

English: Choose the Best Word: Medium Practice Paper

2 Answers

Q#	Answer	Explanation
1	C	The missing word comes straight after the preposition with, and after a preposition the object form is used: with whom we had travelled. Who is the subject form, used for the person doing something, so with who is wrong. Which and that are used for things rather than people, and that can never follow a preposition in any case, while whose would have to be followed by a noun.
2	A	The verb in the line is was , which is singular, so the word in front of it must be singular too. Each means one at a time, so it takes a singular verb even though thirty children follow it. Both, All, Few and Many are all plural and would need were given. The words of the thirty children in between are what make the plural sound right.
3	B	There are two different verbs here. To lie means to put yourself down and takes no object; to lay means to put something else down, and it is followed by the thing being put down, here our sleeping bags. After to, the plain form is needed, so lay is right. Laid is its past form, lain is the past participle of lie, and lying would need a helper verb in front of it.
4	D	The as later in the line is half of a pair, and the other half must come before the adjective: not nearly as big as I had imagined. Bigger and more big would both need than rather than as, and more big is wrong anyway because short words take -er. The biggest picks one out of several and cannot be compared with as, and plain big leaves the first half of the pair missing.
5	E	The line is working out what happened earlier from the evidence of the darkness, and the pattern for a confident guess about the past is must have plus the past participle: must have turned off . Must turn off is about the present or the future, and must be turning off is about this moment. Must turned off and must have turn off are simply the wrong forms: must is always followed by a plain verb, and have by a past participle.

6	A	The subject is the number , which is one thing however many children it counts, so the verb is singular: the number was larger. The words of children sit in between and tempt you into were. The pronoun it later in the line confirms the subject is singular. Is and are are present tense, and the story is told in the past, and being cannot stand as the verb on its own.
7	C	The pattern for something that was true in the past but is not any longer is used to plus a plain verb: I used to think. Use to is a common misspelling of it, since the d is hard to hear. Was used to and am used to mean something quite different, being accustomed to something, and they are followed by an -ing form or a noun, not by think. Used on its own would need an object.
8	B	This is a sentence about something that did not happen, and the pattern for it is if plus had plus the past participle in the first half, with would have in the second: if I had known, I would have brought. Have known and has known belong to the present, would have never follows if in this pattern, and was known would make it passive, as though somebody knew the writer.
9	D	The line fixes the moment at which something was already true, and the phrase for that is By the time : by the time we were allowed to unroll them, it was almost one. Until marks the end of a stretch of time and would need the sentence to carry on differently. Unless turns the second half into a condition, Despite and During must both be followed by a noun rather than by a clause with its own verb.
10	C	When a sentence opens with Not only, the subject and the helping verb swap places, which is called inversion: Not only did we sleep. We did and we do keep the ordinary order and so cannot follow Not only. Do we is inverted but present tense, which clashes with were woken later in the line, and had we would need slept rather than sleep after it.