ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

The Passive Test A2 – B1 Grammar Exercises

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Explanations

1. My mother is very angry because some paint _____ on the carpet in the living room.
✔ **B) has been spilt**
We use the present perfect passive (**has been spilt**) for a past action with a result we can see now: the mother is angry now. Not **had been spilt**, because nothing else in the sentence is in the past.

2. We _____ the first birthday of our son next week, and the invitations _____ out to all of our family and friends yesterday.
✔ **C) are celebrating / were sent**
Are celebrating (present continuous) is used for a fixed future plan (**next week**). The invitations did not send themselves, so we need the passive, and **yesterday** needs the past simple: **were sent**. Not **have been sent**, because the present perfect is not used with **yesterday**.

3. When the project _____, the staff _____ a week off because they will have got really tired by then.
✔ **A) is finished / will be given**
After **when** about the future we use a present tense, here the present passive **is finished**. The main clause is about the future and the staff receive the week off, so we need the future passive **will be given**. Not **will finish**, because we don't use **will** after **when** in future time clauses.

4. The World Wide Web _____ by Sir Tim Berners-Lee in 1989, and since then, it _____ by people all around the world.
✔ **D) was invented / has been used**
In 1989 is a finished past time, so we use the past simple passive **was invented**. **Since then** shows a period from the past until now, so we use the present perfect passive **has been used**. Not **has been using**, because people use the Web; the Web does not use anything.

5. Thieves _____ this afternoon because they _____ a car from a car park.
✔ **B) were arrested / had stolen**
The police arrested the thieves, so we need the passive **were arrested**. The stealing happened before the arrest, so we use the past perfect **had stolen** (active, because the thieves did it).

6. The functions of the new computer program _____ to the employees by a technician last week.
✔ **C) were explained**
Last week is a finished past time, and the functions were explained by someone, so we use the past simple passive **were explained**. Not **have been explained**, because the present perfect is not used with **last week**.

7. A passenger plane flying from Jordan to London _____ by the fog this morning.
✔ **D) has been delayed**
This is recent news with a result now (**this morning**, and it is still the morning), so we use the present perfect passive **has been delayed**. The fog delayed the plane, so the verb must be passive. Not **delayed**, because the plane did not delay anything.

8. Some strong aftershocks _____ about 10 minutes after the main earthquake.
✔ **B) were felt**
People felt the aftershocks at a finished time in the past, so we use the past simple passive **were felt**. Not **had been felt**, because there is no later past action to go back from.

9. Before its movie _____, the final book of the Harry Potter book series _____.
✔ **A) was released / had been published**
Both actions are in the past and both are passive. The book was published first, so it takes the past perfect passive **had been published**; the later action takes the past simple passive **was released**.

10. A: How do you get to work every day?

B: I _____ to work every day by my husband.
✔ **D) am driven**
Every day shows a habit, so we use the present simple. The husband drives, not the speaker, so it is passive: **am driven**. Not **drive**, because **by my husband** shows someone else does the action.

11. A prize _____ to the person who _____ the jigsaw puzzle first.
✔ **A) will be given / completes**
The prize will be given in the future by someone, so we use the future passive **will be given**. In the clause with **who**, the person does the action, so it is active present simple: **completes**.

12. Downloading music from the Internet for free _____ until some steps _____ by the government to stop it.
✔ **C) won't end / are taken**
The main clause is about the future: **won't end**. After **until** we use a present tense for the future, and the government takes the steps, so we need the present passive **are taken**. Not **are going to be taken**, because we don't use future forms after **until**.

13. The milk of the cows which _____ at the moment _____ to make yoghurt, butter and cheese later.
✓ **B) are being milked / will be used**
At the moment needs the present continuous, and the cows are milked by someone, so we use **are being milked**. **Later** shows the future, and the milk is used by people: **will be used**. Not **are milking**, because the cows don't milk anything.

14. This lake _____ some of the water that _____ in the irrigation of nearby agricultural land.
✓ **C) provides / is used**
This is a general fact, so we use the present simple. The lake gives the water (active: **provides**), and the water is used by farmers (passive: **is used**). Not **is provided**, because the lake does the providing.

15. While the kitchen _____ by James, the bedroom _____ by Matt.
✓ **A) was being redecorated / was being painted**
While shows two actions in progress at the same time in the past. The rooms receive the actions and the people are given with **by**, so we use the past continuous passive twice: **was being redecorated** and **was being painted**.

16. Because Mr Pitt _____ one of his teeth, an appointment with the dentist _____ by his secretary immediately.
✓ **D) broke / was made**
Mr Pitt did the breaking himself, so the first verb is active past simple: **broke**. The secretary made the appointment, so the second is past simple passive: **was made**. Not **was broken**, because a person cannot be the thing that is broken here.

17. Ekrem and Kamil _____ a bedtime story by their nanny when the lights _____ out.
✓ **C) were being read / went**
A longer past action was interrupted by a short one. The nanny reads to the boys, so we use the past continuous passive **were being read**, and the short action is past simple: **went** out.

18. The Grey family _____ for their dog for a week before it _____ by a neighbour in the park.
✓ **A) had been looking / was found**
For a week before shows an action that continued up to a point in the past, so we use the past perfect continuous **had been looking**. The neighbour found the dog, so the second verb is past simple passive: **was found**. Not **have been looking**, because the story is in the past.

19. A: When _____ the exam results _____?

B: I'm not sure, but probably they _____ them in a couple of weeks.
✓ **C) will / be announced / will announce**
The question is about the future and the results are announced by someone, so we use the future passive: **will** the results **be announced**? In B's answer the subject **they** does the action, so it is active: **will announce**.

20. Coffee, which _____ heavily all around the world now, _____ to America by the British in the mid-1600s.
✓ **B) is consumed / was introduced**
Now shows a general present fact, and people drink coffee, so we use the present simple passive **is consumed**. **In the mid-1600s** is past, and the British brought it, so we use the past simple passive **was introduced**. Not **consumes**, because coffee doesn't consume anything.

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