

**ANSWER KEY — 22 JUNE 2026**

<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q5</b>	<b>Q6</b>	<b>Q7</b>	<b>Q8</b>	<b>Q9</b>	<b>Q10</b>
A	C	B	D	A	A	B	D	D	A
<b>Q11</b>	<b>Q12</b>	<b>Q13</b>	<b>Q14</b>	<b>Q15</b>	<b>Q16</b>	<b>Q17</b>	<b>Q18</b>	<b>Q19</b>	<b>Q20</b>
C	A	D	B	C	A	C	A	B	D
<b>Q21</b>	<b>Q22</b>	<b>Q23</b>	<b>Q24</b>	<b>Q25</b>	<b>Q26</b>	<b>Q27</b>	<b>Q28</b>	<b>Q29</b>	<b>Q30</b>
C	B	C	D	B	C	A	D	B	C

RC PASSAGES

**Q1 A**  
The passage describes the mycelium as 'a filigree of threadlike hyphae that may sprawl for kilometres beneath a single forest, knitting the soil into a living fabric.' The image is of fine threads woven intricately across a vast area, so 'filigree' conveys something delicately and intricately interwoven. Option A captures this precisely. Option B is wrong because the mycelium is hidden underground, not conspicuous. Option C misreads the word: 'filigree' denotes intricacy, not fragility or imminent collapse, and the text stresses durability ('knitting the soil into a living fabric'). Option D contradicts the organic, sprawling quality the metaphor evokes—filigree work is delicate and ornamental, not rigidly geometric. Hence (A).

**Q2 C**  
The passage's thesis is announced early—'Fungi constitute their own kingdom of life'—and reinforced at the close: 'The hidden kingdom, it turns out, has been quietly running the world all along.' The whole text argues that fungi form a distinct kingdom whose vast ecological and practical importance we have underestimated. Option C states exactly this. Option A is wrong because the passage explicitly denies fungi are plants ('more closely related to animals than to the plants'). Option B overstates one example (mushrooms) and ignores the broader argument. Option D seizes on decomposition, but the passage gives equal weight to mycorrhizal partnership and human uses, calling decomposition 'only half the story.' Hence (C).

**Q3 B**  
The passage states that fungi, as decomposers, 'break down fallen wood, leaf, and carcass, releasing the locked nutrients back into circulation. Without them, the forest would suffocate beneath its own accumulated dead.' The inference is that without fungal decomposers, nutrients would stay trapped in the piling-up dead matter rather than being recycled—exactly what Option B says. Option A invents an evolutionary response the passage never suggests. Option C is wrong because the text does not claim animals could substitute for fungi in recycling. Option D reverses the logic: more accumulated dead matter would harm, not help, the forest, and the passage says the forest would 'suffocate,' not flourish. Hence (B).

**Q4 D**  
The author's stance is consistently appreciative. Fungi are called the performers of 'the planet's least glamorous yet most indispensable labour,' and the passage ends by marvelling that 'the hidden kingdom... has been quietly running the world all along.' This admiration for an overlooked, complex organism matches Option D. Option A misreads the early phrase 'faintly suspect,' which describes a past human misconception, not the author's own view. Option B ('detached and strictly clinical') ignores the evident wonder in phrases like 'stranger and grander.' Option C is unsupported—the author says we are only 'beginning to learn' about fungi, implying no lost golden age of understanding. Hence (D).

**Q5 A**  
The passage describes the 'wood wide web' as a network along which 'nutrients, and possibly chemical warnings, may travel from one plant to another,' but hedges with 'possibly' and 'may.' Evidence that trees actually transmit chemical alarm signals to neighbours through linked fungal threads would directly confirm this tentative claim, strengthening it—so Option A is correct. Option B describes a parasitic, one-sided relationship that would undercut the cooperative picture of mycorrhiza. Option C concerns mushroom fruiting and rainfall, irrelevant to plant-to-plant communication. Option D confirms only that fungal threads are long, which the passage already grants; it says nothing about the exchange of warnings between plants. Hence (A).

**Q6 A**  
In the first paragraph the reader 'received not merely information but a small physical relic of another life,' having held 'the very sheet the other had touched.' Here 'relic' means a tangible surviving trace of another person—exactly Option A. Option B ('worthless object kept out of habit') contradicts the reverent tone; the letter is treasured, not worthless. Option C imports a narrowly religious meaning the context does not support; the passage is about personal correspondence, not sacred objects. Option D ('deliberately discarded waste') is the opposite of the intended sense, since the letter is something kept and cherished. Hence (A).

**Q7 B**

The passage neither condemns digital messaging nor exalts letters; it states 'the right posture is neither nostalgia nor triumph' and that the shift has 'both enriched and impoverished us.' Its purpose is to weigh what is lost and gained as letter-writing declines, which is Option B. Option A is too extreme—the author calls speed and reach 'real gifts,' never urging abandonment of digital tools. Option D is wrong because the author also names real losses (deliberation, materiality, the archive of the self), so the praise is not unqualified. Option C misdescribes the piece as a technical history of the postal system, but the passage is reflective and evaluative. Hence (B).

**Q8 D**

The passage observes that with email and texts 'we write more words to one another than any generation before us, yet we deliberate over fewer of them,' and that 'the medium rewards speed over reflection.' The clear inference is that modern messaging's speed has reduced the care and reflection given to each message—Option D. Option A overstates this into an inability to write 'any words at all,' which contradicts the claim that we write more words than ever. Option B is too absolute; the author celebrates a grandmother seeing her grandchild's face, showing genuine emotional contact survives. Option C is contradicted directly: the passage laments that no 'drawer of yellowing envelopes' will remain. Hence (D).

**Q9 D**

The final paragraph adopts a measured, contemplative voice: 'the right posture is neither nostalgia nor triumph. We have traded depth for breadth... it has both enriched and impoverished us,' closing with a gentle question about 'whether something worth keeping is quietly slipping through our fingers.' This is reflective and balanced, weighing gains against losses—Option D. Option A ('bitterly resentful of all modern change') is wrong because the author explicitly rejects nostalgia and praises digital gifts. Option B ('smugly confident' of revival) overstates the cautious note that the letter merely 'lingers.' Option C ('coldly indifferent') contradicts the evident concern in the closing question. Hence (D).

**Q10 A**

The author repeatedly insists on honesty about trade-offs: the shift to digital messaging 'has both enriched and impoverished us,' and we should ask 'whether something worth keeping is quietly slipping through our fingers.' This fits Option A—convenience often carries a cost worth acknowledging. Option B ('any technology that increases speed is automatically a moral good') is too sweeping; the author grants gains but insists on naming losses. Option C ('the past was uniformly superior') is rejected outright, since the author notes old correspondence 'was a privilege of the literate and the leisured' that excluded the poor. Option D ('written communication has no value once read') contradicts the prized 'archive of the self' and letters 'reread decades later.' The author's balanced weighing of costs and benefits aligns with A. Hence (A).

## CR PASSAGES

**Q11 C**

The conclusion is the claim the rest of the passage supports. The final sentence states it directly: standardised testing should be removed from admissions entirely. Options A, B, and D are premises offered as support, the equity premise, the prediction premise, and the coaching premise respectively, each marshalled to back the abolition claim. A reliable test for the conclusion is to ask which statement the others are reasons for: the equity, coaching, and prediction points are all reasons to abolish, so abolition is the conclusion, not a premise. Option C therefore states the main conclusion. Hence (C).

**Q12 A**

The argument moves from the claim that tests track household income to the claim that they fail as measures of merit. That inferential leap requires an unstated assumption: that a genuine admissions instrument must capture merit rather than merely re-describe privilege. Without this bridging premise, showing that scores reflect wealth would not establish that they are illegitimate. Option A supplies exactly that suppressed premise. B, C, and D are not assumptions the argument needs: the case does not require that no university uses grades, that coaching is universally available, or any claim about officers' preferences. Hence (A).

**Q13 D**

The coaching premise claims that because drilling lifts scores, the test must measure only a trainable trick rather than real ability. Option D undercuts this: if coaching raises scores only for students who already possess strong analytical ability, then the score gains reflect genuine capacity being unlocked, not a content-free trick, so the test may track ability after all. This attacks a load-bearing premise. A and C are irrelevant to whether the tests are flawed; B actually helps the abolition case by impugning the proposed alternative. By disabling the coaching argument, D most weakens the overall reasoning. Hence (D).

**Q14 B**

The prediction premise asserts that entrance scores poorly predict later performance. A natural rebuttal is that scores merely proxy for school grades, which do the real predicting. Option B forecloses that rebuttal: holding grades equal, scores still fail to predict outcomes, showing the predictive failure is intrinsic to the test rather than an artefact of confounding with grades. This directly reinforces the argument's strongest premise. A concedes the opponent's convenience point; C and D are neutral or marginally unhelpful. Because B shores up the prediction premise against the most obvious objection, it most strengthens the argument. Hence (B).

**Q15 C**

The argument leans, at a key step, on the coaching industry's very existence to prove that the test is a worthless trick. But the coaching industry is an interested party whose business presupposes that drilling works, so treating its success as proof that the test measures only a trainable trick accepts self-serving evidence. Option C names exactly this vulnerability. Option A misdescribes the argument, which expressly rejects convenience rather than equating it with fairness. Options B and D point to forms of overreach the passage does not commit, since it cites repeated longitudinal studies rather than a single counterexample, and it does not claim the test is useless for every purpose. Hence (C).

**Q16 A**

The conclusion is the thesis the passage defends. The closing sentence states it plainly: funding space exploration is a justifiable use of public money, which option A captures. Options B, C, and D are the three supporting premises, spin-off technology, long-term survival, and inspiration, each advanced as a reason for the funding claim. Applying the standard test, ask which claim the others support: the technology, survival, and inspiration points all support the justification claim, so that claim is the conclusion. Therefore A states the main conclusion. Hence (A).

**Q17 C**

The argument concludes that space funding is justified, yet justification depends on a comparison the passage never states: that the benefits outweigh the domestic goods the same money could buy. The critic raises precisely this opportunity cost, and the argument's force collapses unless the gains exceed what is forgone. Option C supplies that suppressed comparative premise. The remaining options are far too strong to be assumptions the argument needs: it does not require that every hospital technology came from space programmes, that space budgets exceed health budgets, or that launch viewers invariably become scientists. Because C is the minimal bridging assumption, it is correct. Hence (C).

**Q18 A**

The spin-off premise claims that money spent on space returns repeatedly through technologies it seeds. Option A undercuts this causal claim: if the same technologies would have emerged from cheaper terrestrial research, then space spending is not what produced the benefit, and the unique payoff the argument trumpets evaporates. This attacks the premise at its causal core. B and C are minor concessions that leave the main pillars standing, survival and broad inspiration, and the budget overruns in C concern cost, not the existence of benefits. D weakens only the survival strand while sparing the technology and inspiration strands. Because A neutralises a central premise most decisively, it most weakens the argument. Hence (A).

**Q19 B**

The technology premise asserts that each unit spent on space returns to the public 'not once but repeatedly' through seeded industries. Option B supplies independent quantitative confirmation: economists estimating that each unit spent returns several units directly substantiates that the spin-off benefits are real and net-positive, reinforcing the argument's economic pillar. A actually undercuts the case by showing space programmes are not necessary for public goods; D merely describes engineers' credentials; C's single launch audience is weak anecdote about inspiration. Because B corroborates the load-bearing spin-off premise with measured returns, it most strengthens the argument. Hence (B).

**Q20 D**

The argument's final move answers the 'speculative' objection by noting that transformative investments, like early vaccines, looked speculative yet proved worthwhile, then concludes the space venture will too. Option D mirrors this structure exactly: it cites early vaccines as once-speculative-but-transformative and infers the present speculative venture will likewise pay off, reproducing the same appeal to a past speculative success. A parallels a different strand (cost, not speculation); B commits an appeal to popularity; C commits hasty generalisation from one case. Because D matches the specific speculative-precedent pattern of the passage's closing inference, it is the correct parallel. Hence (D).

## SECTION C – RAPID-FIRE GK &amp; CURRENT AFFAIRS

**Q21 C**

The Dirham (currency code AED) is the official currency of the United Arab Emirates, a federation of seven emirates that includes Abu Dhabi and Dubai. The distractors are neighbouring Gulf states with different currencies: Saudi Arabia and Qatar both use the Riyal, while Kuwait uses the Dinar, which is among the world's highest-valued currency units. Associating each Gulf nation with its specific currency is a frequently tested point in static general knowledge. Hence (C).

**Q22 B**

'Ephemeral' derives from a Greek root meaning 'lasting only a day' and describes anything transient or fleeting, such as a mayfly's life or a passing trend. Its closest synonym among the choices is 'short-lived'. 'Long-lasting' is a direct antonym, while 'spacious', which relates to size, and 'generous', which relates to giving, are unrelated in meaning. Recognising the time-related sense of the root word is the key to eliminating the distractors quickly. Hence (B).

**Q23 C**

The Thomas Cup is the premier international team championship in men's badminton, contested between national teams and named after Sir George Thomas, a former president of the international badminton federation; its women's equivalent is the Uber Cup. The distractor sports each have their own famous team events, for instance the Davis Cup in lawn tennis, but none of them is the Thomas Cup. Linking famous trophies to their sports is standard sports general knowledge. Hence (C).

**Q24 D**

Certiorari, meaning 'to be certified', is a writ issued by a superior court to quash an order passed by an inferior court or tribunal that has acted without jurisdiction, in excess of it, or in violation of natural justice. The distractors are the other constitutional writs: mandamus commands a public authority to perform its legal duty, habeas corpus secures the release of a person unlawfully detained, and quo warranto questions the legal authority of a person holding a public office. Hence (D).

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**Q25 B**

The idiom 'to bury the hatchet' means to settle a quarrel and make peace, abandoning hostility. It originates from a Native American custom of literally burying weapons such as tomahawks to mark the end of a conflict between tribes. The distractors play on the literal images of digging and fighting, but the established figurative meaning is reconciliation. Idioms must be learned as fixed expressions rather than interpreted word by word. Hence (B).

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**Q26 C**

'The Discovery of India' was written by Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister, during his imprisonment at Ahmednagar Fort between 1942 and 1946; it surveys India's history, philosophy and culture and was later adapted into the television series 'Bharat Ek Khoj'. The distractors are other freedom-movement leaders who wrote different works; Gandhi's autobiography, for example, is 'The Story of My Experiments with Truth'. Matching landmark books to their authors is a common general-knowledge test. Hence (C).

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**Q27 A**

The International Day of Yoga is observed every year on 21 June, the date of the summer solstice in the Northern Hemisphere and the longest day of the year. It was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2014 following a proposal by India, and was first celebrated in 2015. The distractors are other June observances: 5 June is World Environment Day and 14 June is World Blood Donor Day, while 1 July is unrelated. Hence (A).

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**Q28 D**

The Strait of Hormuz is a narrow waterway connecting the Persian Gulf to the Gulf of Oman, and through it to the Arabian Sea and the wider Indian Ocean. It is one of the world's most strategically important oil-shipping chokepoints, with a large share of global seaborne crude passing through it, which is why tensions there regularly affect oil prices. The distractor seas, the Red, Mediterranean and Caspian, lie elsewhere entirely. Hence (D).

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**Q29 B**

Part III of the Constitution, spanning Articles 12 to 35, contains the Fundamental Rights, which are justiciable and enforceable against the State. The distractors are adjacent Parts often confused with it: Part IV holds the Directive Principles of State Policy, which are non-justiciable guidelines; Part IV-A lists the Fundamental Duties added by the 42nd Amendment; and Part II deals with citizenship. Remembering that the Fundamental Rights sit in Part III is essential constitutional general knowledge. Hence (B).

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**Q30 C**

'Benevolent' means kind, charitable and well-disposed toward others, sharing the Latin root 'bene' meaning 'well'. Its direct antonym is 'malevolent', built on 'male' meaning 'ill', describing a wish to do harm or evil. The trap is 'munificent', which means extremely generous and is therefore a near-synonym rather than an opposite, while 'cheerful' and 'honest' describe unrelated positive traits. Spotting the bene/male root contrast is the fastest route to the answer. Hence (C).