ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Short Advanced Reading Comprehension Test 38 With MCQs and Answers

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Explanations

1. In accordance with the passage, compared with the absolute kings of the past, modern dictators _____.
✓ **A) have been far more cruel and oppressive**
Paragraph 1 calls the new regimes **totalitarian dictatorship far worse than the worst of the old absolute kings**, run by a **cruel and genocidal despot**. This means modern dictators were **far more cruel and oppressive**. The other options contradict the passage: the regimes ignored basic rights, ordinary people protested against them, and their 'law' is put in quotation marks because it was not real law at all.

2. The writer supposes that a major distinctive feature of "law" is _____.
✓ **C) respect for basic human rights**
The protest in paragraph 2 says that law, **if it is to deserve the name of law, must respect at least some basic rights** to which every human being is entitled. So the writer sees **respect for basic human rights** as the defining feature of real law. Not **to uphold respect for the sovereign**: the passage says these 'laws' were hardly the command of a true sovereign at all.

3. In accordance with the passage, the major protest against the despots of modern times _____.
✓ **E) has come from common people who are concerned about their basic rights**
Paragraph 2 says **It was ordinary people who protested**, and they protested because law must respect **basic rights to which every human being is entitled**. So the protest came from common people concerned about their basic rights. Not **began to increase after 1933**: 1933 is when the West **realised** it was facing dictatorship, and the passage says nothing about protest increasing.

4. Before the introduction of shopping centres, those living in the residential suburban areas _____.
✓ **D) had to go into the centre of the city to do their shopping**
Paragraph 1 says suburbs **tended to be chiefly residential and depended on the traditional city centres for shopping**. So before shopping centres, suburban residents **had to go into the centre of the city** to shop. Not **were anxious to keep commercial activities to a minimum**: the passage never mentions how residents felt about commerce.

5. A popular site for the early shopping centres in the United States was _____.
✓ **B) one near an important road junction with enough space to provide sufficient parking facilities**
The passage says early centres **were usually situated at a significant intersection** and **provided plenty of free, off-street parking**. An **intersection** is an important road junction. Not the option about **a single developer**: that describes who built and leased the stores, not where the centres were located.

6. The new "shopping villages" were reminiscent of small-town shopping areas _____.
✓ **C) as regards both the architectural style and the arrangement of the buildings**
Paragraph 2 says the shopping villages resembled small-town districts **both in their architecture... and in their layout**. **Reminiscent of** means 'reminding you of', and **as regards** means 'in terms of'. Not the option about stores facing the parking lots: the passage says **the stores faced the street** and parking was at the rear.

7. It is pointed out in the passage that the introduction of computers into daily life _____.
✓ **E) has brought a lot of benefits but has also created some serious problems**
The passage describes a mixed effect. The computer industry is **providing employment for many but at the same time making others redundant**, and it is causing **social upheavals**. So computers have brought benefits but also serious problems. Not **the greatest technical achievement of the age**: the passage speaks of the greatest **change in society**, not of an achievement.

8. According to the passage, the impact computers have had on society _____.
✓ **D) has exceeded that of any other technological development in recent times**
The first sentence says computers have brought **a greater change in our society in recent decades than any other force**. So their impact **has exceeded that of any other development in recent times**. Not the option **will certainly continue ... right through the next century**: the passage only says this is **likely**, and only **until** the next century.

9. As is implied in the passage, the widespread use of computers in industry _____.
✓ A) has made considerable changes in the working system inevitable
The passage says computers make some workers **redundant** and mentions **the redeployment of labour** and **social upheavals which require ... significant changes of attitude**. This implies that big changes in the working system cannot be avoided (**inevitable**). Not **new solutions to the problems of unemployment**: the passage says new ideas are **required**, not that they already exist.

10. The passage emphasizes that the question of equality between men and women _____.
✓ B) includes not only equality before the law but also equality in opportunities and exercise of rights
Paragraph 1 speaks of **equal rights, opportunities, and responsibilities**, and paragraph 2 adds **equality before the law**, in education and in employment. So equality covers much more than the law alone. Not **primarily related to economic matters**: pay and social security are only one part of a wider list.

11. As is pointed out in the passage, the equality of the sexes essentially means for everyone _____.
✓ C) full development of individual talents and capabilities
The first sentence says equal rights and opportunities should **enable them to develop their talents and capabilities for their own personal fulfilment**. This is the essential meaning of equality for everyone. Not **job security and a steady income**: pay and social security appear only later, as one of the things governments should provide.

12. It is made clear in the passage that the maintenance of equality between men and women in society _____.
✓ B) is primarily the responsibility of governments
Paragraph 2 says **Governments should ensure** equality before the law, in education and in employment. This makes clear that maintaining equality is mainly the governments' responsibility. Not **has first to be achieved within the family circle**: the passage asks for a reassessment of roles in the family **and the community**, and never says this must come first.

13. One can understand from the passage that, in the three decades prior to the mid-nineteen seventies, _____.
✓ E) the West experienced a period of unparalleled economic boom
The passage begins with **after 30 years of rapid growth and unprecedented prosperity**. **Unprecedented** and **unparalleled** both mean 'never seen before', and a **boom** is a period of fast economic growth. The other options describe the problems that came **after** the mid-1970s, not before.

14. It is pointed out in the passage that rising oil prices in 1973 and 1979 _____.
✓ A) opened the way to the ruin of many Western economies
The passage calls the oil price rises **the main cause** of worsening prospects. They **produced a strong burst of inflation** and led to a **severe world recession**, which seriously damaged Western economies. Not **were a direct result of the growing inflation**: the passage says the opposite, that the oil prices **caused** inflation.

15. It is explained in the passage that the world recession of the mid-1970s was largely due to the fact that _____.
✓ D) much of the profit made by oil producers was not channelled back into world economies
The last sentence says that **because much of the oil revenue accruing to producers could not be spent**, it led to balance of payments problems and **severe world recession**. So the oil producers' profits were not **channelled back** into the world economy. Not **dependent upon oil imports**: this explains why the price rise hurt, but the passage names the unspent revenue as the cause of the recession.

16. The passage presents the case of a textile firm which, _____.
✓ C) owing to fierce international competition, is having to struggle to survive
The passage says Nova **is facing serious problems**, profits **have fallen sharply**, and **competition is cut-throat**. In other words, the firm is struggling because of fierce international competition. Not **has laid off more than half of its workforce**: the passage only says it employed 200 workers **until recently** and gives no numbers or judgement.

17. We can understand from the passage that the area which has been hit worst by international competition _____.
✓ E) has been the ready-to-wear market
Paragraph 2 begins **In the ready-to-wear market, the situation is worse** and says competition there is **cut-throat**. Not **fabric sales**: these **have remained steady**, even though profits fell.

18. One can conclude from the passage that Nova's problems _____.
✓ B) arise from the growing market pressure of low-cost countries
Nova's problems come from foreign suppliers **forcing prices down** and **exporters from 24 low-cost countries** fighting for the European market. Not **began with the loss of two large orders**: those lost orders are a **result** of the competition, not where the problems started.

19. According to the passage, it was the invasion of South Korea by the Communist North that _____.
✓ A) caused the outbreak of the Korean War
Paragraph 2 says **The Korean War broke out in 1950 when Communist North Korea ... invaded the South**. So the invasion caused the war to start. Not **received the support of a United Nations Force**: the UN force supported **South Korea**, the side that was invaded.

20. It is obvious from the passage that the withdrawal of Japan from Korea in 1945 _____.
✓ E) was brought about, in part, by the Russians
The first sentence says Japanese rule ended **when the Russians occupied the northern part of the country** and the Americans occupied the South. So the Russians were partly responsible for Japan's withdrawal. The answer says **in part** because the Americans also played a role. Not the option about an armistice: the passage mentions an armistice only in 1953, years later, and never says it was signed between the United States and Russia.

21. As is explained in the passage, the reunification of Korea after the Japanese withdrawal _____.
✓ C) did not take place because the North and the South set up their own separate governments
The passage says reunification was planned after free elections, **but in practice, rival governments were set up**. So it did not happen because North and South formed separate governments. Not the option about **the demarcation line**: that line was agreed only in 1953, after the war.

22. The questions with which the author begins this passage _____.
✓ C) clearly show that he is uncertain about the present position of the United States
The author opens with open questions: is the USA **a nation in decline**, **or is it undergoing a process of adaptation and renewal?** Asking rather than stating shows that the author is uncertain about the country's present position. Not the options about **confidence** or **full trust**: the questions express doubt, not confidence.

23. In his 'Rise and Fall of the Great Powers', Paul Kennedy _____.
✓ B) argues that the great powers in the past declined because of the drain on resources for military security
The last paragraph says that great powers devote **an increasing share of their resources to military security**, which leads to a neglect of innovation and **a decline in economic strength**. This is Kennedy's idea of **imperial overstretch**. Not the option about **the British Empire collapsed because it ignored new advances in technology**: neglect of technology is only one step in the chain, which begins with heavy military spending.

24. According to the passage, the question of the current role of the United States _____.
✓ D) has triggered off a great deal of discussion throughout society
Paragraph 2 says the books on this subject have sparked **a wide-ranging public debate**. **Triggered off** means 'started', so the question has caused a lot of discussion in society. Not **its most plausible explanation in Paul Kennedy's latest book**: the passage calls Kennedy **the most prominent** decline theorist, not the most convincing, and never says the book is his latest.

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