ANSWER KEY WITH EXPLANATIONS

Word Order Test 1

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Explanations

1. (I) He was sitting (II) in an armchair and (III) reading (IV) a (V) newspaper.

Into which position can the word "comfortably" be put correctly?
✔ **B) II**
An adverb of manner usually goes after the verb it describes, so it fits after **was sitting**: **He was sitting comfortably in an armchair.** It cannot go between **a** and **newspaper** (V), because an adverb cannot describe a noun.

2. Before the meeting began, (I) he assured me that (II) the report (III) would be (IV) ready by the end of the month (V).

Into which position can the word "absolutely" be put correctly?
✔ **D) IV**
Absolutely is an intensifier, so it goes directly before the adjective it makes stronger: **would be absolutely ready**. In positions II, III and V it does not describe any word and sounds wrong.

3. The teacher's question (I) was (II) difficult, so only one of the (III) students was able (IV) to answer it (V).

Into which position can the word "extremely" be put correctly?
✔ **B) II**
Extremely is a degree adverb and goes before an adjective: **was extremely difficult**. It cannot go before a noun such as **students** (III).

4. I expected (I) the theatre to (II) be completely full (III) for the (IV) opening but it was (V) empty.

Into which position can the word "nearly" be put correctly?
✔ **E) V**
Nearly goes before the adjective it describes: **it was nearly empty**. The contrast with **but** shows the theatre was almost empty, not almost full, so positions II and III do not work.

5. (I) I ate (II) the (III) box of (IV) sweets (V).

Into which position can the word "whole" be put correctly?
✔ **C) III**
Whole is an adjective, so it comes after the article and before the noun: **the whole box of sweets**. Not **whole the box** (II), because the article must come first.

6. (I) Do you (II) see (III) John (IV) these (V) days?

Into which position can the word "ever" be put correctly?
✔ **B) II**
In questions, frequency adverbs like **ever** go after the subject and before the main verb: **Do you ever see John these days?**

7. I want (I) to buy a (II) brand (III) new (IV) coat (V).

Into which position can the word "woollen" be put correctly?
✔ **D) IV**
Adjectives about age come before adjectives about material. The material adjective goes right before the noun: **a brand new woollen coat**. **Brand new** is one expression, so **woollen** cannot go between **brand** and **new** (III).

8. (I) There are (II) little (III) black (IV) dogs (V) in the yard.

Into which position can the word "six" be put correctly?
✔ **B) II**
Numbers come before all other adjectives: **six little black dogs** (number, then size, then colour).

9. The (I) children (II) were playing (III) in the backyard when their (IV) uncle called (V) them in.

Into which position can the word "quietly" be put correctly?
✔ **C) III**
An adverb of manner usually goes after the verb: **were playing quietly in the backyard**. Not between **the** and **children** (I), because an adverb cannot describe a noun.

10. They (I) bought their (II) son a (III) car as (IV) a graduation present (V).

Into which position can the words "small yellow" be placed correctly?
✔ **C) III**
Adjectives go between the article and the noun, with size before colour: **a small yellow car**. Not before **son** (II), because the sentence is about the car, not the son.

11. Choose the correct word order.

Which sentence is grammatically correct?
✔ **B) Could you tell me where the nearest railway station is?**
In **indirect questions**, we use **statement word order** (subject + verb), not question word order (auxiliary verb + subject). Therefore, the correct structure is **"where the nearest railway station is"**, not **"where is the nearest railway station"**. Remember that the word order in an indirect question remains the same as in a statement, even when the sentence begins with a question expression such as *Could you tell me...?*

12. They (I) had (II) spent their (III) holiday with a Turkish family (IV) on (V) an island in the Mediterranean.

Into which position can the word "summer" be placed correctly?
✔ **C) III**
Summer is used here like an adjective before a noun, so it goes right before **holiday**: **their summer holiday**.

13. The (I) applause (II) of the (III) audience increased (IV) the self-confidence of the (V) amateur performers.

Into which position can the word "stupendous" be put correctly?
✔ **A) I**
Stupendous (amazing, very great) is an adjective, so it goes before the noun it describes: **The stupendous applause**. Position V gives **stupendous amateur performers**, which is grammatical but does not fit the meaning: it is the applause that was great and gave the performers confidence.

14. Would (I) you (II) hand (III) me (IV) the black one (V) there?

Into which position can the word "please" be put correctly?
✔ **B) II**
In polite requests, **please** goes after the subject and before the main verb: **Would you please hand me...?** It can also go at the end after a comma (**...the black one there, please?**), but not between **one** and **there** (V).

15. The young (I) Italian (II) boy looked very chic (III) in his (IV) suit which contrasted so well with (V) his dark tan.

Into which position can the word "white" be placed correctly?
✔ **D) IV**
The clue is **contrasted so well with his dark tan**: it is the suit that is white, so the colour adjective goes right before the noun: **his white suit**.

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