

ANSWER KEY — 21 SEPTEMBER 2026

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

READING COMPREHENSION

Q1 B Main idea - RC (environmental ethics) MED

The passage moves in three steps. It first accepts Pauly's diagnosis as 'a sound one', illustrating how old damage comes to pass for the pristine. It then turns: 'the remedy most often drawn from the diagnosis deserves more scrutiny', because 'there is no such moment of rest' in ecosystems, so choosing a date is 'to make a decision and attribute it to nature'. Finally it offers the alternative: a target 'can be defended by what that hydrology did', and 'the reasons, not the date, carry the weight'. Option B holds all three moves: the error is genuine, it does not make any earlier state authentic, and targets must rest on function. Option A states exactly the remedy the author scrutinises and rejects. Option C invents a complaint about the concept's extension; the author endorses its escape from fisheries as a 'general habit of mind'. Option D overshoots in the other direction: the fourth paragraph opens 'This does not mean that every target is as good as another', and it is ecological function, not public preference, that the author proposes as the test.

Examiner's note — the trap: D is the trap for readers who absorb the attack on 'authentic' baselines and conclude that the author thinks all targets arbitrary; the fourth paragraph's first sentence rules that reading out.

Q2 D Inference - application to a new case (RC) HARD

The proposal is defended 'solely on the ground that this mix is the forest's natural state'. That is precisely the justification the author calls indefensible: 'What cannot be defended is the claim that the chosen past is authentic and every other past a counterfeit.' The author's objection is to the form of the justification, not to the target itself; a pre-agricultural mix could be defended by 'what that hydrology did', that is, by measurable functions. Option D captures this: the proposal is inadequately justified because it treats a chosen date as nature's standard instead of arguing from function. Option A repeats the reasoning the author criticises in the third paragraph, where an 'earlier and truer' baseline is shown to be an illusion. Option B shifts the issue to evidence: even a perfectly reconstructed mix would still be defended only by date, and the author says the reasons, 'not the date', must carry the weight. Option C substitutes a factual claim about productivity that the passage never makes and that would, in any case, be a functional argument of the kind the author welcomes.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is the attractive option because it sounds scientifically careful, but the author's quarrel is not with the accuracy of reconstruction; it is with authenticity as a ground, which no amount of reconstructive precision can repair.

Q3 A Tone / attitude - RC MED

The author's evaluation is explicitly two-sided. The concept is praised: the diagnosis is offered as a warning 'and it is a sound one', and the final paragraph credits 'Pauly's insight' that memory is a poor measuring instrument. But the third paragraph opens with a reservation: 'the remedy most often drawn from the diagnosis deserves more scrutiny than it receives'. Option A reproduces that structure exactly: appreciation of the diagnosis, wariness about the remedy derived from it. Option B inverts the balance; the author never questions the scientific basis of the syndrome and in fact extends it beyond fisheries to grasslands. Option C misreads the author's reception of the concept's spread as enthusiasm and invents 'critics' whom the passage never mentions; the only person criticised is the restorer who draws the wrong lesson. Option D fails because the passage is plainly argumentative: words such as 'sound', 'deserves more scrutiny' and 'cannot be defended' are evaluative, not expository. The author's attitude is appreciation qualified by a specific reservation.

Examiner's note — the trap: D tempts readers because the first paragraph is purely descriptive, but tone must be judged across the whole passage, and from the second paragraph onward the author is evaluating at every turn.

Q4 C Vocabulary in context - RC HARD

The sentence reads: 'What cannot be defended is the claim that the chosen past is authentic and every other past a counterfeit.' 'Counterfeit' is set against 'authentic', so in context it means a condition denied authenticity, one regarded as having no genuine claim to be natural. Option C captures that sense. The word's ordinary meaning, a forgery made to deceive, cannot apply literally: no one has manufactured the other past states of an ecosystem, and no deceiver is implied. That is why Option A, though it gives the dictionary sense, fails in context. Option B imports an idea of inferior quality, but the author's point is about legitimacy, not quality; indeed the passage stresses that different past states can be compared on their functions. Option D confuses the word with the epistemic problem

of reconstruction, which the passage does not discuss in this sentence at all. The test in vocabulary-in-context questions is always the contrast the sentence itself sets up, and here the contrast is authentic versus inauthentic.

Examiner's note — the trap: A is the trap because it is the word's standard meaning; but nothing in the sentence involves deliberate deception, and the pairing with 'authentic' fixes the contextual sense as 'illegitimate claimant to naturalness'.

Q5 A Structure / purpose of a detail - RC ELITE

The final paragraph opens 'The shift matters in practice.' The 'shift' is the move just recommended, from justifying targets by date (authenticity) to justifying them by reasons (function). The sentence that follows contrasts the two: an authenticity-based project 'has no answer' when climate changes, while a function-based project 'can adapt, keeping the purpose while changing the species'. The detail therefore exists to show that the two justifications behave differently under real conditions, so the choice between them is not merely philosophical. That is Option A. Option B reverses the contrast; the same sentence says the functional project can adapt. Option C misattributes the example: the climate point concerns the target's viability, not the erosion of memory, and it is not offered as an instance of the syndrome. Option D goes beyond the passage; the author suggests adapting the project, not abandoning it. The purpose is signalled by the paragraph's first sentence, which frames everything after it as proof of practical consequence.

Examiner's note — the trap: C is attractive because the closing sentences return to Pauly and memory, but the climate example concerns whether a target can still be sustained, not how people remember landscapes; it serves the practical-stakes point.

Q6 C Main idea - RC (cognitive psychology) MED

The passage replaces the 'archival' picture of memory with one in which 'retrieval does not merely read a memory but reopens it'. It then resists the conclusion that memory is 'simply unreliable', arguing that a self-updating memory 'might be an excellent guide', built 'for use rather than for testimony'. It closes by locating the legal significance in timing: 'the first account a witness gives, and the manner in which it is elicited, bear a weight that later accounts cannot.' Option C compresses all three stages: revision at retrieval, its usefulness, and its legal relevance to early recall. Option A states the very conclusion the author calls 'too quick'. Option B misrepresents the argument, since the passage presents the human experiments as converging evidence reached 'by a different road'. Option D elevates one illustration, question wording, into the principal cause of identification error; the passage makes no such comparative claim, and its legal focus is on the conditions of first retrieval generally.

Examiner's note — the trap: A is the trap for readers who notice the courtroom theme and the unreliability evidence, but the fourth paragraph explicitly rejects the unreliability conclusion as 'too quick'.

Q7 A Inference - experimental design (RC) HARD

The inference drawn was that 'retrieval does not merely read a memory but reopens it'. What made that inference possible was the control condition: 'the same drug given without the reminder did nothing.' The effect depended on the reminder, which is to say on retrieval. If the drug had weakened the memory equally with or without the reminder, the effect could be explained simply by the drug damaging stored memories, and retrieval would play no role; the case for reconsolidation would collapse. That is Option A. Option B describes a condition that would merely confirm that a reminder alone does not weaken the memory, which is consistent with the finding and adds nothing against it. Option C changes the type of memory, but the passage gives no reason to think the inference depends on fear specifically. Option D describes a meaningless test, since a memory that was never formed cannot be weakened, so it could not undermine the inference in any way. Identifying which result would undermine an inference requires locating the comparison on which it rests.

Examiner's note — the trap: B tempts because it sounds like a control condition, but a reminder without the drug is expected to leave the memory intact under every theory; only Option A removes the contrast the inference depends on.

Q8 D Tone / attitude from a phrase - RC HARD

The sentence reads: 'It is tempting to conclude from this that memory is simply unreliable, and the conclusion is sometimes drawn with a certain relish. It is also too quick.' 'Relish' implies enjoyment; the author suggests that some people take pleasure in the debunking conclusion. The next sentence, 'It is also too quick', says that the conclusion outruns its evidence. Option D combines both elements: those who draw it are somewhat too pleased with a sceptical conclusion that the evidence does not fully warrant. Option A concedes that they are 'correct in substance', which the author denies; the whole of the fourth paragraph argues that malleability may be a strength. Option B misidentifies the target: the people drawing the conclusion rely on psychological research rather than attacking it. Option C describes the opposite disposition; people who relish the unreliability conclusion are not clinging to the archival picture, since the unreliability view itself depends on abandoning that picture. Tone questions keyed to a phrase must be answered from the phrase and its immediate context together.

Examiner's note — the trap: A is attractive because the author does not deny that memory is malleable, but 'too quick' rejects the conclusion itself, not merely the way it is supported.

Q9 B Vocabulary in context - RC MED

The sentence reads: 'The malleability that embarrasses the witness box may be the price of a memory built for use rather than for testimony.' The preceding sentences describe a system 'that updated itself at every retrieval' and an animal that 'revises what it knows about a place each time it returns there'. Malleability therefore names the capacity to be reshaped by later retrieval and experience, which is Option B, and the word's literal sense (a metal that can be hammered into new shapes) matches this. Option A, fragility, suggests fading or breaking, but the passage describes revision, not loss; indeed it contrasts the new picture with one in which

'forgetting was loss'. Option C, volatility, implies change without cause, whereas the passage links each revision to a specific occasion of retrieval or suggestion. Option D, credulity, is a trait of persons, not of memory systems, and it narrows the idea to accepting another person's proposals; the rat experiments involve no one proposing anything. Only B fits both the word and the argument.

Examiner's note — the trap: D appeals because the car-crash experiment involves a suggestive question, but 'malleability' in the fourth paragraph refers to the general updating of memory at retrieval, which the passage illustrates with an animal revising its map.

Q10 D Structure - relationship between paragraphs (RC) ELITE

The fourth paragraph reframes malleability: not a defect but perhaps 'the price of a memory built for use rather than for testimony'. The final paragraph does not dispute that reframing. It opens: 'The legal consequences follow not from the fact of malleability but from its timing.' It accepts that memory will be revised and asks what follows for courts, concluding that 'the first account a witness gives, and the manner in which it is elicited' deserve special weight and that trial confidence is 'evidence chiefly of that history'. The lesson is narrower than a general verdict on memory and turns on when revision occurs. That is Option D. Option A misreads the final paragraph as a retraction; nothing in it withdraws the claim that malleability serves use. Option B is wrong because the final paragraph offers no experimental evidence at all. Option C overstates: the author does not call testimony worthless but distinguishes early accounts, which bear weight, from later confidence, which reflects history. The key is the phrase 'not from the fact of malleability but from its timing'.

Examiner's note — the trap: A is the trap because the final paragraph discusses courtroom problems and seems to return to memory's weakness, but it explicitly locates the problem in timing and elicitation rather than recanting the defence of malleability.

CRITICAL REASONING

Q11 A Main conclusion - CR MED

The argument opens by describing the certificate as 'very nearly beside the point' as a protection for the citizen, explains that the certified figure measures pair-matching rather than the probability that a flag is false, demonstrates with arithmetic that a certified system can produce mostly false flags, and then states what 'a rule that genuinely protected the public would' do: cap the scale of deployment, confine watchlists to persons named in warrants, and forbid stops on a flag alone. The conclusion therefore has two parts: the certificate protects little, and the rules should regulate the terms of use. Option A states both. Option B misstates the position, since the author accepts that accuracy is 'a necessary condition of lawful use' and proposes conditions for deployment, not a ban. Option C proposes a higher threshold, but the arithmetic assumes a system 'far better than its certificate requires' and still produces mostly false flags, so raising the threshold is exactly the wrong remedy. Option D invents a claim about officers' statistical competence that the passage never makes.

Examiner's note — the trap: C is the trap: a reader who registers 'accuracy is inadequate' may reach for a higher threshold, but the author's example is built precisely to show that even a far more accurate system fails citizens at scale.

Q12 C Assumption - necessary condition for a proposal (CR) HARD

The proposal forbids 'any stop on the strength of a flag alone'. For this to protect innocent commuters rather than simply to disable the system, an officer must have some other way of checking whether the flagged person is the one sought, such as comparing documents or a closer look at the reference image. If no such check existed, the rule would either stop nobody or be evaded by treating the flag as sufficient in practice. Negate Option C: 'No means other than the flag is available to check a flagged person.' The proposal then cannot operate as intended, which confirms that C is necessary. Option A actually undercuts the need for the rule; if officers already declined to act on uncorroborated flags, the proposal would add little. Option B supports a different recommendation, confining watchlists to warranted persons, and is not required by this one. Option D raises a concern about unequal error rates that the passage never discusses; the proposal would be protective whether or not errors were evenly distributed.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is attractive because it relates to another of the author's recommendations, but an assumption question is tied to the specific claim in the stem, and the no-stop rule works whether or not watchlists currently exceed warrants.

Q13 B Weaken - attacking a premise (CR) HARD

The whole argument rests on a premise about what the certificate measures: 'A system is shown pairs of photographs and asked whether each pair shows the same person.' From this the author infers that the certificate says nothing about how likely a flag is to be false in a crowd search, where the result depends 'on how many people are searched and how few of them are actually wanted'. Option B denies that premise: if the certification test already measures false flags in realistic crowd searches against realistic watchlists, then the certificate addresses exactly the risk the author says it ignores, and the charge that it is 'beside the point' collapses. Option A actually supports a scepticism about certificates, though on a different ground from the author's. Option C is weak correlational evidence; fewer complaints could reflect many causes, and complaints are not wrongful stops. Option D strengthens the argument, because longer watchlists and wider deployment intensify the scale problem that the author says the certificate ignores. The strongest weakener attacks the factual premise on which the inference depends.

Examiner's note — the trap: C tempts because it offers apparent real-world evidence that certification works, but complaint counts are an indirect proxy with many possible causes and do not touch the author's arithmetic.

Q14 D Strengthen - empirical confirmation (CR) MED

The author's central claim is that a certified system can still produce mostly false flags when searching large crowds for a few wanted people, because the proportion of false flags depends on scale and the rarity of targets, not merely on accuracy. The argument supports this with hypothetical arithmetic: 'about a hundred false flags against at most ten true ones'. Option D supplies real-world evidence that the hypothetical describes what actually happens: systems certified well above the threshold produced mostly false flags in exactly

the setting the author describes. That confirms the premise on which the recommendation rests. Option A suggests an interested party favours the threshold, but lobbying says nothing about whether the threshold protects citizens. Option B is irrelevant or even mildly weakening, since improving accuracy might be thought to reduce the problem, and it does not address the scale effect. Option C concerns public attitudes to certification, which is irrelevant to whether certification in fact protects the public; indeed, the author suggests that such reassurance is misplaced.

Examiner's note — the trap: A is tempting because it casts doubt on the motives behind the threshold, but an argument about motive does not show that the safeguard fails; only D confirms the mechanism the author describes.

Q15 B Parallel reasoning - CR ELITE

The author's reasoning has a precise structure: (1) a safeguard certifies a tool's accuracy; (2) but when the tool is applied to a large population in which the target is rare, most positive results will still be false; (3) so the rules should govern the scale and terms of use, and what happens after a positive result, rather than relying on accuracy alone. Option B reproduces every element: a certified screening test, a whole population with a rare disease, most positives false, and rules governing who is screened and what follows. Option A shares the idea of a credential that fails to prevent errors but concludes that the requirement should be abolished, which the author rejects; accuracy remains 'a necessary condition'. Option C shares the certified test but reasons from the general fact that no test is perfect, not from the base-rate effect, and its remedy is disclosure rather than regulation of use. Option D concerns a limit set at the wrong level; its fix is to tighten the same variable, precisely the move the author's argument rules out.

Examiner's note — the trap: C is the trap because it begins with the same words as B, but its reasoning rests on the imperfection of all tests rather than on the rarity of the target in a large screened population.

Q16 D Main conclusion - CR MED

The argument has a diagnostic part and a prescriptive part. The diagnosis: 'the cut relieved a constraint that firms were not facing', because with plants running at little more than seventy per cent of capacity a firm 'waits for customers'. The prescription, introduced by 'If this is right, the lesson for the next round of fiscal support is plain', is that spending on household incomes and orders 'would do more to bring private investment forward than any further reduction in the corporate rate'. The prescription is the main conclusion, supported by the diagnosis, and Option D states both. Option A names the explanation the author rejects: 'the pattern was visible in the quarters before the pandemic began'. Option B overstates; the author expressly says 'None of this makes the tax rate irrelevant; a firm that already has buyers will weigh it', and recommends no reversal. Option C moralises about how firms used the cash, which the author reports without criticism; on the author's account, firms acted rationally by not investing when demand was weak.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is the trap for readers who treat a critique of a tax cut as a call to reverse it; the penultimate sentences explicitly preserve a role for the tax rate and recommend only against a further cut.

Q17 B Assumption - bridging the policy link (CR) HARD

The recommendation depends on a chain: spending raises household incomes and government orders; that spending becomes sales; firms that see sales ('buyers') invest. The passage establishes the final link ('Firms build when they can see buyers') but simply takes for granted that the fiscal measures listed will reach the order books of the firms whose investment is sought. Negate Option B: if the additional income and orders did not turn into sales for those firms, for example because the money was saved or spent on imports, the demand route would not bring investment forward, and the conclusion would fail. So B is necessary. Option A is the opposite of what the argument needs; if households saved most of the money, the demand effect would be weak. Option C concerns international tax competition, which the argument never invokes and does not require. Option D is not necessary: the argument works as long as there is spare capacity and weak demand, and it does not require utilisation to have fallen further.

Examiner's note — the trap: D is attractive because the capacity figure is central to the diagnosis, but the conclusion does not depend on things having got worse; it depends on new spending actually becoming sales.

Q18 C Weaken - testing the causal explanation (CR) HARD

The author's explanation is that investment failed to rise because firms had idle capacity: 'a firm with more than a quarter of its existing machines idle does not buy new machines'. That explanation predicts that firms without idle capacity, those running close to full, should have responded to the higher after-tax return by investing. Option C reports that even in those industries investment failed to rise. That removes the variable the author relies on, spare capacity, while leaving the result unchanged, so something other than weak demand must have held investment back. That seriously weakens the explanation. Option A is consistent with the demand story; postponed expansion is what one would expect if orders did not materialise. Option B is weak and ambiguous, because the author does not claim that investment collapsed, only that it did not rise. Option D actually strengthens the explanation by showing weak consumer demand during the relevant period. The most powerful weakener here is a case where the proposed cause is absent but the effect persists.

Examiner's note — the trap: B tempts because it seems to show idle capacity coexisting with normal investment, but the author's claim is only that idle capacity blocks an increase, so 'not collapsing' leaves it untouched.

Q19 A Strengthen - direct evidence for the mechanism (CR) HARD

The argument rests on a claim about why firms did not invest: they were constrained by demand, not by the tax on returns. The passage supports this with an inference from capacity utilisation, but offers no direct evidence of firms' own reasons. Option A supplies exactly that: manufacturers themselves cited insufficient orders far more often than taxes or the cost of capital as their reason for deferring

expansion. This is direct evidence for the mechanism on which the diagnosis and the recommendation both depend. Option B concerns the fiscal cost of the cut, which bears on whether the cut was expensive, not on why investment failed to respond. Option C would, if anything, weaken the argument by suggesting that the cut's effect was simply delayed, though the author already says the pattern 'has persisted in the years since'. Option D describes a benefit of the cut to firm finances, which is consistent with the author's account but does nothing to show that demand, rather than tax, was the binding constraint on new capacity.

Examiner's note — the trap: C is attractive because it seems relevant to the timing debate, but a predicted lag supports the tax cut's defenders, not the author; it offers them an escape route rather than closing one.

Q20 **C** Flaw - neglected counterfactual (CR) **ELITE**

The argument moves from 'the investment did not arrive', meaning capital formation was 'essentially flat', to the claim that the cut 'relieved a constraint that firms were not facing'. But flat investment is consistent with a cut that did work, if investment would otherwise have fallen, for instance because demand was weakening. The author never considers what would have happened without the cut, so the evidence cannot show the cut had no effect. Option C identifies this neglected counterfactual. Option A misdescribes the argument: the author cites the defenders' pandemic explanation only to rebut it, and does not rely on their testimony. Option B is incorrect because the author explicitly limits the claim, saying 'a firm that already has buyers will weigh' the tax rate, and so does not assume the policy must fail everywhere. Option D invents a concession: the author never says that the pandemic depressed demand, and in any case, weak demand from any cause would be consistent with the demand-side explanation rather than contradicting it.

Examiner's note — the trap: D is the trap because the pandemic seems to sit awkwardly with a demand story, but a demand shock from any source fits the author's explanation, and the passage makes no such concession.

RAPID FIRE — ANSWERS

1. What is the 'shifting baseline syndrome'? — **Each generation treating the conditions it first knew as normal, so earlier losses drop out of view.**
2. 'Pristine' means? — **In its original, unspoiled condition.**
3. 'Counterfeit' (as used against 'authentic')? — **Lacking a genuine claim; a false claimant.**
4. 'Of any vintage' means? — **Of any age or period.**
5. 'Oscillate' means? — **To swing back and forth between states.**
6. 'Complacency' means? — **Uncritical self-satisfaction that ignores danger.**
7. What is memory 'consolidation'? — **The process by which a new memory is stabilised after an experience.**
8. What is 'reconsolidation'? — **Re-storing a memory after retrieval has made it unstable again.**
9. 'Malleable' means? — **Capable of being reshaped.**
10. 'Elicit' means? — **To draw out a response or answer.**
11. 'With relish' means? — **With obvious enjoyment.**
12. 'Relish' vs 'reluctance'? — **Relish = eager enjoyment; reluctance = unwillingness.**
13. What does a 'control condition' do in an experiment? — **Isolates the variable of interest by removing it and comparing results.**
14. What is a 'base-rate' error? — **Ignoring how rare a target is when judging what a positive result means.**
15. Necessary vs sufficient condition? — **Necessary: must be present; sufficient: guarantees the outcome on its own.**
16. What is a 'false positive'? — **A result that flags something as present when it is not.**
17. What does 'beside the point' mean? — **Irrelevant to the matter at issue.**
18. 'Watchlist' in policing? — **A list of persons whom the authorities are seeking or monitoring.**
19. What is 'capital formation'? — **Net addition to productive assets such as plant and machinery.**
20. What is 'capacity utilisation'? — **Actual output as a share of the maximum possible output.**
21. 'Exchequer' means? — **The national treasury; public revenue.**
22. Supply-side vs demand-side policy? — **Supply-side raises incentives to produce; demand-side raises spending on output.**
23. What is a counterfactual? — **What would have happened in the absence of the event or policy.**
24. Neglected-counterfactual flaw? — **Judging a policy by the outcome alone, without asking what would have happened otherwise.**
25. How do you test a necessary assumption? — **Negate it; if the argument collapses, it is necessary.**
26. Strongest type of weakener for a causal claim? — **A case where the proposed cause is absent but the effect still occurs.**
27. What is a parallel-reasoning question testing? — **Whether you can match the logical structure, not the topic.**
28. 'Vocabulary in context' rule? — **Choose the sense the sentence itself fixes, not the dictionary default.**
29. Main conclusion vs intermediate conclusion? — **The main conclusion is supported by the intermediate one, which in turn rests on premises.**
30. 'Plain' as in 'the lesson is plain'? — **Clear and obvious.**
31. 'Rewilding' means? — **Restoring an area to a self-sustaining natural state, often by reintroducing lost species.**
32. 'Trophic cascade'? — **Knock-on effects down a food chain when a top predator is added or removed.**
33. 'Anthropocentric' vs 'ecocentric'? — **Human-centred valuation vs nature valued for its own sake.**
34. 'Nostalgia' means? — **A sentimental longing for a past period.**
35. 'Suggestibility'? — **The tendency to absorb information supplied by others into one's own memory.**
36. 'Misinformation effect'? — **Post-event information distorting the memory of the original event.**
37. 'Corroborate' means? — **To confirm or support with independent evidence.**
38. 'Veridical' means? — **Truthful; corresponding to what actually happened.**
39. 'Precision' vs 'recall' (of a detection system)? — **Share of flags that are correct vs share of true targets that get flagged.**
40. 'Fiscal stimulus'? — **Government spending increases or tax cuts meant to raise demand.**
41. 'Crowding in'? — **Public spending raising private investment by lifting expected demand.**
42. 'Post hoc ergo propter hoc'? — **Assuming that because B followed A, A caused B.**
43. 'Straw man' flaw? — **Attacking a distorted version of the opponent's position.**
44. 'Equivocation' flaw? — **Shifting the meaning of a key word mid-argument.**