ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Paragraph Completion Advanced Level Test – Quiz (Online Exercise With Answers) 4

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Explanations

1. This year, oil exporters could haul in $700 billion from selling oil to foreigners. This includes not only the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) but also Russia and Norway, the world's second- and third-biggest earners. _____. In real terms, this is almost double their dollar surpluses in 1974 and 1980 when Russia's hard-currency exports were tiny.
✓ A) The IMF estimates that oil exporters' current-account surplus could reach $400 billion, more than four times as much as in 2002
The next sentence says **In real terms, this is almost double their dollar surpluses in 1974 and 1980**. **This** must refer to a surplus figure for the oil exporters, and only the IMF estimate of their **current-account surplus** gives one. Not the option about China and Asia: its figure belongs to other economies, so **their** surpluses in 1974 and 1980 would no longer refer to the oil exporters.

2. "Information wants to be free," according to a celebrated aphorism from the early days of the internet. _____. As search-engine firms and others unveil plans to place books online, publishers fear that the services may end up devouring their business, either by bypassing them or because the initiatives threaten to make their copyrights redundant.
✓ B) Yet this ethos has been creating new headaches recently
The gap needs a link between the internet aphorism and the publishers' fears. **Yet** signals a contrast: the free-information **ethos** is now causing **new headaches**, and the next sentence describes them. Not the option about the European "digital library": it is one specific event and does not connect to the aphorism.

3. Across the Himalayas, there is what seismologists call a "slip deficit"—a lack of earthquakes to release the stress that is known to be accumulating. _____. Nevertheless, Roger Bilham, of the University of Colorado, says it is doubtful that the Kashmir quake released more than one-tenth of the cumulative energy stored there. Furthermore, in the past half-century, the Himalayan region has seen fewer powerful earthquakes than might be predicted from historical records.
✓ C) The Kashmir quake was in just such a region, where a great earthquake was overdue
Just such a region refers back to the "slip deficit" in the first sentence, where a great earthquake is **overdue**. The next sentence begins with **Nevertheless**: the quake struck, but it released only a tenth of the stored energy. Not option 173676: it also starts with **Nevertheless**, which makes no sense directly after the definition of a slip deficit.

4. Two years after the end of the first world war, America passed the Jones Act. _____. The war had convinced lawmakers of the need to foster a home-grown fleet for use in times of conflict or national emergency. In 1944, while a more modern war still raged in Europe, governments meeting in Chicago took inspiration from the Jones Act while laying down the regulations that would govern international air transport. These were crafted to safeguard the vital strategic role of each country's "flag carrying" national airline.
✓ A) This restricted the shipping of goods between home ports to American-owned vessels
This refers to the Jones Act and says what the law did. The next sentence gives the reason: the war had convinced lawmakers to **foster a home-grown fleet**. Not the option calling it **the latest in a series of attempts**: a 1920 law cannot be the latest attempt to undo the 1944 Chicago rules, which have not been mentioned yet.

5. Benjamin Franklin, one of America's founding fathers, wrote that "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." _____. What precisely are the essential liberties which, when given up, make a liberal society unworthy of the name? In Franklin's own country, as well as in Britain, Australia and elsewhere, these questions are proving particularly vexing to policymakers trying to deal with terrorism.
✓ C) He presaged an argument that is raging almost two and a half centuries later
He refers to Franklin. **Presaged an argument that is raging** (foretold a debate that is still going on) leads straight into the questions that follow: **What precisely are the essential liberties…?** Not the Blair option: it jumps to a specific British policy before the general question has been asked.

6. *(Question with a long text: see the questions PDF.)*
✓ D) It is the worst social turmoil the country has seen since the student-led unrest of 1968, and the government has appeared powerless to contain it
The paragraph sets out the scale of the unrest: thousands of cars burnt, many arrests and a death. The closing sentence should sum up how serious it is: **the worst social turmoil the country has seen since… 1968**. Not **This rapid domino effect reflects two broader failings**: it starts a new analysis, and as a final sentence it would leave the two failings unexplained.

7. In recent weeks, the world's public health officials have been afflicted with a sort of pandemic of meetings about bird flu. _____. Plans were hatched for how best to respond to the threat from a virus that is threatening poultry around the world and which, it is feared, may trigger a pandemic of human flu.
✓ B) Much of this culminated, this week, in a meeting of officials from nations at the headquarters of the WHO in Geneva
After **a sort of pandemic of meetings**, **Much of this culminated… in a meeting** in Geneva continues the idea of meetings. The next sentence, **Plans were hatched**, describes what happened at that meeting. The other options talk about money or strategy, which do not follow from the meetings.

8. The airlines are constantly pressing the manufacturers to produce large and medium-sized aircraft that can fly anywhere in the world non-stop. Gradually they are getting what they want, particularly with the latest Boeing and Airbus 250-300 seaters on the way. _____. If flights like that become common, Emirates, with its giant planes and global hub, would be flying in the face of conventional wisdom.
✓ D) A Boeing 777 has taken off from Hong Kong to fly to London, covering 20,300 kilometres and flying for 23 hours, to set a new record
Flights like that needs a specific flight described just before it: the record-breaking non-stop 777 flight from Hong Kong to London. Such ultra-long non-stop flights skip hubs like Dubai, so if they became common, Emirates's hub-and-giant-plane strategy would go **against conventional wisdom**. Not the sub-jumbo option: short regional hops contradict the airlines' wish to fly anywhere **non-stop**.

9. One of the more interesting ideas to emerge from America's soul-searching after the turn-of-the-century corporate scandals is that its leading business schools may have neglected to teach students about the moral dimension of being a CEO. _____. Harvard, Stanford and others have since scrambled to introduce business ethics classes.
✓ A) Instead, they focus on management mainly as a science of numbers
The first sentence says the schools **neglected** the moral side of business. **Instead, they focus on management mainly as a science of numbers** says what they taught in its place, and **they** refers to the schools. The next sentence (**have since scrambled to introduce business ethics classes**) is their response. The other options are about individual CEOs or books, not about the schools.

10. _____. Iraq's former ruling minority had many reasons to dislike the document's contents—the federal system split the country, they said, and allowed oil revenues to be distributed unevenly to benefit the Shia—and now they have reason to contest its legitimacy. Even before the election, some American and British officials said they were dreading this kind of result, which could stoke rather than pacify the insurgency.
✓ C) Iraq now has a constitution supported by large majorities of two of the three main ethnic groups, the Shia Arabs and the Kurds, but rejected by the third, the Sunni Arabs
The opening sentence must introduce what the rest of the paragraph refers back to: **the document** (the constitution) and **Iraq's former ruling minority** (the Sunni Arabs who rejected it). Only option 173713 mentions both the constitution and its rejection by the Sunnis. Not option 173714: it describes the constitution's effect on governments, and the Sunni rejection that **this kind of result** refers to would be missing.

11. Insomnia is a common problem in the United States, affecting a large number of adults and becoming more frequent with age. There seems to be a treatment for the condition. _____. Although improvements in sleep appear to be related to quality of life, the relationship between quality of life and successful treatment of insomnia has been difficult to ascertain.
✓ A) It is cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) that has been shown to be effective for insomnia
The sentence before the gap says **There seems to be a treatment**, so the gap should name it. The cleft sentence **It is… that has been shown to be effective** does exactly that. The next sentence then talks about **improvements** and **successful treatment**. The options about outcome measures and placebo describe a study that has not been mentioned.

12. Like most students, Emily was juggling a full schedule of classes. But in the middle of her junior year, she became overwhelmed by her normal routine. She rarely went out. "Even though my eating habits hadn't changed, I kept gaining weight," says Emily, now a 30-year-old retail analyst. At first, she chalked it up to the winter blues. _____.

✔ E) But then a routine test at her yearly checkup showed something different: hypothyroidism

At first, she chalked it up to (blamed it on) **the winter blues** sets up a contrast, and **But then… showed something different: hypothyroidism** completes it with the real cause. Not the option about the doctor's prescription: treatment cannot come before the illness has been diagnosed.

13. During the earliest stages of life, when an embryo consists of fewer than a dozen or so cells, _____. Each embryonic cell is, in the jargon of biologists, totipotent: It has the ability to give rise to cells that make up the eyes, the liver, the brain, or any other part of an adult animal. Yet as an embryo develops, cells lose this ability.

✔ C) the genes inside every nucleus have their fullest potential

The next sentence explains the gap: each early cell is **totipotent** and can become any type of cell. So the genes in every nucleus must still have their **fullest potential**. **Yet as an embryo develops, cells lose this ability** then contrasts with this. Not **this gradual specialization of cells poses a provocative question**: specialization has not been mentioned yet, so **this** has nothing to refer to.

14. Jane Addams was a peacemaker even when she was criticized for her views. She taught, wrote, and lectured about peace both nationally and internationally. Before World War I, Addams was probably the most beloved woman in America. In a newspaper poll that asked, "Who among our contemporaries are of the most value to the community?" _____.

✔ B) Addams was second, after Thomas Edison

The sentence introduces a newspaper poll, so the gap must give its result: **Addams was second, after Thomas Edison**. This supports the claim that she was **probably the most beloved woman in America**. Not the option about being called a traitor: that came later, when she opposed the war, and does not answer the poll question.

15. _____. Even as a young man, Patrick Henry had that kind of influence in the American Colonies. Born in 1736, Henry, a natural leader and a brilliant speaker, believed in individual rights and independence from the British government. As a young lawyer, he astonished his courtroom audience in 1763 with an eloquent defence based on the idea of natural rights, the political theory that humans are born with certain inalienable rights.

✔ D) Have you ever heard someone speak so passionately that the speech moved you to do something?

That kind of influence needs an earlier idea to point back to: a speech so passionate that it moves people to act. The opening question provides it. The full name **Patrick Henry** in the next sentence also shows he has not been mentioned yet. Not the “give me liberty” quotation: it names Henry too early and describes the later war years, which clashes with **Even as a young man**.

16. Business diversity is associated with walking trips. Having four or more different types of businesses in a neighbourhood significantly increased the number of walking trips among residents. This is probably true because of added convenience. _____.

✔ D) Residents are able to accomplish multiple routine errands in a single walking trip and thus may drive less

The gap explains the **added convenience**: with many types of shops nearby, residents can do **multiple routine errands in a single walking trip**. The other options bring in new factors (intersections, housing density, children's weight) instead of explaining the convenience.

17. Midsize organizations producing live performances face the most serious financial strain. Either they will have to become larger and more prestigious—which many lack the resources to do—or they will have to cut their budgets and become more community-oriented, using local talent to keep costs down. _____.

✔ C) Those that are not able to adapt may disappear

The paragraph gives two ways midsize organizations can survive: grow larger, or cut budgets and become more community-oriented. The logical conclusion is what happens to those that manage neither: **Those that are not able to adapt may disappear**. Not **These trends could also…**: no trends have been described, so **these trends** has nothing to refer to.

18. One problem with the Big Bang theory is explaining how the stars and galaxies were formed. _____. Gravity alone cannot cause this in a smooth universe, and so something had to supply the initial gravity that allowed galaxies to form. Physicists suggest that dark matter WIMPs (weakly interacting massive particles) accomplished this task. Since WIMPs only affect ordinary matter gravitationally, physicists say this dark matter could be the seed of galactic formation.

✔ B) If matter initially was distributed evenly in all directions, what caused it to clump together in some regions and form stars and galaxies?

The gap turns the **problem** into a precise question: if matter was spread evenly, what made it **clump together**? The next sentence answers it: **Gravity alone cannot cause this in a smooth universe**, where **this** is the clumping. Not the option about gravity stopping the expansion: it is about the universe's end, not galaxy formation.

19. Magic is used to overcome evil and help the good. Moreover, it is portrayed as a positive element to be used in our daily life. _____. This de-emphasizes issues that can be resolved through human willpower and effort. In this case, there is the possibility of believing in sorcery’s power, and thereby being drawn into helplessness and pessimism.

✔ B) Thus, all daily behaviours are associated with magic

Thus draws a conclusion from the claim that magic is shown as a positive element in daily life: **all daily behaviours are associated with magic**. The next sentence, **This de-emphasizes issues that can be resolved through human willpower and effort**, refers back to this link between everyday life and magic. The other options do not follow from it. The option about using their father's cars has no clear **they** and jumps to children's misbehaviour. The others bring in violence in films or black magic.

20. _____. Some plants, such as cactus, are able to store large amounts of water in their leaves or stems. After a rainfall, these plants absorb a large supply of water to last until the next rain. Other plants, such as the mesquite, have extraordinarily deep root systems that allow them to obtain water from far below the desert's arid surface.

✔ B) Desert plants have a variety of mechanisms for obtaining the water needed for survival

The paragraph lists different ways plants get water (storing it, deep roots), so it needs a topic sentence about **a variety of mechanisms for obtaining the water**. Not **Many kinds of vegetation can survive with little water**: it is about surviving with little water, not about the ways of obtaining it that the examples describe.

21. Although science and technology have never been humanity's first need, it is wrong to reject them in favour of some idealistic philosophies. _____. What is more important here is who controls science and what goals they are serving. In the hands of a few irresponsible individuals, science might make the world into hell, whereas no one has ever been hurt by a gun in the hands of an angel. Science and technology are desirable as long as they serve human values, bring peace and happiness, contribute to international harmony, and help solve humanity's material and spiritual problems.

✔ A) We must praise scientific research and the outcomes of technological innovation

After saying it is wrong to **reject** science, the writer gives the positive side: **We must praise scientific research**. The next sentence, **What is more important here…**, then moves to who controls science. Not **If they move away from these goals…**: **these goals** are only listed in the last sentence, so this option belongs after it, not in the gap.

22. In English, there are many different kinds of expressions that people use to give a name to anything whose name is unknown or momentarily forgotten. The word gadget is one such word. _____. In everyday use, the word has a more general meaning. Other words are also used to give a name to something unnamed or unknown, and these words tend to be somewhat imaginative.

✔ A) It was first used by British sailors in the 1850s and probably comes from French

The gap gives the word's origin: British sailors, who used it in a specialised way. **In everyday use, the word has a more general meaning** contrasts with that first use, so it needs this sentence before it. Not **Some words are used to name something when the name is not known**: it only repeats the first sentence.

23. Blood plasma is a clear, almost colourless liquid. It consists of blood from which the red and white blood cells have been removed. It differs in several important ways from whole blood. To begin with, plasma can be mixed from all donors and doesn't have to be from the right blood group, as whole blood does. _____.

✔ D) Apart from that, whole blood can't be dried and stored, while plasma can

The paragraph promises **several important ways** plasma differs from whole blood. **To begin with** gives the first difference, and **Apart from that** adds a second: plasma can be dried and stored, but whole blood can't. Not **So, there are huge differences…**: a summary after only one difference is too early.

24. *(Question with a long text: see the questions PDF.)*

✔ C) They do not eat while on land, subsisting on a layer of fat under the skin

This results in weight losses needs a cause just before it. Penguins **do not eat while on land** and live on their layer of fat. So they lose weight while they stay on land during the two-month incubation. The option also follows on from the previous sentence about what they eat at sea. Not the option about the height of emperor and king penguins, or the one about large colonies: neither size nor colony size explains the weight loss.

25. Singapore possesses all the ingredients for traffic disaster. The island city-state has a large population, a limited land area, booming economic growth and one of the highest automobile densities in the world. _____. Yet, Singapore's traffic moves smoothly. Much of the explanation lies in sound urban planning and an effective mass-transit system.

✔ E) In other rapidly growing Asian metropolises, like Bangkok, such conditions have created bumper-to-bumper traffic in the streets

Such conditions refers to the list of "ingredients for traffic disaster". The option shows what these conditions cause elsewhere (**bumper-to-bumper** traffic in Bangkok), which sets up the contrast with **Yet, Singapore's traffic moves smoothly**. Not the option about Singaporeans supporting the government's goal: it explains the smooth traffic, so it cannot come before **Yet**.

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