

ANSWER KEY — 16 JULY 2026

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
C	A	B	D	A	D	B	C	A	B
Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
D	C	A	B	D	A	C	B	D	C

READING COMPREHENSION

Q1 **C** Main idea **MED**

The passage is a reflective character study whose gravitational centre is the narrator's late understanding of what his grandfather embodied. The clinching sentence — 'He had been practising a form of attention that the century was busily unlearning' — names the theme directly: a mode of care and unhurried slowness that is quietly disappearing. The closing image of keeping the tools 'the way one keeps a language one no longer speaks' confirms that the essay is about the memory of a vanished way of valuing things, not about technique or the mechanics of the craft. (C) captures precisely this recognition of a lost mode of attention. (A) fixes on the process the narrator barely describes, and (B) inflates a regret the text never voices, while (D) rewrites a tender remembrance into a comparative thesis the author simply does not argue.

Examiner's note — the trap: (D) is the classic trap: it converts a tender remembrance into a comparative argument about handmade versus industrial. The passage never claims superiority; it mourns and remembers a disappearing kind of attention.

Q2 **A** Inference **HARD**

The grandfather deliberately separates the book from its paper, calling the paper only 'where the book happens to be living at the moment.' That phrase — 'happens to be living at the moment' — frames the physical paper as a temporary, incidental vessel, not the book's essence; the book is something that persists independently of any single copy. (A) restates exactly this: the real book lies beyond its replaceable physical form, which is merely its housing for now. Nothing in the remark recommends frequent rebinding, laments the decay of a book's value, or ranks written content above readers; each of those readings imports a concern the sentence itself does not carry. The inference the line invites is metaphysical, not practical — it is about where a book's being resides.

Examiner's note — the trap: (B) misreads the line as practical advice about preservation and rebinding. But 'not the paper' is a claim about where a book's being resides, not a maintenance instruction to rebind often.

Q3 **B** Vocab-in-context **EASY**

The word appears in the clause 'refusing to let anything be disposable,' describing a man who treated every worn Bible and soft-spined ledger as worthy of patient repair rather than replacement. Read against that refusal, 'disposable' plainly carries its ordinary modern sense: something treated as throwaway, of too little worth to be kept. (B) — 'regarded as of so little worth that it may be discarded after brief use' — fits that contrast exactly. The remaining options exploit unrelated senses of the root 'dispose': (A) leans on 'at one's disposal' meaning available; (C) on 'disposed' meaning arranged in order; and (D) on 'distribute widely.' None of those senses suits a sentence built entirely around a craftsman's refusal to treat objects as expendable trash.

Examiner's note — the trap: (A) exploits the 'at one's disposal' sense (available). But the context is about worth and discarding, not availability, so that reading collapses the sentence's meaning.

Q4 **D** Tone **EASY**

The narrator describes his young self as a 'boy who wanted the world to be quick' and speaks of 'the particular boredom of the young, who mistake slowness for emptiness.' The diagnosis is candid but plainly affectionate: he understands the impatience rather than condemning it, framing it as a common failing of youth that he has since outgrown and now views with sympathy. That blend of honesty and warmth is exactly 'gently self-critical and forgiving' (D). The tone is neither bitter nor indifferent nor defensive; the softening qualifier 'particular' and the retrospective sympathy of the whole recollection rule those alternatives out. He is amused and a little wistful at his former impatience, not angry with himself for it.

Examiner's note — the trap: (A) 'bitterly self-reproaching' overshoots the mark. There is self-criticism, but it is rueful and forgiving rather than bitter — no note of self-punishment colours the recollection.

Q5 **A** Structure / purpose **HARD**

The final paragraph turns the now-useless tools into a deliberate symbol. The narrator says he keeps them 'the way one keeps a language one no longer speaks — not to use, but to remember that the words were once available,' preserving them as a reminder of a vanished 'way of holding the world that took its time.' The paragraph thus consolidates and crystallises the essay's theme in a single concrete image, rather than advancing any plot or introducing a fresh idea. (A) states this crystallising function. He explicitly declares he will 'never' bind a book, which defeats (B); the paragraph draws no durability-versus-fragility contrast, defeating (C); and it never returns to solve the unnamed smell of the opening, defeating (D).

Examiner's note — the trap: (B) misreads 'I keep them' as a hint of future use. The text flatly forecloses that — 'never bound a book and never will' — so the tools function symbolically, as memory, not practically.

Q6 **D** Main idea **MED**

The passage opens by insisting that the identity question 'is not idle,' precisely because 'almost every practice we regard as morally serious — punishment, gratitude, obligation, even love — presupposes that a person persists through time.' It closes by observing that revising our view of the self reshapes 'how, and for whom, one ought to live.' The through-line is therefore that the metaphysics of personal identity quietly underwrites our whole moral life, and that rethinking it carries practical, ethical consequences. (D) captures both halves — the moral stakes and the reformist payoff. (A) and (C) each endorse a position the passage explicitly complicates rather than affirms, and (B) overstates Parfit into a wholesale denial of identity and obligation that the author never actually asserts.

Examiner's note — the trap: (A) restates the 'intuitive answer' the passage immediately undercuts with 'the body is precisely what changes most,' so it cannot be the main idea the author defends.

Q7 **B** Inference **HARD**

The promise functions as a device. Because 'the person who made it... no longer exists in any straightforward sense,' the author uses it to expose how being 'bound by her word' silently assumes a persisting, accountable self. He then generalises the point: punishment, gratitude and obligation all 'presuppose that a person persists.' So the example is introduced to reveal that everyday moral obligation rests on a contestable metaphysical assumption. (B) states exactly this purpose. (A) misreads the passage as claiming that promises expire with time; the author never says the bond lapses, only that it becomes puzzling who is bound by it. (C) and (D) seize on later or incidental material — the continuity criterion, or ordinary forgetfulness — rather than the actual role the opening example plays.

Examiner's note — the trap: (A) is the trap: readers infer 'the earlier self is gone, so the promise dies.' But the author's worry is who is bound, not that the obligation dissolves after ten years.

Q8 **C** Vocab-in-context **EASY**

'Rupture' sits inside the series 'Memory fades; character can rupture; a person may... become so unlike her former self,' a list cataloguing ways psychological continuity can break down. The parallelism with 'fades' and with 'become so unlike' shows that 'rupture' here denotes a breaking apart or a sharp discontinuity in a person's character. (C) — 'break apart or undergo a sharp and sudden discontinuity' — matches that sense exactly. (A) reverses the meaning into a strengthening; (B) imports an irrelevant notion of intact transfer between persons; and (D) confuses 'rupture' with vivid recollection. Only a meaning of sudden breakage fits a sentence whose entire purpose is to describe the failure and interruption of continuity.

Examiner's note — the trap: (D) tempts because the surrounding sentence discusses memory. But it is memory that 'fades'; the word 'rupture' itself means to break, not to remember with vividness.

Q9 **A** Tone / attitude **MED**

The author calls Parfit's conclusion 'unsettling,' yet immediately adds that 'it is not merely destructive,' and then devotes the entire final paragraph to its liberating upshot, quoting Parfit's own reported relief. He neither mocks the view nor merely records it; he weighs it and finds real value in it. That is serious, sympathetic engagement, which is what (A) describes. (B) 'derisive' contradicts the plainly respectful treatment; (C) 'wholly neutral' ignores the evaluative words 'unsettling' and 'liberating' that colour the discussion; and (D) 'alarmed' inverts a passage that actually ends by embracing the view's benefits — Parfit 'cared less about his own death and more about the lives of others.' Engagement, not alarm, is the settled stance.

Examiner's note — the trap: (D) fixes on the single word 'unsettling.' But the author immediately pivots — 'not merely destructive' — and closes on liberation, so alarm cannot be his considered attitude.

Q10 B Central claim ELITE

The argument's engine is the concession that 'continuity admits of degrees,' from which follows 'if identity comes in degrees, then perhaps responsibility does too.' On that basis the author concludes that the 'sharp boundary we draw around the self... begins to look arbitrary' and may therefore need revising. (B) reproduces this precisely: identity as a matter of degree, and hence a rethinking of the moral weight we assign the self. (A) overstates the view into total unaccountability, which the author never endorses. (C) states the psychological-continuity position that the passage actually problematizes. (D) pushes to the outright abolition of identity, but the author's claim, following Parfit, is that identity 'is not what matters' — a subtler downgrading than declaring it a useless illusion to be scrapped entirely.

Examiner's note — the trap: (D) is the elite trap: it echoes the radical mood, but the author says identity 'is not what matters,' which lowers identity's importance without pronouncing it a useless illusion to be abandoned altogether.

CRITICAL REASONING

Q11 D Identify the conclusion HARD

The passage contains two nested arguments. The first is the light-touch case, whose stated conclusion is that 'mandatory audits would ultimately make AI systems less safe, not more.' The author then spends the rest of the passage rebutting that case, closing with his own verdict: 'The case against pre-deployment audits... has not been made.' The main conclusion of the passage is the author's own final judgement, not the view he sets out to attack. (D) paraphrases that verdict — the anti-audit argument has not been established. (A) is the opponents' conclusion, which the author rejects; (B) and (C) are premises he cites in reconstructing their case, and (C) is in fact the very premise he goes on to dispute at length.

Examiner's note — the trap: (A) is the dominant trap: it is the most emphatic 'Therefore' sentence in the passage. But it belongs to the argument the author refutes, not to the author's own position.

Q12 C Identify the assumption HARD

The light-touch chain runs: audits shrink the field, then a concentrated market turns 'complacent,' then 'the surviving giants face little pressure to improve their systems' safety,' and therefore systems become less safe. That final link holds only if competitive pressure is what makes firms safer in the first place. The author says so explicitly: the argument 'assumes that competitive pressure is the principal engine driving firms to make their systems safer.' (C) names this required, load-bearing assumption. (A), (B) and (D) are neither stated nor needed by the argument; indeed the light-touch camp implicitly grants that safety risks exist — its whole worry is that concentration will worsen them — which flatly contradicts (D).

Examiner's note — the trap: (D) attracts readers who think the light-touch camp must be dismissing AI risk. But that camp concedes safety matters; its argument is that concentration reduces safety, so (D) cannot be its assumption.

Q13 A Weaken HARD

The author's rebuttal stands on two legs: that rivalry breeds recklessness, and that a tiered regime can 'spare small entrants the heaviest burdens.' The second leg is the load-bearing rescue, because it defeats the claim that audits must entrench incumbents by eliminating small firms. (A) attacks that leg directly, with evidence that even audit regimes 'carefully scaled to firm size' have historically driven most small entrants out. If tiered audits still wipe out small firms, the author's 'false alternative' reply collapses and the concentration worry he dismissed comes straight back. (A) therefore most weakens his position. (B), (C) and (D) are peripheral: voluntary testing, scarce expertise and consumer willingness-to-pay say nothing about whether tiered audits actually protect small entrants.

Examiner's note — the trap: (C) looks damaging because scarce expertise raises audit costs. But cost is not the author's crux — the survival of small firms under a tiered regime is — so (A), which strikes exactly that link, weakens far more.

Q14 B Strengthen HARD

The author's first counter-move claims that 'rivalry pushes firms toward recklessness rather than restraint,' inverting the light-touch assumption that competition breeds safety. (B) supplies direct empirical support for that inversion: the firms 'facing the fiercest competition were the most likely to release models with unpatched safety flaws... to beat rivals to market.' This confirms that competition drives recklessness, so thinning the field need not reduce safety and may even improve it — exactly the author's point. (B) therefore most strengthens his case. (A) and (D) concern small-firm funding and falling compute costs, both tangential to the safety mechanism; (C) merely reports a policy choice elsewhere and bears not at all on whether competition improves safety.

Examiner's note — the trap: (A) tempts because it seems pro-small-firm and thus friendly to the author. But whether startups can raise money says nothing about the competition-and-safety link on which his argument actually turns.

Q15 D Flaw MED

The author isolates a specific structural error. The light-touch argument 'treats those costs as fixed and unavoidable' and frames the whole decision as all-or-nothing. He answers that 'the choice... is not between blanket audits and none at all,' since a graduated, size-sensitive regime — a spectrum of designs — is available. That is a false-dilemma, or false-alternative, flaw, which is precisely what (D) describes. (A) alleges a sampling defect the author never raises; (B) misdescribes the reasoning as conflating a system's safety with a firm's profitability; and (C) invents an appeal to industry authority that appears nowhere in the passage. Only (D) matches the two-options-when-more-exist error the author actually names.

Examiner's note — the trap: (B) is the trap for skimmers who recall talk of firms and costs. But the error the author names is the two-option framing of the choice, not any confusion of safety with profit.

Q16 A Identify the conclusion MED

The author does not so much defend bail as diagnose a gap in the abolitionist case. His closing sentences isolate the decisive move: 'To leap from "the practice is abused" to "the practice must be abolished" is to assume that a tool corrupted in its use cannot be corrected, only discarded,' and then, pointedly, 'That assumption... has not been defended.' The main conclusion is therefore that the abolitionist argument fails as it stands because it rests on an undefended assumption. (A) states exactly this. (B) is the very view the author is critiquing; (C) misreports his 'in principle' observation as a claim about how bail actually works in practice, which he does not make; and (D) is never asserted anywhere in the passage.

Examiner's note — the trap: (C) tempts because the author does say bail is 'in principle' about flight risk. But he openly concedes it is 'routinely set' arbitrarily in practice, so (C) misstates his actual position.

Q17 C Identify the assumption MED

The author reconstructs the abolitionist reasoning and pinpoints its pivot: 'Its central claim is that wealth is the only thing distinguishing the detained defendant from the released one.' The whole inference to 'wealth alone violates equal justice' collapses the moment some other legitimate difference — such as flight risk — could separate the two defendants. So the argument must assume that wealth is the sole relevant difference between them. (C) states precisely that assumption. (A) reverses the flight-risk consideration rather than assuming it away; (B) misapplies the presumption of innocence in a way the argument never needs; and (D) attributes a deliberate punitive motive to judges that the abolitionist case does not require in order to run.

Examiner's note — the trap: (D) reads malice into judges, which feels sympathetic to the reformers. But the argument needs only that wealth is the sole difference — not that judges intend to punish — so (C) is the true load-bearing assumption.

Q18 B Weaken HARD

The author's defence rests on an 'in principle' distinction: bail 'is meant to track the risk of flight, not the depth of the pocket,' so two like-charged defendants may still differ in flight risk. (B) dismantles this by showing that even where flight-risk assessment is formally mandatory, the bail set tracks wealth almost entirely and flight risk not at all. If that is so, the author's principled distinction has no purchase on reality, and wealth really does do the decisive work — precisely vindicating the reformers he is answering. (B) therefore most weakens his defence. (A), (C) and (D) are peripheral: alternative tools, the occasional wealthy absconder, and the administrative cost of detention all leave the crucial wealth-versus-flight-risk link entirely untouched.

Examiner's note — the trap: (C) looks like a hit because it shows bail failing to prevent a rich defendant's flight. But one wealthy absconder does not show that bail generally tracks wealth rather than risk; only (B) establishes that pattern.

Q19 D Strengthen HARD

The author's key move is that the reformers' own evidence supports 'reform of how bail is set, not the wholesale abolition of the institution' — the tool can be corrected rather than merely discarded. (D) supplies exactly the confirming case: where bail was reformed to track assessed flight risk, 'the wealth gap in pre-trial detention shrank dramatically without bail being abolished.' This shows, concretely, that correction works and that abolition is therefore not required — the very heart of the author's rebuttal. (D) most strengthens his position. (A) merely reports public opinion, (B) concerns eventual acquittals rather than the wealth gap, and (C) touts a benefit of abolition, none of which supports the correct-don't-discard thesis the author is defending.

Examiner's note — the trap: (B) tempts as sympathetic to detainees, but high eventual-acquittal rates could just as easily motivate abolition; only (D) shows the specific claim that reforming bail closes the wealth gap.

Q20 **C** Parallel reasoning **ELITE**

The author names the flaw as inferring 'the practice must be abolished' from 'the practice is abused,' which assumes that a tool corrupted in use 'cannot be corrected, only discarded.' A genuine parallel must reproduce that exact structure: a beneficial instrument is misused by some, therefore ban the instrument outright rather than curb the misuse. (C) does this exactly — some surgeons misuse the scalpel, so ban scalpels 'altogether, not merely kept out of careless hands.' The abuse-to-abolition leap, and the refusal to consider correction, are identical. (A) is a hasty generalisation from an absence of past failure; (B) is an appeal to authority; and (D) is faulty induction from a limited personal sample. None of those mirrors the discard-rather-than-correct error the author actually identifies in the bail argument.

Examiner's note — the trap: (D) is the elite distractor: like the original it over-concludes, but its error is generalising from limited observation, not 'abuse implies abolish.' Only (C) matches the misused-tool structure the author pinpoints.