

# Reading

## Answers & worked explanations

Free NSW selective practice paper | Cheerful Pine | 38 answers

Matches the accompanying question PDF. The key and explanations below are taken from the published online paper, checked on 22 September 2026. This is our original practice material, not an official Department of Education paper.

### Quick answer key

#### Part 1 - Fiction

|      |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1: B | 2: C | 3: A | 4: C | 5: D | 6: D | 7: B | 8: D |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|

#### Part 2 - Vocabulary

|      |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 9: D | 10: B | 11: B | 12: A | 13: B | 14: A | 15: D | 16: A |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|

#### Part 3 - Poem

|       |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 17: D | 18: B | 19: A | 20: B | 21: C | 22: B |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|

#### Part 4 - Gapped text

|       |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 23: D | 24: C | 25: G | 26: B | 27: F | 28: A |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|

#### Part 5 - Multiple matching

|       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 29: D | 30: D | 31: A | 32: B | 33: A | 34: B | 35: D | 36: A |
| 37: C | 38: C |       |       |       |       |       |       |

# Worked explanations

## Part 1 - Fiction

### Question 1 - Answer B

The passage says the dolls 'didn't look as if they belonged', but of the little lamp that it 'seemed to smile' and 'was real'. What is suggested by setting the lamp against the dolls in this way?

Correct answer: The plain little lamp feels alive; the dolls do not.

Strategy. Ask why the writer calls the lamp 'real' but says the dolls do not 'belong'.

The dolls are stiff and out of place; the lamp seems to smile and 'live here'.

So the lamp stands for something genuine and alive amid the showy house.

Check. The humble lamp is the one true, living thing - which matters at the end.

Why the others are wrong

A. The dolls are 'stiff', not broken; the contrast is aliveness, not damage.

C. It is not about size preference but about which thing seems genuinely alive.

D. Reads only the surface craftsmanship; the point is the lamp feels alive and true, while the dolls feel false.

### Question 2 - Answer C

The Kelveys were kept away because 'the line had to be drawn somewhere. It was drawn at the Kelveys.' What is the writer doing with the phrase 'the line had to be drawn somewhere'?

Correct answer: Echoing the grown-ups' own smug words back at us.

Strategy. Decide whether the writer means this excuse sincerely or is echoing it critically.

'The line had to be drawn somewhere' is the sort of thing the snobbish adults would say.

The flat repetition - 'It was drawn at the Kelveys' - mocks the cruelty of that excuse.

Check. The phrase is the adults' excuse, quoted so we feel how unjust it is.

Why the others are wrong

A. The writer's sympathy is clear; the irony is pointed, not undecided.

B. The whole passage sides with the Kelveys; the flat repetition mocks this excuse, it does not make it.

D. It is not a school rule but class prejudice dressed up as necessity.

### Question 3 - Answer A

Kezia invites the Kelveys in 'though her heart beat'. What do the words 'though her heart beat' add?

Correct answer: She knew she was breaking the rule and chose to do it anyway.

Strategy. Ask why Kezia's heart would beat as she speaks to the Kelveys.

She had 'made up her mind' and knew the Kelveys were forbidden.

Her heart beats because she is knowingly defying the rule - a small act of courage.

Check. Quiet, nervous courage - she breaks the rule on purpose.

Why the others are wrong

- B. She reaches out TO them; the fear is of breaking the grown-ups' rule, not of the girls.
- C. A racing heart here is nerve, not showing-off; she risks trouble by inviting them.
- D. The beating heart marks the daring of what she is about to do, not physical effort.

## Question 4 - Answer C

Beryl is angry throughout. But what does the comparison 'as if they were chickens' add, in particular, to how she treats the Kelveys?

Correct answer: She treats them as beneath notice - not as children at all.

Strategy. Think about how one treats chickens, and what that says about Beryl's view of the Kelveys.

Chickens are shooed away without a thought for their feelings.

Comparing the children to chickens shows Beryl treats them as beneath notice.

Check. The simile strips the Kelveys of their dignity as children.

Why the others are wrong

- A. 'Nuisance' still grants them a place; the livestock image lowers them further, to creatures shooed without a thought.
- B. This is about bossiness generally; the simile is specifically about seeing the Kelveys as less than human.
- D. 'Chickens' is about how little she regards them, not about speed or noise.

## Question 5 - Answer D

After being driven off, little Else 'seemed to have forgotten it all' and says softly, 'I seen the little lamp.' What does this reveal about Else?

Correct answer: She holds on to the one beauty she saw; the cruelty could not take it.

Strategy. Weigh what Else chooses to remember against what has just been done to her.

She has been shamed and driven off, yet 'seemed to have forgotten it all'.

What stays with her is the lamp - the beauty she found - which the cruelty could not take away.

Check. A small, unbroken dignity: the beauty she saw outlasts the unkindness.

Why the others are wrong

- A. She speaks softly for herself, absorbed in the lamp - not managing Lil's feelings.
- B. There is no wish to own it; the point is that seeing it was enough for her.
- C. Her 'rare smile' shows quiet contentment, not confusion; she chooses to hold the beauty, not miss the insult.

## Question 6 - Answer D

When Lil warns that they are not allowed to speak to her, Kezia answers, 'Oh well. It doesn't matter.' What does this reply show about Kezia?

Correct answer: The grown-ups' rule simply carries no weight with her.

Strategy. Weigh the tone of 'Oh well. It doesn't matter' - is it hesitation, anger, or something else?

Lil raises the ban; Kezia says 'Oh well. It doesn't matter.'

The careless reply shows the rule simply holds no weight for her.

Check. A shrug - the grown-ups' rule means nothing to her kindness.

Why the others are wrong

A. 'It doesn't matter' is a firm dismissal, not hesitation - she knows the rule and sets it aside.

B. 'It doesn't matter' answers Lil's point about the RULE ('you wasn't to speak to us'), not their poverty - real as her kindness is, that is not what she waves aside here.

C. She does not reason it out - her careless 'Oh well' dismisses the ban itself, not the question of who made it.

## Question 7 - Answer B

The passage notes that 'even the teacher had a special voice for them'. What does this detail show?

Correct answer: Even the adults joined in looking down on them.

Strategy. Notice the word 'even' before 'the teacher'.

'Even the teacher' means the shunning reached beyond the children to the adults.

A 'special voice' sets the Kelveys apart as beneath the rest.

Check. The whole community looked down on them - teachers included.

Why the others are wrong

A. That would be a kindness, but 'even the teacher' places her among those who shun them - the 'special voice' marks them out, it does not shield them.

C. A 'special voice' here marks them out as lesser, not favoured - the word 'even' signals disapproval.

D. It is not about discipline; 'even the teacher' shows the general contempt reached her too.

## Question 8 - Answer D

What does the passage as a whole explore?

Correct answer: Being shut out - and a small beauty that survives it.

Strategy. Find the idea that runs beneath the doll's house story.

Under the surface toy-story is the shunning of the Kelveys and Else's quiet dignity.

Check. Exclusion, and a beauty that outlasts it.

Why the others are wrong

A. The doll's house is only the setting; the real subject is exclusion and dignity.

B. Too simple: Kezia's sharing is crushed by the adults; the point is the cruelty, not a lesson in sharing.

C. The adults' cruelty is central, but the passage ends on Else's 'I seen the little lamp' - the beauty that survives is as much the point as the prejudice.

## Part 2 - Vocabulary

### Question 9 - Answer D

Choose the word that best fits gap (9).

Correct answer: memorised

Strategy. Don't judge the four verbs by how they sound beside 'route'. Read the whole sentence: it concludes the bird's guidance 'must be carried within its own body' - that is, the bird holds no LEARNED knowledge of the way. So the blank names the learned, remembered route the sealed basket denies it - not a decision it made, a length it changed, or a guess about what lay ahead.

The clause after the semicolon - 'whatever guides it home must be carried within its own body' - means the bird's homing is inborn, not learned; so the blank names some LEARNED knowledge of the route that the bird turns out not to have. 'memorised the route' is exactly that learned knowledge - a route committed to memory from having seen it - and because the covered basket kept the bird from seeing the outward way, it is the memory it cannot hold. That is why the sentence can conclude the guidance is innate.

The others are not learned knowledge of the way: 'predicted' concerns what is still to come, yet the route was already travelled; 'chosen' is a decision the carried bird never made and says nothing about knowing the way home; 'shortened' is about a route's length, not about knowing it.

Check. Only 'memorised' names a learned, remembered route - and the sealed basket makes that memory impossible, which is exactly why the sentence concludes the bird's guidance must be innate.

Why the others are wrong

A. Near-miss competitor: you can predict a route you are about to fly, but 'the route it travelled' is already in the past, and something already done cannot be predicted - so this breaks the sentence's own time frame.

B. Plausible-misreading trap: sealed in a covered basket the carried bird made no decisions, so it 'cannot have chosen' its route either - yet which way it was taken says nothing about how it KNOWS the way home, the learned knowledge the sentence is actually denying it ('whatever guides it home must be carried within its own body').

C. Literal off-point trap: 'shortened the route it travelled' is about a route's length, not about knowing the way; making a journey briefer has no bearing on the inborn homing sense the sentence concludes with.

## Question 10 - Answer B

Choose the word that best fits gap (10).

Correct answer: assumed

Strategy. The gap is not fixed by the words around it - all four verbs fit 'most scientists \_\_\_\_ that pigeons steer by the sun'. Let the NEXT sentence decide it: because the sun idea was later 'abandoned', it can only ever have been taken for granted, not shown to be true.

Read on: the following sentence says the sun explanation 'has since been abandoned' - so it turned out to be wrong.

'assumed' means believed without proof, exactly the status of an idea that was later dropped.

'proved', 'confirmed' and 'established' all claim the idea was shown to be true, which the refutation that follows makes impossible.

Check. An idea that a cloudy day could overturn was only ever assumed - it was never proved, confirmed or established.

Why the others are wrong

A. 'proved' would mean the sun theory had been demonstrated beyond doubt - but the next sentence says the idea was 'abandoned', and a genuinely proved fact could not be overturned by a cloudy day.

C. 'confirmed' claims the sun theory was checked and found true; yet the passage goes on to overturn it, so it was never confirmed, only taken for granted.

D. 'established' means settled as accepted fact, but an established fact would not be 'abandoned', which is exactly what the following sentence says happened to the sun idea.

## Question 11 - Answer B

Choose the word that best fits gap (11).

Correct answer: innate

Strategy. Ignore the single word and read the clause that defines it after the colon: 'a pigeon is born already knowing... and needs no lessons'. Pick the adjective that precisely means present from birth.

The sentence supplies its own definition after the colon: born with it, no lessons needed.

'innate' is the exact term for an ability present from birth.

'natural', 'automatic' and 'inherited' each capture only part of that idea, or are looser, or point elsewhere (to genetics).

Check. The defining clause 'born already knowing... needs no lessons' matches 'innate' more exactly than the near-synonyms.

Why the others are wrong

A. Captures how the bird never gets lost, but the sentence defines the sense as one the bird is BORN with ('born already knowing... needs no lessons'); 'unerring' describes never-failing accuracy, not something present from birth.

C. Fits the idea of homing done without thought, yet 'automatic' describes effort-free action, not something present at hatching; the defining clause 'born already knowing' points to birth, so 'innate'.

D. Very close, but 'inherited' points to traits passed down from parents, while the definition given is simply that the bird is born already knowing and needs no lessons - that is 'innate'.

## Question 12 - Answer A

Choose the word that best fits gap (12).

Correct answer: unerring

Strategy. Four look-alike 'un-...-ing' adjectives; only one collocates with 'accuracy'. The deciding clue is 'never once heading down the wrong valley' - that means never in error.

'never once heading down the wrong valley' tells us the quality is being right, not being tireless or loyal.

'unerring accuracy' is the set phrase for never missing the mark.

'unfailing' (never running out), 'unflagging' (never tiring) and 'unswerving' (never wavering in loyalty) each mean something else and mis-collocate with 'accuracy'.

Check. Only 'unerring' pairs with 'accuracy' to mean 'makes no mistakes' - the quality the wrong-valley clue describes.

Why the others are wrong

B. Same un-...-ing shape and half-fits a long, hard flight, yet 'unflagging' means tireless (unflagging energy); the sentence measures correctness of direction, not stamina.

C. Tempting because a bird flies straight, but 'unswerving' means steadfast in loyalty or resolve (unswerving devotion); it collocates with commitment, not with 'accuracy', which pairs with 'unerring'.

D. Morphologically parallel near-synonym, but 'unfailing' means never running out (unfailing patience, an unfailing supply); the gap is about never making a mistake, shown by 'never once heading down the wrong valley', so it needs 'unerring'.

## Question 13 - Answer B

Choose the word that best fits gap (13).

Correct answer: perilous

Strategy. All four adjectives could describe hard 'work', so the phrase itself cannot decide the gap. Use the facts on either side: the flights were 'through gunfire' and 'many never reached their lofts', while the survivors were 'honoured as heroes'. Those point to danger, not tiredness, thanklessness or boredom.

The sentences around the gap describe gunfire and birds that 'never reached their lofts at all' - the work cost many of them their lives.

'perilous' means full of danger, which is exactly what deadly flights through gunfire were.

'tiring' names only the effort of long flights; 'thankless' is contradicted by the birds being 'honoured as heroes'; 'tedious' means dull, which gunfire and heavy losses are not.

Check. Gunfire and birds lost in flight make the work dangerous - 'perilous' - not merely tiring, thankless or tedious.

Why the others are wrong

A. 'thankless' would mean the birds' efforts went unrewarded, yet the survivors were 'honoured as heroes', so their work was anything but thankless.

C. 'tedious' means dull and monotonous, but a flight through gunfire with many birds lost is the opposite of dull; nothing in the passage suggests boredom.

D. 'tiring' catches the 'long flights', but fatigue is not what the passage stresses: the birds flew 'through gunfire' and 'many never reached their lofts at all', so the work was deadly, not merely wearying.

## Question 14 - Answer A

Choose the word that best fits gap (14).

Correct answer: toll

Strategy. The verb is 'took', and the next clause ('many never reached their lofts') means birds were lost. Choose the noun that follows 'took a heavy \_\_\_\_' and means serious loss.

'took a heavy toll' is the set phrase for causing serious harm or death.

'many never reached their lofts at all' confirms the birds were lost, matching 'toll'.

'cost', 'price' and 'strain' pair with other verbs and do not carry the sense of losses of life.

Check. Only 'toll' completes 'took a heavy \_\_\_\_ on' and matches the deaths described next.

Why the others are wrong

B. You 'pay a heavy price', but flights do not 'take a heavy price'; the verb 'took' needs 'toll'.

C. 'put a heavy strain on' is idiomatic, yet the verb here is 'took', and 'strain' means stress rather than the deaths signalled by 'many never reached their lofts'.

D. We say something happened 'at a heavy cost', not that it 'took a heavy cost'; and the words that follow ('many never reached their lofts') point to losses of life - a heavy toll.

## Question 15 - Answer D

Choose the word that best fits gap (15).

Correct answer: distance

Strategy. All four fit 'cover the same \_\_\_\_', so the fragment cannot decide it. Use the surrounding facts: the lofts are 'scattered across many different towns', and the next sentence judges the race by 'the miles it has flown' - that is distance.

Lofts in different towns means the birds fly unequal lengths.

The following sentence measures each bird's time 'against the miles it has flown' - miles are distance.

'journey', 'route' and 'course' describe the trip or the path, not the mileage the speed calculation needs.

Check. Because the winner is decided by speed (miles over time), the word the scattered towns make unequal is 'distance'.

Why the others are wrong

- A. Birds do fly a route, yet 'route' means the path taken, not the miles; because the winner is judged on miles over time, the operative word is 'distance'.
- B. 'the same course' points to the path, half-fitting 'cover', but the fairness rule compares miles flown, so 'distance' is what the scattered towns make unequal.
- C. You do 'cover a journey', so it fits the local phrase, but 'the same journey' means the same trip; the passage stresses the lofts are in different towns, so what actually differs is measurable distance - which the next sentence turns into speed.

## Question 16 - Answer A

Choose the word that best fits gap (16).

Correct answer: fastest

Strategy. The prize rule was just defined as time measured against miles - that is speed. And the clause 'not to the first bird spotted' rules out whichever bird merely arrived first.

'time measured against the miles it has flown' means the winner is the quickest per mile - the fastest.

'not to the first bird spotted dropping onto its loft' directly rejects the bird that simply arrived soonest.

'furthest' and 'highest' measure ground covered or altitude, which the rule does not use.

Check. Speed (miles over time) wins the prize, and 'soonest' is explicitly rejected, so 'fastest' is the only fit.

Why the others are wrong

- B. A parallel superlative that pairs with flight (altitude), yet height is never measured here; the rule compares miles over time, so speed - 'fastest'.
- C. Half-fits the long flights, but each bird flies only to its own loft; the contest is decided by speed, not by which bird covered the most ground.
- D. This is exactly the misreading the sentence corrects: the prize does NOT go to the first bird home ('not to the first bird spotted dropping onto its loft'), so 'soonest' (arrived first) is wrong.

## Part 3 - Poem

### Question 17 - Answer D

How does the poem change as it moves from the stanzas about Clancy to the stanzas about the narrator's own life?

Correct answer: It turns from an open, admiring picture of the bush to a shut-in, sour picture of the city.

Strategy. Compare the feeling of the Clancy stanzas with the office stanzas.

The bush is 'sunlit' and free; the city is 'dusty, dirty' and shut in.

So the poem swings from bright admiration to gloom.

Check. The turn is from open praise to cramped disgust.

Why the others are wrong

- A. The last stanza returns warmly to Clancy ('I doubt he'd suit the office') - the fondness for him never cools.
- B. The city stanzas breathe disgust ('foulness', 'foetid'), not fear - he is repelled by the city, not frightened of it.
- C. He never accepts the city - the poem ends still dreaming of swapping places with Clancy, longing undimmed.

## Question 18 - Answer B

In the final stanza, what does the 'round eternal of the cash-book and the journal' stand for?

Correct answer: The narrator's endless round of office bookkeeping.

Strategy. Work out what a cash-book and a journal are, and whose daily work they name.

A cash-book and a journal are the account books of a city office, not anything from the bush.  
In the imagined swap it is the narrator's own daily paperwork that Clancy would take over.

Check. The endless grind of office account-keeping - the narrator's own work.

Why the others are wrong

- A. Misattached 'round': the cycle that 'come and go' in the line above is the driving seasons, not the ledgers named here.
- C. Quote-snatch on 'journal': on its own it can mean a diary or paper, but paired with 'cash-book' it is an accounts ledger.
- D. Echoes the opening 'I had written him a letter', but a cash-book and journal are account books, not correspondence.

## Question 19 - Answer A

In the bush stanza, whose are the 'kindly voices' that greet Clancy?

Correct answer: The wind and river, spoken of as friendly people.

Strategy. Read on to see what the 'voices' actually are.

The next line calls them 'the murmur of the breezes and the river'.  
So nature is given warm, human-like voices.

Check. The 'voices' are wind and water, made to sound like welcoming friends.

Why the others are wrong

- B. Cattle appear only by contrast in the city stanza ('in place of lowing cattle'); they are not the 'kindly voices'.
- C. Strong literal trap: 'voices' and 'friends' suggest people, but the next line names them as breeze and river.
- D. Townsfolk belong to the scorned city half, not the bush; a careless 'people' reading picks this.

## Question 20 - Answer B

How does the narrator feel about the city where he works?

Correct answer: Oppressed and repelled by it.

Strategy. Pin down the exact feeling in his city words - fear, boredom, longing, or disgust?

'Dingy', 'foetid', 'foulness', 'fiendish' are the language of disgust, not of fear or of not caring.  
The longing in the poem is all for the bush; toward the city every word is repelled.

Check. Oppression and disgust, aimed squarely at the city.

Why the others are wrong

- A. 'Daunt' and 'haunt' can sound like fear, but the ruling note is disgust - 'foetid', 'foulness', 'fiendish' - not dread of danger.
- C. The 'dingy' greyness might suggest deadened, not-caring feeling, but his words are actively repelled ('foulness', faces that 'haunt' him), not blank.
- D. The wistful longing is aimed at the bush; toward the city itself every word he chooses is one of disgust.

## Question 21 - Answer C

In the city stanzas, three of these descriptions give human or devilish qualities to lifeless things. Which one is meant plainly, as a simple fact?

Correct answer: the 'dusty, dirty' city

Strategy. Ask, for each phrase, whether it could be literally true.

A city really can be dusty and dirty - that is a plain fact.

But a ray cannot be 'stingy', a rattle cannot be 'fiendish', and buses cannot 'make hurry' - those give lifeless things human or devilish traits.

Check. Only 'dusty, dirty' is used plainly; the rest are figures of speech.

Why the others are wrong

A. Figurative: 'fiendish' calls the noise devilish, a quality a rattle cannot literally have.

B. Figurative: a ray of light cannot really be mean or stingy - a human quality given to it.

D. Figurative: buses cannot literally 'make hurry' - hurrying is a human action given to a lifeless vehicle.

## Question 22 - Answer B

In the final stanza, how serious is the narrator's wish to swap lives with Clancy?

Correct answer: A wistful daydream - he admits Clancy would not suit the office.

Strategy. Weigh the soft, uncertain words against what he admits about Clancy.

'Somehow rather fancy' and 'like to' are the language of daydreaming.

He even doubts Clancy 'would suit the office' - so each man belongs in his own world.

Check. A fond, half-serious longing, not a real plan.

Why the others are wrong

A. Overclaim trap: 'somehow rather fancy' and 'like to' are soft, dreamy words, not a decision.

C. He only 'fancies' a swap and 'doubts' it would work - hardly certainty of being better.

D. Half-plausible as a 'resolution', but the whole daydream shows the envy is still very much alive.

## Part 4 - Gapped text

### Question 23 - Answer D

Which sentence best fits gap 23?

Correct answer: Because of this danger, coastal peoples searched for a way to warn ships away from the shallows.

Strategy. Look at what comes just before and after the gap, and find the sentence that turns the danger into the reason people looked for a first solution.

Before the gap, the text describes how a hidden rock could sink a ship - a real danger.

After the gap it says 'The earliest solution was simple: people lit bonfires.'

The missing sentence must link that danger to the search for a solution.

'Because of this danger, coastal peoples searched for a way to warn ships away from the shallows' does exactly that: 'this danger' points back to the sinking ships, and 'a way to warn ships' points forward to the bonfires.

Check. Read it in place: danger, so they searched for a way, and the earliest way was bonfires. The words 'this danger' only make sense in this gap.

Why the others are wrong

- A. This sentence belongs in gap 6, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- B. This sentence belongs in gap 4, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- C. This sentence belongs in gap 2, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- E. This is the extra sentence - it fits none of the gaps.
- F. This sentence belongs in gap 5, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- G. This sentence belongs in gap 3, where its link to the surrounding text holds.

## Question 24 - Answer C

Which sentence best fits gap 24?

Correct answer: Sailors could see its glow from many kilometres away, and travellers counted it among the wonders of the world.

Strategy. Find the sentence that describes how far the light could be seen and sets up the words 'even this wonder' that come after the gap.

Before the gap, the text describes the fire and the mirrors on the Pharos lighthouse.

After the gap it says 'Yet even this wonder could not last forever.'

So the missing sentence must talk about the light and call the lighthouse a wonder.

'Sailors could see its glow from many kilometres away, and travellers counted it among the wonders of the world' fits: 'its glow' points back to the fire, and 'wonders' sets up 'even this wonder'.

Check. The words 'its glow' need the fire before them, and 'even this wonder' after needs something to point back to. Only this sentence gives both.

Why the others are wrong

- A. This sentence belongs in gap 6, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- B. This sentence belongs in gap 4, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- D. This sentence belongs in gap 1, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- E. This is the extra sentence - it fits none of the gaps.
- F. This sentence belongs in gap 5, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- G. This sentence belongs in gap 3, where its link to the surrounding text holds.

## Question 25 - Answer G

Which sentence best fits gap 25?

Correct answer: Slowly, though, sea trade recovered, and ships crowded the coasts of Europe once more.

Strategy. Find the sentence that turns the quiet times into the busy new sea routes named just after the gap.

Before the gap, the text says few lighthouses were built and old ones fell into ruin - a quiet time.

After the gap it says 'These busy new routes demanded better guidance.'

The words 'These busy new routes' need a sentence just before that mentions busy routes or growing trade.

'Slowly, though, sea trade recovered, and ships crowded the coasts of Europe once more' supplies those busy routes, and 'though' shows the turn away from the quiet time.

Check. 'These busy new routes' would have nothing to point back to without this sentence.

Why the others are wrong

- A. This sentence belongs in gap 6, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- B. This sentence belongs in gap 4, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- C. This sentence belongs in gap 2, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- D. This sentence belongs in gap 1, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- E. This is the extra sentence - it fits none of the gaps.
- F. This sentence belongs in gap 5, where its link to the surrounding text holds.

## Question 26 - Answer B

Which sentence best fits gap 26?

Correct answer: Earlier lights had wasted most of their glow, scattering it uselessly into the sky.

Strategy. The sentence after the gap starts with 'Instead', so the gap must hold the problem it is turning away from.

Before the gap, the text says Fresnel designed a new kind of lens.

After the gap it says 'Instead, a lighthouse fitted with a Fresnel lens could be seen from more than thirty kilometres away.'

'Instead' needs a problem before it - something the new lens fixed.

'Earlier lights had wasted most of their glow, scattering it uselessly into the sky' is that problem, so 'Instead' works as a contrast between the wasted old light and the far-reaching new beam.

Check. Take the sentence away and 'Instead' points to nothing. The old wasted light against the new far-reaching beam is the contrast that makes the gap fit.

Why the others are wrong

- A. This sentence belongs in gap 6, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- C. This sentence belongs in gap 2, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- D. This sentence belongs in gap 1, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- E. This is the extra sentence - it fits none of the gaps.
- F. This sentence belongs in gap 5, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- G. This sentence belongs in gap 3, where its link to the surrounding text holds.

## Question 27 - Answer F

Which sentence best fits gap 27?

Correct answer: Above all, he could never let the flame go out, no matter how fierce the storm.

Strategy. Find the sentence about the keeper's most important duty that leads into the warning about the light failing.

Before the gap, the text lists the keeper's jobs - trimming wicks, polishing lenses, winding the clockwork.

After the gap it warns 'If the light failed even for a moment, ships might be dashed against the rocks.'

The missing sentence should name the most important duty and mention the flame going out.

'Above all, he could never let the flame go out, no matter how fierce the storm' fits: 'he' is the keeper, and the flame going out matches the warning that follows.

Check. 'Above all' marks the top duty, and 'the flame going out' is exactly what the next sentence warns about.

Why the others are wrong

- A. This sentence belongs in gap 6, where its link to the surrounding text holds.

- B. This sentence belongs in gap 4, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- C. This sentence belongs in gap 2, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- D. This sentence belongs in gap 1, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- E. This is the extra sentence - it fits none of the gaps.
- G. This sentence belongs in gap 3, where its link to the surrounding text holds.

## Question 28 - Answer A

Which sentence best fits gap 28?

Correct answer: Electric lamps and computers have replaced the keepers, who have now retired from their lonely posts.

Strategy. Find the sentence that explains how modern lighthouses run themselves and sets up 'Even so, these towers still stand watch'.

Before the gap, the text says almost every lighthouse now works on its own.

After the gap it says 'Even so, these towers still stand watch...'. .

'Even so' means 'in spite of that', so the gap must say the keepers have gone.

'Electric lamps and computers have replaced the keepers, who have now retired from their lonely posts' explains how the lights run alone, and 'Even so' then makes sense - the people have gone, but the towers remain.

Check. The gap explains how the light 'works on its own', and 'Even so' needs the keepers being gone before it. Only this sentence supplies that.

Why the others are wrong

- B. This sentence belongs in gap 4, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- C. This sentence belongs in gap 2, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- D. This sentence belongs in gap 1, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- E. This is the extra sentence - it fits none of the gaps.
- F. This sentence belongs in gap 5, where its link to the surrounding text holds.
- G. This sentence belongs in gap 3, where its link to the surrounding text holds.

## Part 5 - Multiple matching

### Question 29 - Answer D

Which writer states plainly that this was the most terrified they have ever been?

Correct answer: Extract D

Why the others are wrong

- A. The writer's legs turn to string at the deep end, but they never claim this was the greatest fear of their life.
- B. Nothing here frightens the writer at all - the struggle is with clumsy fingers, not fear.
- C. The writer's stomach knots before the speech, yet these are ordinary nerves, not the worst fright they have known.

### Question 30 - Answer D

Which writer only discovered afterwards that the person steadying them had been just as afraid at the time, yet had deliberately not let it show?

Correct answer: Extract D

Why the others are wrong

- A. The grandmother was frightened of water as a girl, long ago; she was not hiding any fear during the lessons themselves.
- B. Mr Okafor shows no fear whatever - what he tests in the writer is patience, not courage.
- C. Aunt Priya openly confesses she still gets nervous, so she hides nothing, and her nerves are about her own meetings, not the writer's moment.

### Question 31 - Answer A

Which writer came to realise that their helper had once been frightened of the very skill they were now passing on, and had mastered it in spite of that?

Correct answer: Extract A

Why the others are wrong

- B. Mr Okafor is never said to have struggled with music himself.
- C. Aunt Priya is uneasy in the same area - speaking - but she has not conquered it; she admits she still feels sick every time.
- D. Sam was frightened during the storm, but sailing is not a skill he once feared and later mastered, nor is he teaching it.

### Question 32 - Answer B

Which writer fondly remembers a helper who could lighten a dreary day with a bit of clowning?

Correct answer: Extract B

Why the others are wrong

- A. The grandmother is gentle and steady, never a joker.
- C. Aunt Priya's help is calm, careful rehearsal, with no comedy in it.
- D. Sam is coolly matter-of-fact in a crisis, not playful.

### Question 33 - Answer A

Which writer actually stopped and walked away partway through, more than once, before being coaxed into carrying on?

Correct answer: Extract A

Why the others are wrong

- B. The writer came close to handing the clarinet back but never actually did - they kept going right through the term.
- C. The writer feels sick beforehand but never abandons the speech.
- D. There is nothing to walk away from in a sudden storm; the writer simply has to endure it.

### Question 34 - Answer B

Which writer's guiding figure has stepped away for good - no longer in their old role and settled somewhere distant?

Correct answer: Extract B

Why the others are wrong

- A. The grandmother has moved far away, but she has not left any role, and the two still meet regularly on a screen.
- C. Aunt Priya is still close by and present in the writer's life.
- D. Cousin Sam is still around; nothing suggests he has gone anywhere.

### Question 35 - Answer D

Which writer hopes that one day, in a moment of real danger, they can be the steadying presence for someone more frightened than themselves?

Correct answer: Extract D

Why the others are wrong

- A. The grandmother's steadiness lives on in the writer's swimming, but the writer voices no wish to become that figure for anyone else.
- B. The writer already helps the younger boy now; this is something they do, not a future hope, and it involves no danger.
- C. The writer hopes to help a nervous younger brother through being watched - an anxious moment, but not the real danger this statement describes.

### Question 36 - Answer A

Which writer was reassured that there was no need to hurry, because there was all the time they could want?

Correct answer: Extract A

Why the others are wrong

- B. Mr Okafor urged going slowly and never rushed the writer, but his point was how to practise, not a promise that there was unlimited time.
- C. Aunt Priya rehearses thoroughly with the writer, but under the pressure of a fixed open-night date, not free of any hurry.
- D. In the storm there is no time to spare at all - quick action is exactly what the moment demands.

### Question 37 - Answer C

Which writer learned that the person encouraging them is still unsettled by that very challenge even now, and gets through it only by steeling themselves and pressing on regardless?

Correct answer: Extract C

Why the others are wrong

- A. The grandmother was once terrified of the water and taught herself to swim, but she overcame that fear long ago - nothing suggests the water still troubles her now, so this only half-fits.
- B. Mr Okafor betrays no nervousness of his own at all; what he offers the writer is patience, not a struggle he still shares.
- D. Sam owns up that his hands had been shaking, but that was fear in one passing crisis that he hid at the time, not a nervousness that still grips him whenever he sails.

### Question 38 - Answer C

Which writer, once helped through their own nervousness, would like to be there for a shy young relative facing the same ordeal?

Correct answer: Extract C

Why the others are wrong

- A. The writer treasures the grandmother's memory but never speaks of helping anyone else through nerves.
- B. The writer is already helping the younger boy with his clarinet - a present action, not a future wish, and about squeaks rather than stage-nerves.
- D. The writer hopes to be the steady one for somebody in real danger - a different ordeal from being watched, and not a young relative.