reason, so **explain why** fits: **He hasn't explained why he sacked the secretary**. Not **whom**, because the object of **sacked** (**the secretary**) is already in the sentence.

40. I was surprised to find out _____ football team your brother supports. Why does he support Manchester United when he lives in London?
✓ **A) which**
Which + noun asks about one choice from a known group: **which football team your brother supports**. The next sentence names the team, Manchester United. Not **who**, which cannot be followed directly by a noun.

41. His poor performance in examinations might have something to do with _____ he misses class.
✓ **D) how often**
The sentence is about frequency, so **how often** fits: **how often he misses class**. After a preposition (**with**), a noun clause cannot start with **that**, so **with that he misses** is wrong.

42. The form requires you to state _____ you got divorced.
✓ **C) when**
Got divorced is a single event in the past, so the form asks for its time: **state when you got divorced**. Not **how long**, which needs a duration (e.g. **how long you have been divorced**).

43. Perhaps the driver's manual says _____ air pressure you should have in each tyre.
✓ **E) how much**
Air pressure is uncountable and the manual gives an amount, so **how much** is right: **how much air pressure you should have**. Not **which**, which suggests choosing between types rather than giving a quantity.

44. _____ he only attended about sixty per cent of the course contributed to his poor examination results.
✓ **A) The fact that**
A complete clause stated as a fact (**he only attended about sixty per cent**) becomes the subject with **The fact that**. Not **Whether**, because the sentence states that he did attend only part of the course, so it is not uncertain.

45. I can't imagine _____ they are going to cope with three children now that he has lost his job.
✓ **D) how**
Cope is about the way people manage a problem, so **how** is needed: **I can't imagine how they are going to cope**. Not **why**, because the reason for their difficulty (he has lost his job) is already given.

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