

ANSWER KEY — 24 JUNE 2026

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

RC PASSAGES

Q1 D
The passage states the keyboard "acquired an inertia that had nothing to do with its merits" after millions had trained on it and factories had tooled for it. The surrounding discussion of path dependence and lock-in shows inertia means a tendency to stay in an established state and resist change. A sudden burst of energy is the opposite of the slow, sticky persistence described. A measurable mechanical defect confuses inertia with the jamming problem that 'vanished more than a century ago'. A deliberate corporate strategy is unsupported; the author attributes survival to accumulated habit and coordination, not orchestrated suppression. Inertia here is the social and economic stickiness that keeps the layout dominant despite better options. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q2 C
The passage builds toward the claim that "what survives is often merely what arrived first and grew entrenched," using QWERTY to illustrate path dependence, lock-in, and the role of coordination over quality. The main idea is that inferior standards endure because the cost of switching is private while the benefit is collective and distant. The clever-engineers reading inverts the author's point, since the layout's original purpose is treated as obsolete. The 'consumers were irrational' option is explicitly rejected: the passage says they are 'rational in a narrow, individual sense'. The 'touchscreens made it obsolete' option contradicts the text, which marvels that the layout survives onto touchscreen devices. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q3 A
The passage explains Dvorak's failure through coordination: "No single typist gains much by mastering Dvorak if every employer, every shared computer, and every colleague still speaks QWERTY." The benefit is 'collective and distant' while the cost is borne privately, so a superior standard stalls precisely when its payoff requires many users to switch in concert. Patent validity is never linked to adoption failure in the text. Rapid technological change is not offered as the decisive factor; QWERTY survives despite such change. Government mandates are not discussed at all, so inferring that regulatory inaction causes the failure goes beyond the passage. The supported inference centres on collective-action and coordination dynamics. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q4 B
The author writes, "We like to believe that markets reliably reward the best product... The QWERTY story suggests a humbler truth," then warns against mistaking 'persistence for superiority'. The tone is measured and doubting rather than triumphant or savage, which makes gentle skepticism most apt. The enthusiastically affirming option reverses the argument, since the passage undercuts faith in market efficiency. Bitter contempt overstates the tone; the author explicitly defends consumers as 'rational', not ignorant or blameworthy. Rigid neutrality is wrong because the closing lines clearly advance a critical view ('to misread history itself'). The author questions a flattering assumption without anger, signalling restrained, reasoned doubt. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q5 B
The author's argument rests on the premise that a 'demonstrably faster alternative', Dvorak, 'should have triumphed' but lost to coordination and lock-in rather than to quality. If controlled trials showed Dvorak offers no real speed advantage, the central example collapses: QWERTY might simply be good enough, and persistence would reflect adequacy, not mere entrenchment. That directly attacks the claim that an inferior standard survives despite a better rival. Schools teaching QWERTY actually supports the lock-in thesis by explaining entrenchment. Manufacturers converging quickly likewise reinforces path dependence. Touchscreens reproducing QWERTY is the very puzzle the author cites as evidence, so it strengthens rather than weakens the case. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q6 A
The passage says equating mind with a unified self 'begins to look parochial, a generalisation from the single, peculiar case of the vertebrate brain.' The appositive directly defines the word: drawing a sweeping conclusion from one narrow case is a narrow, limited outlook. Hence parochial means restricted by one's own confined frame of reference. The religiously devout reading relies on the literal parish-related origin of the word but ignores the context, which concerns intellectual narrowness, not piety. Carefully reasoned from wide evidence is the opposite of the author's point, since the criticism is precisely over-generalising from a single example. Deliberately deceptive is unsupported; the author imputes limited perspective, not dishonesty. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q7 D

The passage repeatedly contrasts the octopus's distributed nervous system with 'our tidy picture of cognition' as 'a single, unified seat of control,' concluding that intelligence 'might be better understood as something dispersed.' The central point is that the octopus challenges the assumption of a unified controlling mind. The claim that it is more intelligent than all vertebrates is never made; the author discusses a different kind of mind, not a superior rank. The common-ancestor option is contradicted outright, since the text stresses intelligence 'evolved entirely independently' from a 'brainless worm'. The 'cannot truly be intelligent' option inverts the author's argument, which treats the octopus as genuinely clever and instructive. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q8 A

The author notes that 'we typically measure how well they perform tasks designed around human capacities, and then pronounce them clever in proportion as they resemble us,' framing this as something that 'should make us cautious.' The inference is that such tests are skewed toward human-like ability and thus potentially biased. Calling them the most objective ranking method contradicts that cautionary stance. The 'useless' option overstates the critique; the author questions the tests' assumptions rather than denying that animals can perform the tasks. The arm-autonomy option misattributes the tests' value, which the passage never connects to octopus arms; the discussion of testing is about anthropocentric bias, not limb behaviour. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q9 C

The author frames the octopus as something that 'should make us cautious' and invites 'a more humbling question,' closing with the image of intelligence as 'a sprawling landscape with many summits.' The tone is reflective and gently challenging, urging humility about human-centred assumptions, which makes thoughtfully questioning the best fit. Dismissive mockery overstates the attitude; the author critiques an assumption respectfully rather than ridiculing scientists. Anxious alarm misreads the 'alien mind' phrasing, which expresses wonder, not fear of any threat. Detached and clinical is wrong because the passage plainly takes an evaluative position, calling the unified-mind view 'parochial' and advocating a humbler outlook. The voice is contemplative and persuasive, not neutral. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q10 B

The author argues that intelligence may be 'dispersed, emerging from the interaction of semi-autonomous parts rather than issuing from a central throne,' citing arms that 'partly think for themselves.' A severed arm solving a maze on its own would be powerful evidence that genuine problem-solving occurs without central direction, directly strengthening the distributed-cognition thesis. The option about larger central brains outperforming smaller ones supports the opposite, brain-centred view. A recent shared ancestor with a complex brain undercuts the passage's emphasis on independent evolution from a 'brainless worm'. The finding that problem-solving stops when the central brain is impaired would imply control is centralised after all, weakening rather than strengthening the author's claim. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

CR PASSAGES

Q11 A

The conclusion is the claim the rest of the passage is offered to support. Here the three premises (congestion costs, health hazards of emissions, and lost public space) are all marshalled toward the explicit statement that 'banning private cars from city centres would make those centres healthier, wealthier, and more humane.' The remaining choices are premises or supporting evidence, not the point being argued for: the bus-space comparison and the emissions-illness link are reasons offered, and the retail-spending figure is cited as corroborating data from cities that already pedestrianised. A conclusion is what the premises drive toward, not the data itself. Test each option by asking 'is this used to support something else, or is it the thing being supported?' Only the recommendation to ban cars is supported by everything else, so it is the conclusion. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q12 C

The argument insists the discretionary commuter 'could just as easily take a train' and that exemptions cover those who genuinely need to drive. For the ban to deliver its promised benefits without simply stranding people, it must assume that most current drivers actually have a workable alternative such as public transport. If no such alternative existed, the ban would impose large costs the argument never accounts for, undermining the 'humane' conclusion. The other options are not required: the argument does not need everyone to own a car, nor does it claim buses are always punctual or that retail spending is the sole measure of health. Use the negation test: deny that drivers have alternatives, and the conclusion collapses, confirming this is the load-bearing assumption. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q13 C

The conclusion is that a ban makes the city healthier and less congested. The strongest weakener attacks that causal payoff directly. If banned traffic merely diverts to surrounding residential streets and worsens total congestion and emissions citywide, then the ban relocates the harm rather than removing it, defeating the central health-and-congestion claim. That is a structural objection to the mechanism, not a quibble. The other options are weak: luxury retailers' preferences, slightly higher maintenance costs, and occasional cyclist misbehaviour are minor frictions that do not touch the core claim that the centre becomes cleaner and more liveable. A good weakener undercuts the link between premise and conclusion; only the displacement-of-traffic finding shows the promised benefit may never materialise. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q14 B

Strengthening means supplying evidence that the predicted benefits actually occur and that the chief objection fails. Controlled studies showing car-free cores cut local pollution and raise footfall without diverting traffic do exactly this: they confirm the health and economic gains the conclusion promises and they neutralise the displacement worry that the strongest weakener raised. That is direct, on-point support for the causal claim. The other options add nothing: a single reversed experiment is anecdotal and arguably cuts against the argument, drivers enjoying music is irrelevant to public health, and planners' credentials are an appeal to authority that says nothing about outcomes. The best strengthener targets the same premise-to-conclusion link a weakener would attack, but reinforces it; the controlled-study evidence does this most squarely. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q15 C

The flaw is a false dilemma. The passage frames the choice as the convenience of the few drivers versus the wellbeing of the many, concluding that one must be sacrificed for the other. But this ignores middle-ground options such as congestion pricing, low-emission zones, restricted hours, or improved transit that could capture most benefits without an outright ban. By presenting only two extremes, the argument forecloses alternatives that might serve both interests. The other criticisms misfire: the passage does offer reasoning and references cities with measured outcomes, it uses 'congestion' in its ordinary sense, and it does not rest on a single named authority. Identifying the flaw means naming the reasoning defect precisely; here the structure illegitimately reduces a spectrum of policy choices to a binary, which is the classic false-dilemma error. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q16 B

The conclusion is the proposition the whole passage works to establish. The premises about illegitimate acquisition, cultural identity, and modern source-nation capability all converge on the claim that the objects should be returned to their countries of origin. The universal-museum statement is the opposing position the author argues against, so it cannot be the author's conclusion. The observation that many artefacts left during conquest is a premise, and the claim about source nations' conservation capacity is another premise answering a specific objection. To find the conclusion, ask which statement everything else is recruited to support; only the call for repatriation plays that role. The author even signals it directly with 'the demand deserves to be honoured' and 'the objects should be returned,' confirming this is the thesis rather than a supporting reason. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q17 B

The argument rests heavily on the wrongful manner of acquisition and concludes that 'the mere passing of years does not convert stolen property into rightful possession.' For that reasoning to work, it must assume that how an object was originally acquired still bears on who is entitled to hold it now. If origin of acquisition were morally irrelevant once enough time passed, the repatriation case would lose its foundation. The other options overreach or are unnecessary: the argument does not need every artefact to be tainted, only many; it makes no claim that reproductions are aesthetically superior, merely that they preserve access; and it need not assume returned objects are never mistreated. Apply the negation test: deny that acquisition history matters today, and the central justice claim collapses, marking this as the essential assumption. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q18 A

The repatriation case stands on the premise that the objects were taken through plunder, coercion, or grossly unequal dealings, which strips away legitimate moral title. The most powerful weakener attacks that premise directly. If independent records show most contested objects were acquired through documented, fair purchase rather than plunder, then the central claim of wrongful acquisition fails for the bulk of the collection, and the demand grounded on it loses its force. The other options are trivial: curators' private sympathies, gift-shop replicas, and poor gallery lighting say nothing about whether the objects were rightfully obtained. A genuine weakener undercuts a premise the conclusion depends on; only the evidence of fair acquisition strikes at the moral foundation of the entire argument. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q19 D

Strengthening means confirming both that the promised benefits of return materialise and that the chief objections fail. Evidence that returned artefacts have demonstrably revived cultural practices while remaining safe and publicly accessible at home does both: it supports the premise that the objects are living elements of identity and it simultaneously defeats the preservation and access objections raised by defenders of the status quo. That is targeted, multi-pronged support. The alternatives are weak: a single polite thank-you is anecdotal, tourist numbers at European museums arguably cut the other way, and a general improvement in conservation is too vague to bear on the specific dispute. The best strengthener reinforces the same premise-to-conclusion link an opponent would attack; the revival-and-safety finding does this most directly and completely. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q20 D

This is a parallel-reasoning question; the task is to match the logical structure, not the topic. The author argues that the mere passage of time does not convert wrongfully taken property into rightful possession, so a long-held grip confers no legitimate title. The closest structural parallel is the principle that a thief cannot gain ownership of a stolen painting simply because decades have elapsed; both rest on the idea that wrongful acquisition is not cured by duration. The demolition example concerns efficiency, not title acquired over time. The contract example is about formal validity conditions, a different principle entirely. The language example describes neutral, gradual change with no wrongdoing or ownership at stake. Only the stolen-painting case mirrors the form 'lapse of time does not legitimise an original wrong,' making it the correct parallel. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21 B

Article 352 governs the proclamation of a National Emergency, which the President may declare on grounds of war, external aggression, or armed rebellion when the security of India or any part of it is threatened. The distractors cover the other emergency and amendment provisions: Article 356 deals with President's Rule on the failure of constitutional machinery in a State, Article 360 covers a Financial Emergency, and Article 368 concerns Parliament's power to amend the Constitution. Notably, the 44th Amendment of 1978 replaced the original phrase 'internal disturbance' with the narrower 'armed rebellion' to prevent misuse. The correct provision is Article 352. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q22 B

Switzerland's official currency is the Swiss Franc, denoted CHF, even though the country is almost entirely surrounded by Eurozone states. Switzerland is not a member of the European Union and has deliberately retained its own currency, which is widely regarded as a stable safe-haven currency. The distractors belong elsewhere: the Krona is the currency of Sweden and Iceland, and the Schilling was Austria's currency until Austria adopted the Euro in 2002. The Euro itself is used by most EU members but not by Switzerland. The correct answer is therefore the Swiss Franc. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q23 D

The word 'ephemeral' describes something that lasts for a very short time, momentary or short-lived, as in the ephemeral bloom of a flower. The question asks for its opposite, so the answer must convey lasting or enduring. 'Permanent', meaning continuing indefinitely without change, is the precise antonym. The three distractors fail because each is actually a synonym of ephemeral, not an opposite: 'fleeting', 'transient', and 'brief' all denote short duration. In antonym questions the trap is to pick a near-synonym; the only word reversing the meaning of ephemeral here is permanent. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q24 C

The idiom 'to bury the hatchet' means to settle a quarrel and make peace, ending hostility between people. Its origin lies in a Native American custom in which warring parties would literally bury their weapons, such as a tomahawk or hatchet, to mark the formal end of conflict. The distractors are tempting only if the phrase is read literally rather than figuratively: 'hide a weapon' fixates on the object, 'abandon a plan' and 'dig for treasure' invent unrelated meanings. Idioms must be read for their settled figurative sense, so the answer is to make peace. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q25 C

The Basic Structure Doctrine was propounded in *Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala* (1973), where a 13-judge bench, the largest ever, held that while Parliament can amend the Constitution under Article 368, it cannot alter or destroy its 'basic structure', such as the supremacy of the Constitution, the rule of law, and judicial review. The distractors are related but distinct: *Maneka Gandhi* (1978) widened the scope of Article 21, *Golaknath* (1967) had held fundamental rights unamendable and was later overruled, and *Minerva Mills* (1980) reaffirmed and refined the doctrine. The originating case is *Kesavananda Bharati*. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q26 A

Arundhati Roy is the author of 'The God of Small Things', her debut novel set in Kerala, for which she won the Booker Prize in 1997, becoming the first Indian woman to do so. The distractors are all distinguished writers easily confused with her: Kiran Desai won the Booker Prize for 'The Inheritance of Loss' in 2006, Anita Desai, Kiran's mother, is known for novels such as 'Clear Light of Day' and was thrice shortlisted, and Jhumpa Lahiri won the Pulitzer Prize for her short-story collection 'Interpreter of Maladies'. The correct author is Arundhati Roy. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q27 D

Archimedes' Principle states that a body wholly or partly immersed in a fluid experiences an upward buoyant force equal to the weight of the fluid it displaces. This explains why a body floats when the displaced fluid weighs as much as the body and sinks when it weighs less, and it underlies the design of ships and submarines. The distractors describe different laws: Pascal's Law concerns the equal transmission of pressure through a confined fluid, Bernoulli's Principle links higher fluid speed to lower pressure, and Boyle's Law relates a gas's pressure and volume at constant temperature. The answer is Archimedes' Principle. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q28 A

The sentence describes a committee determined to advance a controversial proposal in the face of public criticism, so it needs a phrasal verb meaning to force something to be accepted or completed despite opposition. 'Push through' carries exactly that sense and fits naturally. The distractors all clash with the intended meaning: 'push over' suggests physically toppling something, 'push off' is informal for departing or leaving, and 'push back' means to resist, delay, or postpone, which is the very opposite of pressing the proposal forward. Because the context signals overcoming resistance, the correct completion is push through. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q29 A

Two separate facts must be matched. The Tunis-based Nobel Peace Prize-winning organisation is the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, which won the 2015 prize for building a pluralistic democracy in Tunisia after the 2011 Jasmine Revolution, so the first country is Tunisia. The host city of the 2024 Summer Olympic Games was Paris, placing the second country as France. The pairing Tunisia and France satisfies both. The distractors fail because they mismatch one half or the other: Egypt, Japan, Greece, and Morocco are not linked to these specific facts. The correct pairing is Tunisia and France. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q30 D

Article 32 guarantees the Right to Constitutional Remedies, which lets a citizen move the Supreme Court directly for the enforcement of fundamental rights and empowers the Court to issue writs like habeas corpus and mandamus. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar described it as the 'heart and soul' of the Constitution, since without an enforcement mechanism the other rights would be merely declaratory. The distractors protect different guarantees: Article 19 covers freedoms such as speech and assembly, Article 21 secures life and personal liberty, and Article 14 ensures equality before the law. The right described here belongs to Article 32. Hence (D) is the correct answer.