English Punctuation & Grammar: Hard Practice Paper 6 Answers

Q#	Answer	Explanation
1	C	'had stayed locked,' is followed by a second complete sentence, and a comma is too weak to join two sentences together. It needs a full stop or a semicolon: had stayed locked. Nobody had the key. The mistake is in group C.
2	E	Every mark in this line is correct. However has been dropped into the sentence as an aside, and it is properly closed off by a comma on each side of it. So there is no mistake in this line.
3	A	'The row of dusty boxes were' does not agree. The subject is row, which is singular, so the verb must be was. Of dusty boxes only describes the row; it is not what the sentence is about: The row of dusty boxes was pushed. The mistake is in group A.
4	C	'and every one had it's' uses the wrong word. It's is short for it is, and no bundle has an it is ribbon. The possessive form has no apostrophe: every one had its own ribbon. The mistake is in group C.
5	B	'three things,' introduces a list, and the mark that introduces a list is a colon, not a comma: three things: a ring, a photograph and a folded letter. The commas that follow are right, because they separate the items themselves. The mistake is in group B.
6	D	'carefully had never been opened.' runs two things together. Which my uncle held very carefully is dropped into the middle of the sentence to describe the letter, so it needs a comma at **both** ends, and the second one is missing: carefully, had never been opened. The mistake is in group D.
7	E	Every mark in this line is correct. The semicolon joins two complete sentences whose meanings belong together, and no comma is needed inside so short a second half. So there is no mistake in this line.

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8	A	‘My great-grandfathers name’ means the name belonging to my great-grandfather, so it is a possessive and takes an apostrophe before the s: My great-grandfather’s name. The mistake is in group A.
9	D	‘open it at all?’ should not end with a question mark. His exact words are not given; the line reports that he wondered something, which makes it a statement: open it at all. A question mark would be right only for “Ought we to open it at all?” The mistake is in group D.
10	B	‘less answers’ uses the wrong word. Answers can be counted one by one, so the word is fewer; less belongs with things that cannot be counted, such as less light or less hope: far fewer answers. The mistake is in group B.

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