ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Short Advanced Reading Comprehension Test 37 With MCQs and Answers

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Explanations

1. **It is concluded in the passage that Doctorow's novel World's Fair _____.**
✓ E) gives an account of how the thoughts and feelings of the main character are shaped by the period in which he lived
The last sentence says **World's Fair** shows how the events of the 1930s **helped mould the sensibilities** of the young protagonist. This means the period shaped his **thoughts and feelings**. Not the first option: the passage never says the effects were **damaging**, only that they formed his character.

2. **From the passage, we infer that a blend of fiction and history _____.**
✓ C) is a striking feature of Doctorow's writing
The passage opens by saying Doctorow is **best known for mixing fiction with historical fact**. So this blend is a **striking feature** of his writing. Not the option about contemporary American writers: the passage talks only about Doctorow, not about other writers.

3. **We learn from the passage that Doctorow's purpose in bringing together in his novels the usual and the extraordinary _____.**
✓ A) is to build up a convincing picture of a period
The passage says Doctorow **gives readers the "feel" of an era** by combining the unusual and the commonplace. His aim is to **build up a convincing picture of a period**. The options about criticism or failure in **World's Fair** have no support in the text.

4. Ever since Nobel prize-winner Linus Pauling first advocated vitamin C as a common cold war weapon more than 20 years ago, researchers have been busy trying to verify that claim. However, so far, they've found little proof that vitamin C prevents colds. In fact, there are more studies that say it doesn't.

There is evidence, though, that it can keep coughing and sneezing to a minimum, and that low levels of vitamin C in the body may be related to bronchitis.

From the passage, we can learn that Dr Pauling's view as regards vitamin C _____.
✓ E) has not been verified scientifically
Researchers have been **trying to verify** Pauling's claim, but they have **found little proof**, and more studies say it is wrong. So his view **has not been verified scientifically**. Not 'aroused very little interest': the passage says researchers **have been busy** studying it.

5. **In accordance with the passage, coughing and sneezing _____.**
✓ D) can be reduced with the help of vitamin C
The second paragraph says there is evidence that vitamin C **can keep coughing and sneezing to a minimum**. In other words, they **can be reduced** with its help. The passage does not say coughing and sneezing are early symptoms of bronchitis; it only links bronchitis to low vitamin C levels.

6. **During the last two decades, there has been plenty of scientific effort made to _____.**
✓ B) confirm that the common cold can be prevented by vitamin C
Pauling made his claim **more than 20 years ago**, and since then researchers **have been busy trying to verify** that vitamin C prevents colds. To **verify** means to **confirm**. The other options, such as the dangers or adverse effects of vitamin C, are not mentioned.

7. **It is emphasized in the passage that traditionally, animals are believed to _____.**
✓ D) act on instinct
The traditional view is that behaviour **stems almost exclusively from instinct**, so animals **act on instinct**. Not 'know exactly what they are doing': the passage says animals **don't know that they know**.

8. **It is stressed in the passage that modern research forces one to consider _____.**
✓ B) the possibility of intelligence in animals
Current research suggests **a startling depth of intelligence** in animals and makes **a compelling case for at least considering** animal consciousness. It therefore forces us to consider **the possibility of intelligence in animals**. Not 'animals to be the equal of man': the passage makes no such comparison, and it admits that nothing has been proved yet.

9. **We can infer from the passage that, in the light of modern research, our traditional assumptions about animal behaviour _____.**
✓ C) have to be reconsidered
No one can **yet prove** animal consciousness, but the data make a case for **considering** it. So the traditional assumptions **have to be reconsidered**. Not 'totally disproved': the passage is careful and says that nothing is proven.

10. As said in the passage, in the early years of the universities, _____.
✓ E) the majority of students came from upper-class families
The second paragraph says universities were designed **mainly for the sons of the nobility and gentry**, so most students came from **upper-class families**. Not 'most students wanted to train for a profession': professional skills were learned **after college** as an apprentice.

11. It is implied in the passage that since most of the early universities enjoyed the support of the Church, _____.
✓ A) state authorities granted them various rights
The first paragraph says many universities **had obtained special privileges from existing regimes because of their close association with the Church**. **Regimes** are the state authorities and **privileges** are rights, so the state **granted them various rights**. Low standards are mentioned in the passage, but they are not presented as a result of Church support.

12. As emphasized in the passage, real professional skills _____.
✓ B) were normally acquired through a period of apprenticeship
The passage says education for a livelihood in medicine or law **could be acquired after college by serving as an apprentice**. So real professional skills came through **apprenticeship**, not through university teaching. The text also says **scholarship was irrelevant for most professions**.

13. The effects of sleep loss are subject to a number of popular misconceptions. The belief that everyone must sleep 8 hours a night is a myth. According to the results of a recent survey on the subject, adults average about 7 to 7.5 hours of sleep per night, and many individuals function effectively with 5 to 6 hours of sleep.

In fact, 20 per cent of the population (slightly more in men) sleep less than 6 hours per night. Another important fact is that sleep time decreases with age.

In accordance with the passage, the popular assumption that eight hours of sleep per night is essential _____.
✓ C) is actually a fallacy
The passage calls the belief that everyone needs 8 hours **a myth**. A **fallacy** is a mistaken belief, so the two words mean the same here. Not 'only true for 20 per cent of the population': that figure refers to people who sleep **less than 6 hours**.

14. The survey referred to in the passage signifies that as people get older and older _____.
✓ A) they sleep less and less
The last sentence states that **sleep time decreases with age**, so as people get older they **sleep less and less**. 'They require more sleep' says the opposite.

15. It is implied in the passage that a sleep time under 8 hours _____.
✓ C) does not necessarily reduce a person's efficiency
Adults average **7 to 7.5 hours**, and **many individuals function effectively with 5 to 6 hours**. So sleeping under 8 hours **does not necessarily reduce** efficiency. Not the option about women: short sleep is **slightly more** common in **men**.

16. In accordance with a more recent view, the beginnings of the development of civilization _____.
✓ E) seem to have occurred in Mesopotamia rather than, as once thought, in Egypt
Archaeologists used to think civilization arose first in Egypt, but **a more recent opinion suggests that the earliest advances may have taken place in Mesopotamia**. So, according to the newer view, it **seems to have occurred in Mesopotamia rather than in Egypt**. Not the Egypt option: the passage says the Nile Valley was the **more** favourable region.

17. It is indicated in the passage that the Nile valley and Mesopotamia _____.
✓ D) do not share the same geographical conditions
The passage says geographical conditions in both regions **were not identical**. This means the two regions **do not share the same geographical conditions**. Not 'equally suitable': Mesopotamia was **not as wholly favourable** as the Nile Valley.

18. From the passage, we can learn that _____.
✓ A) our opinions of early history may sometimes need to be revised
The passage shows an older view (Egypt first) being challenged by **a more recent opinion** (Mesopotamia first). So our ideas about early history **may sometimes need to be revised**. The other options are not supported, or are contradicted: archaeologists clearly **did** see these regions as the first civilizations.

19. The writer argues that, contrary to common assumption, the behaviour of people _____.
✓ B) was not at all uniform in any given period
People wrongly suppose that **everyone thought or acted more or less in the same way** during a period. The writer replies: **in fact, there was no such sameness**. So behaviour **was not at all uniform** in any period. 'In any given period is always the same' is the very assumption the writer rejects.

20. The division of history into periods _____.
✓ A) is both useful and deceptive
Periods are **useful to focus discussion**, but they **frequently lead historical thought astray** and have **deluded** many people. So dividing history into periods is **both useful and deceptive**. 'Serves no useful purpose' ignores the first half of this point.

21. In accordance with the passage, the study of history _____.
✓ C) requires knowledge of dates and periods
The passage opens: **Dates and periods are necessary to the study and discussion of history**. So the study of history **requires knowledge of dates and periods**. The Middle Ages and the Victorian Age appear only as examples of periods, not as stages in the history of the subject.

22. From this passage, we learn that the writer is somewhat apprehensive in case ____.
✓ C) his book will be felt, by many people, to be superfluous
The author writes that another book on FORTRAN **probably seems unreasonable to most** and that he starts **with mild trepidation**. He is worried that readers will think his book **superfluous**, meaning unnecessary because so many similar books already exist. The other options are about computer sales, costs or complexity, which the author never mentions as worries.

23. In accordance with the passage, publications on computer technology ____.
✓ B) have already reached a very high number
The passage begins: **A number of books have been written on computers…**. The author adds that one more book **seems unreasonable**, which shows how many already exist. So these publications **have already reached a very high number**. Not 'only concerned with FORTRAN': FORTRAN is mentioned as **particularly** common, not as the only subject.

24. The writer of this passage points out that his new book on FORTRAN is justified because ____.
✓ D) it introduces a new approach to computer programming languages
The author says the new status of the discipline and the rapid changes in programming languages **demand that a new direction be taken in presenting the subject**. His book is justified because it offers **a new approach**. Not 'little relevant literature': the passage says many books have **already** been written.

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