ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Prepositions MCQ Test With Answers – Online Exercise – Quiz 4

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Explanations

1. In their discussions concerning the proposed defence strategies, NATO diplomats found they could not agree _____ what the alliance was _____, what weapons it would threaten to use and in what circumstances.
✓ **A) on / for**
We **agree on** a topic or decision, meaning we reach the same opinion about it. **What something is for** asks about its purpose, here the purpose of the alliance. Not **agree with**: we agree with a person or an opinion, not with a question such as 'what the alliance was for'.

2. The works of the ancient Greek physician Hippocrates, commonly known as the Hippocratic Collection, consist _____ about 70 works, _____ which only a relatively small number are possibly by him.
✓ **A) of / of**
Consist of means 'be made up of': **The team consists of five players.** In **of which only a small number…**, **of** shows a part of a larger group, like **some of them**. Not **consist in**: that means 'have as its main feature', not 'be made up of'.

3. Foreign policy is composed of the goals sought, values set, decisions made and actions taken _____ states and the national governments acting _____ their behalf.
✓ **A) by / on**
In a passive meaning, **by** introduces who does the action: **actions taken by states**. **Act on someone's behalf** means 'act for someone, representing them'. Not **for**: we say **on their behalf**, not **for their behalf**.

4. ***A priori*** knowledge _____ Western philosophy is the knowledge that is independent _____ all particular experiences, as opposed to a posteriori knowledge, which derives from experience alone.
✓ **B) in / of**
In Western philosophy gives the field or area where the idea is used. The adjective **independent** takes **of**: **independent of experience**, meaning 'not depending on it'. Not **independent from**, which is less standard, and **with Western philosophy** is wrong here.

5. The objective _____ a proper diet is to achieve and maintain a desirable body composition and a large capacity _____ physical and mental work.
✓ **D) of / for**
The objective of something is its aim or purpose: **the objective of a diet**. **Capacity for** means the ability to do or deal with something: **a large capacity for work**.

6. Despite the official ban _____ street celebrations, 2008 saw football fans take to the streets _____ massive numbers on several occasions.
✓ **E) on / in**
A **ban on** something is an official rule that stops it: **a ban on smoking**, **a ban on street celebrations**. **In large/massive numbers** tells us how many people do something together: fans came out **in massive numbers**. Not **ban of**: the noun **ban** takes **on**.

7. According to the generally accepted plate tectonics theory, scientists believe that Earth's surface is broken _____ a number of shifting plates, which average _____ 50 miles in thickness.
✓ **D) into / about**
Break into pieces or parts means 'divide into': **The surface is broken into plates. About** before a number means 'approximately': **average about 50 miles**. Not **broken up**: **broken up a number of plates** needs **into** to show the result.

8. To protect whales and dolphins _____ the coast of Hawaii, a court in California has temporarily banned the US navy from using powerful sonar equipment _____ a military exercise in the area.
✓ **D) off / during**
Off the coast means in the sea, a short distance from the land: **an island off the coast of Hawaii**. **During** means 'at some time within a period or event': **during a military exercise**. Not **at the coast**, which means on the shore, where whales and dolphins do not live.

9. As it had in World War I, Argentina proclaimed neutrality _____ the outbreak of World War II, but in the closing phase it declared war _____ the Axis powers.
✓ **C) at / on**
At the outbreak of a war means at the moment it started. A country **declares war on** another country. Not **declared war with**: the fixed collocation is **declare war on**.

10. _____ some cancers, the best therapy is a combination _____ surgery, radiation, and chemotherapy.
✓ **C) For / of**
For introduces the case or purpose something is suitable for: **For some cancers, the best therapy is… A combination of** things means several things used together: **a combination of surgery and radiation**.

11. The modern era of Shakespeare scholarship has been marked _____ an enormous amount of investigation _____ the authorship, text, and chronology of his plays.
✓ B) by / into
Be marked by means 'be characterised by': **The period was marked by great change.** The noun **investigation** takes **into**: **an investigation into the authorship**. Not **investigation of**: it exists, but it does not combine with **out** in the first gap.

12. From the mid-fifteenth century _____, Lisbon began to emerge as a significant market _____ slaves.
✓ D) on / for
From (a time) on means 'starting at that time and continuing': **From 1450 on, the city grew. A market for** something is a place where people buy and sell it: **a market for slaves**, **a market for spices**. Not **away / in**: **market in slaves** is possible, but **from the mid-fifteenth century away** is not English.

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