

ANSWER KEY — 11 JULY 2026

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
B	A	C	A	B	A	D	D	D	C
Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
B	B	D	A	D	D	C	B	A	C
Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Q30
C	B	C	A	C	A	D	A	C	B
Q31	Q32	Q33	Q34						
C	D	D	B						

RC PASSAGES

Q1 B

The passage moves from the loss of the starry sky to concrete ecological and biological harms, then stresses that the fix is "unusually cheap and immediate" because "stray light vanishes the instant it is switched off." That combination is its core. The claim of a purely aesthetic loss ignores the documented harms; the carbon comparison is explicitly used to contrast, not equate, the two problems; and the passage shows light misdirects turtles and birds to their deaths rather than guiding them to safety. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q2 A

The sentence contrasts light pollution with atmospheric carbon and says its 'remedy' is 'cheap and immediate,' describing measures like shielding lamps and dimming streets. In context the word means a way of correcting or curing the harm. The medical sense of a prescribed medicine does not fit an environmental problem, the legal sense of a court claim is unsupported by the passage, and 'permanent and irreversible' contradicts the very point that switching off light reverses the harm at once. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q3 C

The author draws an explicit contrast: 'Unlike carbon in the atmosphere, stray light vanishes the instant it is switched off.' The inference is that light pollution is far quicker to undo. The passage stresses that the fix is cheap, not expensive, so wholesale replacement is not implied; it lists wide ecological harms beyond human sleep; and it frames the cure as something 'a community can heal in an evening,' which is the opposite of requiring international treaties. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q4 A

The author details real ecological and biological damage, showing genuine concern, but ends by insisting the wound can be healed 'in an evening' if a community chooses to act, striking a hopeful note. This rules out indifference, since the harms are treated seriously, and resignation, since the closing lines are optimistic about reversal. Nor is the tone celebratory of brighter cities; the passage laments what that brightness has erased rather than applauding it. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q5 B

The passage's reversibility claim rests on the idea that removing or redirecting light restores darkness almost immediately. Evidence that towns which shielded their lamps saw stars and insect populations rebound 'within weeks' directly confirms that rapid recovery. Rising electricity demand speaks to scale, not reversibility; species adapting to brightness does not show the harm can be undone; and the difficulty of cutting carbon, while a contrast the author uses, says nothing about how quickly light pollution itself can be reversed. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q6 A

The passage argues that the placebo effect is 'not imagined but embodied,' driven by expectation that triggers the body's own chemistry, while cautioning that it 'will not shrink a tumour or clear an infection.' That balance is the main idea. Calling it a worthless illusion contradicts the imaging evidence; claiming it cures infections and tumours is exactly what the passage denies; and the note on open-label placebos shows honest medicine may in fact use it, rebutting the last option. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q7 D

The metaphor appears where the text says expectation makes 'the brain release its own opioids and dopamine, the very chemicals many painkillers are designed to mimic,' and then calls this recruiting 'the body's internal pharmacy.' So it means the natural chemicals the brain produces. A hospital dispensary and a home medicine cabinet are literal external stores, not the internal one described, and sugar or saline are the inert placebos themselves, not the body's own chemistry. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q8 D

The passage states the effect is 'strongest for symptoms that the brain itself modulates, such as pain, nausea and anxiety, and weakest, or absent,' for conditions 'like a bacterial infection or a broken bone, where belief cannot mend tissue.' A bacterial infection therefore falls in the least-responsive category. Chronic pain, nausea and anxiety are precisely the brain-modulated symptoms the author names as most responsive, so they are more, not less, likely to benefit. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q9 D

The open-label studies are introduced right after the author raises the 'awkward ethical edge' that deception seems required. The point is that if patients improve even when honestly told they receive a placebo, the effect can be used 'without lying,' which 'would loosen the ethical knot.' The mention does not claim all doctors lie, does not urge replacing real drugs, and certainly does not disprove the effect; it is offered as a possible ethical escape. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q10 C

The claim that the response is 'embodied' rests chiefly on imaging showing the brain releasing opioids and dopamine. Evidence that scans reveal no chemical change in those reporting relief would undercut exactly that basis, suggesting the relief is subjective rather than physiological. The other options all reinforce the passage: dosage and physician manner amplifying the effect, and open-label placebos still working, are consistent with a real, expectation-driven bodily response rather than against it. Hence, option (C) is correct.

CR PASSAGES

Q11 B

The passage builds toward the explicit claim that 'legacy admissions are indefensible and should be ended everywhere at once,' which is the conclusion every other point supports. That admission is an engine of opportunity is a premise setting up the stakes, the observation about universities keeping donations is evidence rebutting a defence, and the value of alumni loyalty is the opponents' claim, not the author's conclusion. Only the first option states what the argument is ultimately urging. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q12 B

The campaigners rebut the financial fear by citing 'several respected universities' that dropped the practice with no measurable fall in giving, then generalise that donations can be sustained without it. That step assumes those examples are representative of universities generally; otherwise the rebuttal would not carry. It does not require that every donor is motivated by relatives' admission, that donations are the sole income source, or that no legacy applicant could qualify on merit, none of which the argument needs. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q13 D

A key plank of the argument is that donations can be sustained without legacy preference, which is why the practice's 'only remaining justification collapses.' Evidence that universities abolishing it suffered large, sustained falls in giving attacks this directly, reviving the financial justification the campaigners tried to dismiss. That a few legacy applicants would qualify anyway, that alumni feel pride, or that demand exceeds supply do not rescue the practice or rebut the merit-based case against it. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q14 A

The argument's moral core is that legacy preference favours birth over merit and hands advantage to the already-advantaged. Evidence that admitted legacy applicants had markedly weaker records than other entrants confirms that the preference displaces more deserving candidates, strengthening the merit-based case for abolition. Multi-generational attendance merely restates the privilege at issue, the existence of universities without the policy is neutral, and applicants preferring famous alumni says nothing about whether legacy preference is fair. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q15 D

After rebutting the donations defence, the passage leaps to the claim that 'the only remaining justification collapses,' as though defeating one argument disposes of every conceivable ground for the practice. That overlooks other possible justifications the author never examines, an overreach in the reasoning. The argument does not lean on one university's statistics, does not assume all applicants are wealthy, and never treats the policy's popularity as a measure of its fairness, so those criticisms do not fit. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q16 D

The passage culminates in the recommendation that 'governments should abandon sweeping prohibitions and invest instead in collection and recycling infrastructure,' the claim all the reasoning supports. The properties of plastic, the concentration of ocean leakage in a few regions, and the reuse threshold for cotton totes are premises marshalled to reach that recommendation. Only the first option states the conclusion the argument is designed to establish rather than a supporting fact along the way. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q17 C

The claim that bans can raise total environmental costs turns on the premise that banned consumption reappears as substitute consumption; the author states 'consumers do not stop consuming; they switch to substitutes.' Without that behavioural assumption, a ban might simply cut consumption and the harm would fall. The argument does not assume no one reuses totes, does not deny that plastic threatens marine life, and does not claim recycling is free, so those are not the assumptions it relies upon. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q18 B

The argument's causal engine is that bans merely shift consumption to dirtier substitutes, so total harm rises. Evidence that consumers instead cut consumption overall after a ban breaks that engine, since the feared substitution, and its extra life-cycle costs, would not occur. The other options are consistent with, or even supportive of, her case: strong recycling working, cotton totes being durable, or recycling being hard to fund do not show that bans reduce rather than redirect consumption. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q19 A

Her central worry is that substitutes carry a larger burden 'across their full life cycle,' so a ban can raise total emissions. Direct life-cycle evidence that the paper and cloth substitutes actually adopted after bans emit more than the plastics they replace confirms exactly that mechanism, strengthening the counterproductive claim. Rising plastic production, voter approval of bans, and recycling difficulty do not establish that the post-ban substitutes are environmentally worse, which is the point at issue. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q20 C

The economist's structure is: prohibiting a product merely diverts behaviour to a worse alternative, so the right response is to fix the underlying harm rather than ban the product. The fuel example mirrors this exactly, banning a cheap fuel pushes drivers to a dirtier one, so clean up emissions instead. The medicine, sports and book options display different faulty patterns (overreaction, hasty generalisation, and popularity-equals-quality) that do not match the substitution-and-manage-the-harm logic here. Hence, option (C) is correct.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21 C

The capital of Canada is Ottawa, located in the province of Ontario, where the federal Parliament sits. Toronto is Canada's largest city and a major financial centre but is not the national capital, while Vancouver on the west coast and Montreal in Quebec are large cities too, yet neither is the seat of the federal government. The capital is therefore Ottawa. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q22 B

The currency of Japan is the yen. The won is the currency of South Korea, the yuan is the currency of China, and the ringgit belongs to Malaysia. These currencies are sometimes confused because several are used in East and Southeast Asia, but the yen is specifically Japan's monetary unit, so it is the correct answer among the four listed options. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q23 C

The word 'ephemeral' describes something that lasts for only a very brief time, such as a passing mood or a mayfly's life. Its closest synonym among the options is 'short-lived'. 'Permanent' is an antonym, meaning lasting indefinitely, while 'enormous' refers to great size and 'hidden' to concealment, neither of which relates to duration. Hence 'short-lived' best captures the meaning of ephemeral. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q24 A

'Benevolent' means well-meaning and kindly, wishing good to others. Its direct opposite is 'malevolent', which means wishing harm or evil to others. The other options, 'generous', 'kind', and 'gracious', are all synonyms of benevolent rather than antonyms, so they cannot express the opposite meaning. Therefore malevolent is the correct choice for the word most opposite in sense to benevolent. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q25 C

The idiom 'to bite the bullet' means to endure a painful or difficult situation with courage, accepting something unpleasant that cannot be avoided. It originates from soldiers reportedly biting a bullet to bear pain during surgery without anaesthetic. It does not refer to eating quickly, making an error, or escaping danger. Hence its meaning is to face a hardship bravely and stoically. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q26 A

The Latin maxim 'audi alteram partem' means 'hear the other side' and is one of the two central principles of natural justice, the other being the rule against bias. It requires that no one be condemned unheard and that a fair opportunity be given to present one's case. It is not confined to contract, criminal procedure, or property law, but is a general principle of fair procedure. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q27 D

Freedom of speech and expression is guaranteed under Article 19(1)(a) as one of the six freedoms available to citizens, subject to reasonable restrictions. Article 21 protects life and personal liberty, Article 14 guarantees equality before the law, and Article 25 secures freedom of religion. Therefore, the specific guarantee of free speech and expression rests in Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution of India. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q28 A

A 'googly' is a type of delivery bowled by a leg-spin bowler in cricket, in which the ball spins in the opposite direction to what the batter expects, deceiving them. The term belongs exclusively to cricket and is not used in hockey, tennis, or football, each of which has its own distinct vocabulary. Hence the sport associated with the googly is cricket. Hence, option (A) is correct.

Q29 C

The Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award of India, conferred for exceptional service or performance of the highest order across any field of human endeavour. It is not a military decoration, for which the Param Vir Chakra is the highest, nor is it specifically a sports or literary honour. Therefore the Bharat Ratna is correctly described as India's highest civilian award. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q30 B

The 2024 Summer Olympic Games were hosted by France, with Paris serving as the host city for the third time in its history. Japan hosted the previous Summer Games in Tokyo in 2021, the United Kingdom hosted London 2012, and Brazil hosted Rio de Janeiro in 2016. Therefore the nation that staged the 2024 edition of the Summer Olympics was France. Hence, option (B) is correct.

Q31 C

'The Discovery of India' was written by Jawaharlal Nehru while he was imprisoned at Ahmednagar Fort during the freedom struggle, and it traces the country's long history and culture. Mahatma Gandhi wrote 'The Story of My Experiments with Truth', while Ambedkar and Tagore authored other notable works. Therefore the author of 'The Discovery of India' is Jawaharlal Nehru, independent India's first Prime Minister. Hence, option (C) is correct.

Q32 D

A person who knows and uses several languages is called a polyglot, from Greek roots meaning 'many tongues'. A pedagogue is a teacher, a cartographer is a person who makes maps, and a philatelist is someone who collects postage stamps. None of these relates to command of multiple languages, so the correct one-word substitution for a multilingual person is polyglot. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q33 D

The idiom 'a blessing in disguise' describes something that at first seems bad or unfortunate but later turns out to bring an advantage or benefit. It does not literally mean a gift, a costume, or a compliment. The phrase captures the idea that an apparent setback can conceal a hidden good, so the correct meaning is a hidden benefit found within a misfortune. Hence, option (D) is correct.

Q34 B

The maxim 'ignorantia juris non excusat' means that a person cannot escape liability merely by claiming to be unaware of the law. Everyone is presumed to know the law of the land. It is different from 'caveat emptor', meaning let the buyer beware, and from the separate principle that justice delayed is justice denied. Hence it means ignorance of the law is no excuse. Hence, option (B) is correct.
