ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Penguin Readers Placement Test 5B

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Explanations

1. 'I'm going to see the doctor tomorrow.' 'So _____.'
✓ **C) am I**
To say 'me too' after a positive sentence, use **So** + auxiliary + subject. The first sentence uses **am** (**I'm going**), so the reply is **So am I**. Not **So do I**, because the verb in the first sentence is **be**, not **do**.

2. I didn't leave that note on your desk. I suppose _____ did.
✓ **D) someone else**
Someone else means 'a different person'. We put **else** after words like **someone**, **nobody**, **everything**: **Ask someone else**. **Someone other** and **other person** (without **some/another**) are not correct.

3. Every royal palace has _____ secrets.
✓ **B) its**
Every royal palace is singular and is a thing, so the possessive is **its**. Not **their**, because **every** takes a singular verb (**has**) and a singular possessive when it refers to things.

4. They didn't take any notice of us _____ we protested.
✓ **C) although**
Although joins two ideas that contrast: they ignored us, but we protested. Not **in spite**, which needs **of** + noun (**in spite of our protests**), and not **even**, which needs **though** (**even though**).

5. Oh, look! The design on that man's tie is _____ yours.
✓ **B) similar to**
The correct prepositions are **similar to** and **the same as**. So only **similar to** is right here: **Your tie is similar to mine**.

6. We can't pay you unless we're sure that this is his _____ on the cheque.
✓ **A) signature**
A **signature** is your name written in your own special way, for example on a cheque or a contract. **Please put your signature at the bottom.**

7. If we _____ you were coming, we would have met you at the station.
✓ **D) had known**
This is the third conditional, about an imagined past: **If** + past perfect, **would have** + past participle. The clue is **would have met**, so we need **had known**. Not **knew**, which is used in the second conditional (present/future).

8. I tried to persuade her, but she _____ listen.
✓ **D) wouldn't**
Wouldn't + verb can mean 'refused to' in the past: **she wouldn't listen** = she refused to listen. The other options don't fit with **listen** in this meaning.

9. Congratulations! You've won first _____!
✓ **C) prize**
You **win first prize** in a competition. Not **price**, which is how much something costs; and we don't say **first reward** or **first victory** here.

10. _____ a pity that you can't come to the party.
✓ **B) It's**
We use **It's a pity (that)** + clause, where **it** refers to the clause that follows. **What a pity!** is possible, but not **What's a pity**. Not **There's**, because **there is** shows that something exists.

11. The crowd were outside the palace, waiting _____ arrive.
✓ **D) for the queen to**
The pattern is **wait for** + person + **to** + verb: **waiting for the queen to arrive**. **Waiting for the queen** alone cannot be followed directly by **arrive**.

12. She interrupted the minister's speech, _____ made him angry.
✓ **A) which**
After a comma, **which** can refer to the whole previous clause: her interrupting the speech made him angry. Not **that**, because **that** cannot be used after a comma in a non-defining relative clause.

13. The new offices are _____ the other side of the river.
✓ **D) on**
The fixed expression is **on the other side (of)**: **The shop is on the other side of the road.**

14. How long can you stay under water without coming to the _____?
✓ **C) surface**
The **surface** is the top part of water or land. Swimmers **come to the surface** to breathe. Not **level** or **ground**, which don't collocate with **come to the** here.

15. I'm not going to walk to the village. It's 20 miles _____!
✓ **A) away**
With a distance we use **away**: **It's 20 miles away.** We don't say **20 miles far**; **far** is used in questions and negatives (**How far is it?**, **It isn't far**).

16. We've reminded him several times, but he _____ hasn't paid us.
✓ **C) still**
Still goes before a negative verb to show surprise or annoyance that something hasn't happened: **he still hasn't paid us**. Not **yet**, which goes at the end: **he hasn't paid us yet**.

17. We can buy some food _____ our way home.
✓ **B) on**
The fixed expression is **on the way** / **on our way home**, meaning while we are going home.

18. They _____ him of killing the dog.
✓ **A) accused**
The pattern is **accuse** someone **of** doing something. Not **blamed**, because we say **blame** someone **for** something.

19. The service at the hotel was _____, so I'll be happy to stay there again.
✓ **C) satisfactory**
Satisfactory means 'good enough': **The service was satisfactory.** Not **very well**, because after **was** we need an adjective (**very good**), not an adverb.

20. I would like you _____ attention, please.
✓ **A) to pay**
The pattern is **would like** + person + **to** + verb: **I'd like you to pay attention.** We don't say **would like that you pay**.

21. It's a very good car but it's too expensive. I can't _____ it.
✓ **C) afford**
Afford means 'have enough money for': **I can't afford a new car.** Not **pay**, because we **pay for** something, and **pay it** would mean paying a bill or a person.

22. No one expected the President to _____ his rival in the election.
✓ **A) beat**
You **beat** a person or team, but you **win** a game, prize or election. So **beat his rival**. Not **win**, because **win** cannot take a person as its object.

23. That's the trouble with online reviews. You can't trust them, _____ they say.
✓ **B) whatever**
Whatever means 'it doesn't matter what': **You can't trust them, whatever they say.** Not **however**, which means 'it doesn't matter how' and is used with adjectives or adverbs (**however hard they try**).

24. He had to give up the house because he couldn't pay the _____.
✓ **B) rent**
Rent is the money you pay regularly to live in a house or flat that you don't own. Not **fare** (money for a bus or train ticket) or **salary** (money you earn from your job).

25. That was a nasty thing to do. You should be _____ of yourself.
✓ **A) ashamed**
Be ashamed of yourself means to feel bad about something wrong you did. Not **sorry**, because we don't say **sorry of yourself**; and **disgusted** goes with **with**.

26. She wasn't _____ to lift the heavy box.
✓ **D) strong enough**
Enough comes after an adjective: **strong enough to lift**. Not **enough strong**, because **enough** goes before nouns (**enough money**) but after adjectives.

27. You'd already read the book, _____ you?
✓ **A) hadn't**
A question tag uses the same auxiliary as the main sentence. **You'd already read** = **You had already read** (past perfect), so the tag is **hadn't you?** Not **wouldn't**, because **'d** here means **had**, shown by the past participle **read**.

28. It takes the children over an hour to _____ to school with all this traffic.
✓ **C) get**
Get to a place means 'travel to / arrive at' it: **It takes an hour to get to school.** Not **arrive**, which needs **at** (**arrive at school**), and not **reach**, which takes no preposition (**reach school**).

29. Our cook has just left, so we'll have to _____ for another one.
✓ **C) advertise**
Advertise for someone means to put an advertisement in a newspaper or online to find a person for a job: **We advertised for a new cook.** Not **announce** or **advise**, which have different meanings.

30. There's a policeman over there. _____ the way.
✓ **A) Ask him**
We say **ask someone the way**, with no preposition: **Let's ask him the way.** Not **ask to him**, because ask takes the person directly, without **to**. **Demand** is too strong here, and we don't use it with a person as the object like this.

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