ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Upper Level Vocabulary Test 19

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Explanations

1. Since 1945, the rivalry in military strength between the world's great powers has produced a _____ balanced peace.
✔ **E) precariously**
Precariously means in an unstable way that could easily fail or collapse. A **precariously balanced peace** is one that could break down at any moment. Not **previously**, which only means 'before' and does not fit with **balanced**.

2. The team's coach insisted on a program of _____ training before the big match.
✔ **B) rigorous**
Rigorous training is very thorough, strict and demanding. It is the natural collocation with **training**. **Harsh** and **severe** describe punishment or conditions rather than a training programme.

3. I tried to _____ a hint but you didn't notice.
✔ **B) drop**
The fixed expression is **drop a hint**, which means to suggest something indirectly. Not **suggest**, because you suggest an idea, not **a hint**.

4. What you say is true, but you could have _____ it more tactfully.
✔ **B) phrased**
To **phrase** something means to choose the words you use to express it, as in **You could have phrased it more tactfully.** Not **remarked**, which means to make a comment and does not describe how the words were chosen.

5. The police are _____ the suburbs for the missing car.
✔ **B) combing**
To **comb** a place means to search it very carefully and thoroughly: **The police are combing the suburbs for the missing car.** Not **seeking**, because you seek the thing you want (**seek the car**), not the place where you search. **Sacking** a town means attacking it and stealing from it, which does not fit here.

6. The climbers _____ their greatest ambition by reaching the summit of the mountain.
✔ **E) realized**
To **realize an ambition** means to achieve it or make it happen. Not **obtained**, because we obtain things such as permission or information, not an ambition.

7. He was so _____ in the book that he forgot all about his appointment.
✔ **E) engrossed**
Engrossed in something means so interested in it that you notice nothing else. The preposition **in** is the clue. **Gripped** means a similar thing, but it is used with **by** (**gripped by the book**).

8. It is impossible to _____ these points of view: they are too different.
✔ **B) reconcile**
To **reconcile** different views means to find a way for them to exist together or agree. Not **compromise**, because you compromise **on** something, and it cannot take **points of view** as a direct object.

9. I am never free on Thursday evenings as I have a _____ arrangement to play chess with a friend.
✔ **A) long-standing**
A **long-standing** arrangement is one that has existed for a long time and still continues. Not **long-lasting**, which describes something that lasts a long time, such as an effect or a product.

10. If you are under 18, you are not _____ to join this club.
✔ **D) eligible**
Eligible means allowed or qualified to do something because you meet the rules: **eligible to join**. Not **permissible**, which describes an action that is allowed, not a person.

11. The Chairman is to give a formal _____ at the Annual General Meeting.
✔ **B) address**
A formal **address** is a speech given to an audience, and **give an address** is a common collocation. **Discussion**, **debate** and **dialogue** involve several people, not one speaker.

12. When I arrived in this country I had to start learning the language from _____.
✔ **A) scratch**
The idiom **from scratch** means from the very beginning, with no previous knowledge. Not **nothing**: **from nothing** is used for building a business or a fortune, not for learning a language.

13. I spoke to him, but he was too _____ to hear what I said.
✔ **A) preoccupied**
Preoccupied means thinking so much about something else that you do not notice what is happening around you. Not **absent-minded**, which describes a person's general habit of forgetting things rather than their state at one moment. **Concentrated** is not used for people in this sense (we say **concentrating**), and **cautious** and **thoughtful** do not explain why he didn't hear.

14. National emergencies require that the interests of the community _____ those of the individual citizen.
✔ **D) override**
To **override** something means to be more important than it. Here the community's interests are more important than **those** (the interests) of individuals. Not **overcome**, which means to defeat a problem or difficulty.

15. Because of the strike, British Rail have been forced to _____ all trains to London.
✔ **A) cancel**
To **cancel** trains means to stop them from running at all. Not **postpone**, which means to move an event to a later time; trains are cancelled, not postponed.

16. The townspeople held a celebration when work on the _____ of the ancient building had been completed.
✔ **C) restoration**
Restoration is the work of repairing an old building so that it looks as it did originally. Not **reproduction**, which means a copy of something.

17. All flights in and out of London Airport came to a _____ because of the strike.
✔ **C) standstill**
Come to a standstill means to stop completely. A **terminus** is the last station on a line, not a state of stopping. **Stoppage** is a noun for a strike itself; we do not say **come to a stoppage**.

18. Dried vegetables are easy to use if you remember to _____ them overnight.
✔ **E) soak**
To **soak** food means to leave it in water for a long time so that it becomes soft: **soak the beans overnight**. Not **infuse**, which means putting tea or herbs in hot water to get their flavour.

19. Investors seem to be losing _____ in the car industry.
✔ **B) confidence**
Lose confidence in something means to stop believing that it will succeed or do well. It is the usual collocation about investors and markets. Not **reliance**, which means depending on something, and we do not say **lose reliance in**.

20. The memorial in the square _____ the soldiers who lost their lives in the war.
✔ **D) commemorates**
To **commemorate** means to honour the memory of people or an event, often with a monument. Not **celebrates**, which suggests a happy occasion.

21. At the end of his trial he was _____ of murder.
✔ **A) convicted**
To be **convicted of** a crime means a court officially decides that you are guilty. Not **sentenced**, which is the punishment given after a conviction (**sentenced to ten years**), and it is used with **to**, not **of**.

22. To _____ greater accuracy, all invoices will be double-checked before leaving the office.
✔ **B) ensure**
To **ensure** means to make certain that something happens: **to ensure greater accuracy**. Not **assure**, which means to tell someone confidently that something is true (**I assure you**). **Insure** is about insurance.

23. The mountainous areas of the country are _____ populated.
✔ **D) sparsely**
Sparsely populated means having very few people living there, spread over a large area. It is a fixed collocation; **slightly** or **loosely populated** are not used.

24. He is an _____ worker and rarely does well in examinations.
✔ **D) erratic**
Erratic means not regular or consistent, sometimes good and sometimes bad. That is why he rarely does well in exams. Not **errant**, which means behaving badly or wandering from the right path, and **erroneous** means incorrect.

25. He was completely _____ by the thief's disguise.
✔ **C) taken in**
To be **taken in** means to be deceived or tricked: **He was taken in by the disguise.** Not **taken up**, which means started (a hobby) or accepted (an offer).

26. His letter was so confused that I could hardly make any _____ of it at all.
✔ **D) sense**
Make sense of something means to understand it. It is a fixed expression. Not **meaning**: we say **understand the meaning**, not **make any meaning of it**.

27. According to the weather forecast, which is usually _____, it will snow this afternoon.
✔ **A) accurate**
An **accurate** forecast is correct and true. **Accurate** is the usual word for forecasts and predictions. **Precise** and **exact** describe measurements or details rather than whether a forecast comes true.

28. It was nearly Christmas, and the children were in high _____.
✔ **B) spirits**
In high spirits is an idiom meaning happy, excited and full of energy. Not **mood**: we say **in a good mood**, not **in high mood**.

29. An energetic manager can be a great _____ to his firm.
✔ **A) asset**
An **asset** is a person or thing that is very useful or valuable: **She is a great asset to the team.** Not **profit**, which is money gained, not a person.

30. He was a generous friend but as a businessman, he drove a hard _____.
✔ **A) bargain**
The idiom **drive a hard bargain** means to negotiate firmly and insist on getting a good deal. Not **deal**: the word fits the meaning, but the fixed idiom uses **bargain**.

31. This man is so arrogant that he is completely _____ to all criticism.
✔ **A) impervious**
Impervious to something means not affected or influenced by it: **impervious to criticism**. Not **unaware**, because it is used with **of** and means 'not knowing', not 'not caring'.

32. I cannot bear the noise of my brother's radio; it _____ me from my work.
✔ **E) distracts**
To **distract someone from** something means to take their attention away from it. The preposition **from** is the clue. **Disturbs** fits the meaning but is not used with **from my work**.

33. He soon made a _____ for himself on the stage.
✔ **E) name**
The idiom **make a name for yourself** means to become well known and respected. Not **fame** or **popularity**: they have a similar meaning but do not fit the fixed expression **make a ... for himself**.

34. His aunt died leaving him a small _____.
✔ **E) legacy**
A **legacy** is money or property left to someone when a person dies. Not **heritage**, which means the traditions, culture and history of a country or group.

35. His irresponsible behavior put the whole operation in _____.
✔ **C) jeopardy**
Put something in jeopardy means to put it in danger of failing or being lost. Not **risk**, because the phrase is **put at risk**, not **in risk**.

36. When I invited him to dinner he accepted with _____.
✔ **D) alacrity**
Alacrity means eagerness and speed: **He accepted the offer with alacrity.** Not **gratification**, which means a feeling of pleasure or satisfaction and is not used in this expression.

37. During the fire he _____ the people into groups which carried sand and water to throw on to the flames.
✔ **C) organized**
To **organize people into groups** means to arrange them in an ordered way for a purpose. Not **dispersed**, which means to send people away in different directions.

38. Will you _____ Peter to bring his camera tomorrow?
✔ **B) remind**
Remind someone to do something means to tell them so that they do not forget. Not **remember**, because it does not take a person plus **to** + verb in this way (**remember to bring**, not **remember Peter to bring**).

39. The carpet was _____ with coffee where the cup had fallen.
✔ **E) stained**
Stained means marked with a dirty mark that is difficult to remove: **stained with coffee**. Not **dyed**, which means coloured on purpose, for example cloth or hair.

40. That comedian is very good at _____; she can take off the Prime Minister perfectly.
✔ **D) impressions**
An **impression** is an amusing imitation of a famous person's voice and behaviour. **Take off** someone means to copy them in a funny way. Not **reproductions**, which are copies of objects such as paintings or furniture.

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