

ANSWER KEY — 23 SEPTEMBER 2026

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

READING COMPREHENSION

Q1 C Main idea - RC (literary criticism) MED

The second paragraph states the thesis outright: unreliability 'is better understood as a property of the reading', against the common view under which 'unreliability is a property of the text, planted by the author and waiting to be discovered'. The same paragraph adds that the novel 'supplies evidence the narrator does not know he is supplying' and that 'the reader is doing the interpretive work'. Option C carries both halves, the reader's production of the effect and the novel's supply of the evidence. Option A invents a claim about who invented the device; James is cited only for the observation that narration is shaped by the narrating mind. Option B asserts a ranking of novels that the author never makes; he praises 'the better books of this kind', not the kind as such. Option D restates precisely the 'cruder' account the passage sets out in order to reject it.

Examiner's note — the trap: D attracts anyone who reads the first paragraph as the author's own position; it is in fact the 'common use' he calls cruder than Booth intended.

Q2 A Inference - RC (what a non-compulsory reading implies) HARD

The clause says the author makes the second reading 'possible without making it compulsory', and it is preceded by 'Nothing in the sentences compels this.' If nothing compels the reading, then a reader who does not perform it has broken no rule laid down by the text; he has merely not taken up an available option. That is exactly option A. Option B smuggles in a consensus requirement the passage denies: unreliability is produced when 'we decline to take the account at its own valuation', not when a majority agrees. Option C recommends an explicit signal, which contradicts the whole account, since an explicit signal would make the reading compulsory and return us to the 'trick'. Option D adds a claim about placement in the closing pages; the passage says the better books 'simply stop' and never resolve, so late placement of decisive evidence is not its picture.

Examiner's note — the trap: C tempts readers who treat clarity as an authorial duty; the passage treats the absence of an explicit signal as the source of the effect, not a defect.

Q3 D Tone / attitude - RC HARD

Two signals fix the attitude. The first is critical: the term 'has hardened into something cruder than he intended', and the common use 'names a trick'. The second is admiring, but of the thing itself rather than the usage: the device 'resists the paraphrase that blurbs and examinations demand of it', and the form's capacity to be 'pleasurable rather than humiliating' is called 'the achievement of the form'. Dissatisfaction with the usage plus respect for the effect is option D. Option A is wrong on both counts: the author plainly cares, and he treats the device as central to how these novels are read. Option B misdirects the criticism at Booth, whom the passage defends by saying the coarsening is not what he intended. Option C reverses the complaint; the author objects that the term has been flattened, not that it is applied too narrowly.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is the trap for readers who see a named critic beside a complaint and assume the complaint is aimed at him.

Q4 B Vocabulary in context MED

The phrase appears in 'we decline to take the account at its own valuation', immediately glossed by what follows: we 'construct, behind the voice we are given, a second and unspoken version of events'. To accept an account at its own valuation is therefore to accept it on the terms it proposes for itself, which is option B. Option A takes 'valuation' in its narrow commercial sense of price, which the sentence does not support. Option C shifts the assessment to the novel's final verdict on the narrator; the phrase concerns the reader's stance while reading, not a judgement delivered at the end. Option D describes a general indulgence towards first-person narration, but the contrast in the sentence is between accepting one version and constructing a second, not between strict and generous readers of first-person prose.

Examiner's note — the trap: D reads plausibly as a paraphrase of trusting a narrator, but it names a reader's habit rather than the account's own terms, which is what 'its own' points to.

Q5 A Structure / function of an example HARD

The two examples are introduced by the claim they are there to support: 'The famous instances work because the novel supplies evidence the narrator does not know he is supplying.' The butler recalls 'with quiet satisfaction' an episode that damns him, and the governess describes apparitions 'with a precision that slowly begins to feel like invention'. In both, the narrator hands over the material without seeing what it shows, which is option A. Option B makes a claim about national tradition that the passage never raises. Option C is the opposite of the function: these are examples of evidence that is not an explicit clue, and the passage treats explicit clues as belonging to the crude 'trick' account. Option D imposes a chronological contrast; the two instances are offered as parallel cases, not as stages in a development.

Examiner's note — the trap: D attracts students trained to expect a then-and-now contrast whenever two examples appear; here the examples are parallel, joined by a semicolon within one sentence.

Q6 D Main idea - RC (moral luck) MED

The second paragraph names the structure of the piece: the case's 'force lies in a contradiction we appear to hold without noticing', between the principle that 'a person may be blamed only for what lies within his control' and 'the ordinary practice of judgement, which tracks outcomes relentlessly'. The third paragraph then says 'The dispute is over which commitment must give way', and surveys the two replies. That is option D. Option A reverses the passage: neither philosopher is said to have refuted the control principle, and Nagel offers 'not a solution but a diagnosis'. Option B states one of the two replies as though it were the author's conclusion, and adds a legal recommendation the passage never makes. Option C contradicts the third paragraph, which explicitly extends the problem to 'temperament, upbringing and circumstances', well beyond cases of criminal harm.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is the strongest distractor because the equal-culpability view is stated in the author's own voice as a reported reply; the passage presents it as one side of a live dispute.

Q7 B Inference - RC (cost of a philosophical position) ELITE

The reformist reply is described as holding that 'the drivers are equally culpable, and our different treatment of them merely records the crudeness of institutions built around visible harm'. Equal culpability is exactly what the control principle delivers, so the reply keeps that principle intact; the cost it pays is to classify the entrenched practice of judging by outcomes as institutional crudeness, which is option B. Option A is contradicted by the fourth paragraph: Nagel's suggestion 'was not a solution but a diagnosis', in which both commitments remain ours. Option C misuses the remorse point; the remorse is offered at the end as something Nagel's diagnosis explains, not as a refutation that the passage endorses. Option D states the second reply, which invokes unchosen temperament and upbringing to argue that the control principle proves too much, and attaches it to the first.

Examiner's note — the trap: D is the elite-level trap: it is a true statement drawn from the passage, but it belongs to the rival reply, and the stem asks only about the reformist one.

Q8 C Tone / attitude - RC HARD

The final paragraph is balanced in both directions. On one side: the suggestion 'was not a solution but a diagnosis', and 'That answer has satisfied few philosophers, and Nagel did not claim it would.' On the other: 'Its merit is that it explains something the tidier positions cannot', followed by two things it explains, the rationality of remorse and the failure of the phrase there but for fortune to console. Acknowledging that it settles little while crediting it with a distinctive explanatory reach is option C. Option A overstates: nothing is resolved on the author's own account. Option B is too harsh and ignores the word 'merit'. Option D misreports both the author's stance and the profession's: the passage says the diagnosis has satisfied few, which is not the same as being widely judged obviously mistaken, and the author does not join that verdict.

Examiner's note — the trap: D exploits the sentence about few philosophers being satisfied; unsatisfied is weaker than refuted, and the author's next sentence is praise.

Q9 A Vocabulary in context MED

The word appears in 'the ordinary practice of judgement, which tracks outcomes relentlessly', set against the control principle in the previous sentence. The point being made is that what we say about a person moves with how things turn out, which the two-driver case demonstrates: identical conduct, different outcome, different verdict. To follow outcomes closely and vary as they vary is option A. Option B imports an aim of punishing, but the sentence describes a pattern in judgement generally, including the first driver being 'told he was lucky'. Option C reads 'track' as leaving a trace, which inverts the direction of the metaphor: judgement follows outcomes, it does not deposit marks on them. Option D reads 'track' as hunting something concealed, but nothing in the passage suggests that the outcomes are hidden; the child at the corner is the most visible fact in the case.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is attractive because the paragraph mentions prosecution, but prosecution is an instance of judgement following outcomes, not a definition of the verb.

Q10 B Structure / function of an opening case HARD

The opening is built so that only one variable moves. The two men are 'equally drunk', take 'the same route home', and 'Nothing distinguishes the two men's choices, their intentions, or the care they took.' The single difference is a child at a corner 'he could not have seen around'. Holding everything within the agents' control fixed so that the outcome alone varies is what isolates the phenomenon the passage goes on to name, which is option B. Option A treats the case as a claim about criminal liability, but the legal consequence is reported as data about our reactions, not defended as correct. Option C singles out intoxication; drunkenness is held

constant across both drivers and so cannot be what produces the asymmetry. Option D is contradicted by the rest of the passage, which relies on the case throughout rather than discrediting it.

Examiner's note — the trap: A tempts readers who notice the word 'prosecuted' and assume a legal thesis; the paragraph reports the prosecution as one of the things said afterwards.

CRITICAL REASONING

Q11 **D** Main conclusion - CR **MED**

The final sentence carries the recommendation: the council 'should not close a single branch on the strength of' the falling circulation figure, which it should treat 'as evidence about lending and about nothing else'. A conclusion in an editorial argument of this kind is the proposition the rest exists to support, and every earlier paragraph feeds it: door counts are cited to show borrowing measures one function; distance sensitivity is cited to show which functions closure destroys; the consultation and the district studies are cited to show who is harmed. Option D states that recommendation. Options A and C are premises, drawn respectively from the door-count paragraph and the consultation finding. Option B is a comparative valuation the argument never makes; the claim is that circulation is the wrong measure of what would be lost, not that the unmeasured services are worth more than lending.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is the trap for readers who convert 'the figure measures the wrong thing' into 'the other things matter more', a ranking the passage carefully avoids.

Q12 **C** Necessary assumption - CR **HARD**

The argument reasons from the fact that sitting with laptops, storytelling hours and help with forms 'do not register in a circulation figure' to the conclusion that closing branches would remove something the council should not remove. That step needs these activities to count as part of what the service is for. Negate option C and the argument collapses: if warm rooms and help with forms are no part of the library's purpose, their disappearance is no objection to closure, however many people they serve. Option A is not needed; the district studies are used for what happened after closure, not to match the council's selection method. Option B is not required at all, since the argument concerns what the fall in borrowing shows, not how long it will last. Option D is far stronger than the argument needs and would not be required even if some city had raised borrowing.

Examiner's note — the trap: D is the classic over-strong assumption: it rules out a worldwide exception, whereas a necessary assumption need only be what the argument cannot do without.

Q13 **A** Weaken - CR (alternative explanation of a null finding) **HARD**

The argument's strongest evidence is that districts losing a branch 'recorded no corresponding rise in use at the surviving libraries', from which it infers that 'the displaced users did not travel to them; they simply stopped coming'. Option A supplies a different explanation of the same data: if a community centre offering the same rooms, computers and help with forms opened nearby, the displaced users had somewhere else to go, so the absent rise at other libraries no longer shows that they were left without the service. That removes both the inference and the harm. Option B leaves the door-count comparison intact, since an unchanged proportion of staff and delivery workers cannot explain a change over time. Option C at most double-counts some users, which does not touch the distance argument. Option D concerns who answered the consultation, a subsidiary premise about who is affected.

Examiner's note — the trap: D looks like a response-bias attack and is the popular wrong answer; it weakens only the claim about which users are concentrated where, leaving the central inference untouched.

Q14 **B** Strengthen - CR (confirming the mechanism) **ELITE**

The argument's pivot is that closure removes services whose numbers were not falling, because those services cannot survive the extra distance. The passage supports this indirectly, by the absence of a rise at surviving libraries. Option B supplies the direct confirmation: in districts that lost a branch, 'use of council services requiring help in person fell, and did not recover once a larger central library opened'. That is the predicted loss, shown to occur, and shown not to be repaired by the very remedy the consolidation proposal offers. Option A records sentiment about character, which no council is obliged to act on and which the argument never invokes. Option C plainly helps the opposing case. Option D shows only that consolidation does not change the borrowing trend, which is consistent with the argument but says nothing about the unmeasured services on which it turns.

Examiner's note — the trap: D feels supportive because it embarrasses the consolidators, but the argument is not about whether consolidation revives lending; it is about what closure destroys.

Q15 **D** Parallel reasoning - CR **ELITE**

The structure to match has four parts: a headline measure is falling; a second measure of use is not; the functions behind the second measure are the ones that cannot survive extra distance; therefore do not close on the falling measure. Option D reproduces each part, with sales falling, footfall steady, repair counters serving customers 'who will not travel far', and the conclusion that the chain 'should not close them on sales figures'. Option A shares the falling-measure opening but concludes about a licensing category, which has no counterpart here. Option B argues for reallocation from the falling measure, the very move the original opposes. Option C accepts that the headline measure defines the institution's purpose, which is the assumption the original attacks, and then endorses proportional cuts. Matching the conclusion type matters as much as matching the premises.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is the distractor for students who match only the falling-usage premise; its conclusion reallocates resources away from the shrinking function, the opposite of the original's recommendation.

Q16 A Main conclusion - CR MED

The last paragraph opens with the recommendation and the word that marks it: 'The ministry should therefore decline the extension until such a trial exists', the trial being one 'with a mortality endpoint'. Everything before it is support: overdiagnosis explains why detection is not prevention, the incidence-without-mortality pattern supplies the evidence from other countries, and the survival-statistic paragraph disposes of the supporters' reply. Option A restates that recommendation. Option B is the premise of the second paragraph. Option C is the point of the fourth paragraph, offered as a rebuttal rather than as the thing to be shown. Option D takes the final sentence's general remark about the burden of proof and inflates it into a blanket attitude of suspicion towards screening, which the passage does not adopt; it asks for a specific trial in a specific age band.

Examiner's note — the trap: D is attractive because it echoes the closing sentence, but a closing observation about standards of proof is not the same as the operative recommendation.

Q17 B Necessary assumption - CR HARD

The evidential heart of the argument is the foreign pattern: 'recorded incidence has risen steeply ... while mortality from the disease has remained flat', which the author calls 'the signature of overdiagnosis'. That reading holds only if the extra cases were not genuinely dangerous disease. Negate option B, and suppose dangerous disease truly became more common while treatment held deaths level; the same figures would then show a programme doing its work, and the inference to overdiagnosis fails. Option A is not needed, and would work against the conclusion, which is that the ministry should wait for exactly such a trial. Option C overstates the harms; the passage says nerve injury occurs 'in a minority of cases' and rests its case on overdiagnosis rather than on complication rates. Option D alleges concealment by the advisory group, a motive claim the argument never requires.

Examiner's note — the trap: C is the trap for students who equate a necessary assumption with the strongest version of the harms; the argument survives a small complication rate.

Q18 C Weaken - CR (transfer of evidence across populations) HARD

The argument transfers evidence from foreign programmes to a proposal about adults from the age of thirty. Option C breaks the transfer: if those programmes screened mainly adults over fifty, 'in whom these tumours behave far less aggressively than in adults of thirty', then the flat mortality observed there does not predict flat mortality in the younger band, and the signature of overdiagnosis may simply not apply to the population at issue. That attacks the evidence rather than the conclusion's wording, which is what a weakener should do. Option A addresses cost, which the passage concedes at the outset by accepting that the test is cheap. Option B mentions monitoring rather than surgery, but only for 'some patients', leaving the overdiagnosis claim about detection untouched. Option D reduces the estimated burden of one harm without disturbing either the autopsy evidence or the incidence-mortality pattern.

Examiner's note — the trap: B is the popular wrong answer: monitoring softens the harm but concedes the very point that healthy people are being converted into patients under observation.

Q19 D Strengthen - CR (reversal evidence) MED

If a programme is detecting disease that never needed detecting, then stopping it should make recorded cases fall without costing lives. Option D reports exactly that: in a region that suspended a comparable programme, 'recorded incidence fell sharply while deaths from the disease did not rise at all'. This is the mirror image of the passage's own evidence and closes the obvious gap in it, since a critic could otherwise argue that flat mortality reflects successful treatment of real disease. Option A questions the advisory group's composition, which is at best an argument about authority rather than about the disease. Option B adds a further harm from detection but does not bear on whether detection prevents death. Option C concerns where the money comes from, a budgetary point that leaves the clinical claim exactly where it stood.

Examiner's note — the trap: B feels like support because it lists another harm; the conclusion asks for a mortality trial, so evidence about deaths, not anxiety, is what moves the argument.

Q20 C Flaw - CR (statistic inflated by the practice it is used to defend) ELITE

The author's objection is stated in the fourth paragraph: 'a programme that adds harmless tumours to the numerator of a survival statistic will raise that statistic whatever it does to anyone's life expectancy'. The supporters treat a high survival figure as proof that the programme works, but the figure rises automatically once cases that were never going to kill anyone are added to the count of the diagnosed and surviving. The evidence is therefore contaminated by the very practice it is offered to justify, which is option C. Option A alleges a small sample; the passage never disputes the size of the survival data. Option B describes an inference from whole to part, which is not what is going wrong. Option D would be a charge that screening creates tumours, a claim the author never makes and which his own autopsy evidence contradicts.

Examiner's note — the trap: D is the elite trap: it sounds like the overdiagnosis complaint, but the author says the nodules are genuinely present and merely harmless, not that screening brings them into existence.

RAPID FIRE — ANSWERS

1. 'Free indirect style' in fiction? — **Third-person narration that takes on a character's own idiom and viewpoint.**
2. 'Focalisation' means? — **Whose perspective the events of a narrative are presented through.**
3. Who makes a narrator unreliable, on this passage's account? — **The reader, by constructing a second account behind the narrator's.**
4. 'At its own valuation' means? — **On the terms the thing sets for itself.**

5. 'Adjudicate' means? — **To settle authoritatively between competing claims.**

6. 'Paraphrase' means? — **A restatement of a text's sense in different words.**

7. 'Coinage' of a term? — **A newly invented word or phrase, and the act of inventing it.**

8. 'Hardened into' (of a usage)? — **Became fixed and rigid over time.**

9. 'Crude' vs 'nuanced'? — **Crude is rough and oversimplified; nuanced is alive to fine distinctions.**

10. 'Compulsory' means? — **Required; leaving no choice in the matter.**

11. 'Interpretive work' (of a reader)? — **The effort of construing meaning that is not stated outright.**

12. 'Self-serving' means? — **Shaped so as to protect or flatter one's own interest.**

13. 'Plausible' means? — **Seeming reasonable or believable on the face of it.**

14. 'Blurb' means? — **A short promotional description printed on a book's cover.**

15. What does it mean that a work 'resists paraphrase'? — **It cannot be restated without losing what matters in it.**

16. 'Governess' means? — **A woman employed to teach children in a private household.**

17. A 'twist' in fiction? — **A late revelation that reverses the reader's understanding.**

18. 'Suspicion' vs 'scepticism'? — **Suspicion distrusts a particular account; scepticism withholds belief generally.**

19. 'Humiliating' vs 'chastening'? — **Humiliating degrades; chastening corrects without degrading.**

20. 'Apparition' means? — **A ghostly figure; something that appears suddenly and strangely.**

21. 'Moral luck' means? — **Blame or praise that depends on factors outside the agent's control.**

22. Which two philosophers named moral luck? — **Bernard Williams and Thomas Nagel.**

23. The 'control principle' in ethics? — **A person may be blamed only for what lay within his control.**

24. 'Resultant luck'? — **Luck in how an action happens to turn out.**

25. 'Constitutive luck'? — **Luck in the temperament and character one happens to have.**

26. 'Circumstantial luck'? — **Luck in the situations one is placed in and tested by.**

27. 'Culpable' means? — **Deserving of blame.**

28. 'Remorse' vs 'regret'? — **Remorse admits one's own wrongdoing; regret may be about anything.**

29. A 'diagnosis' vs a 'solution' in philosophy? — **A diagnosis explains why the problem arises; a solution removes it.**

30. 'Entrenched' means? — **Firmly established and hard to dislodge.**

31. To 'dissolve' a problem? — **To show that it does not arise, rather than to answer it.**

32. 'Temperament' means? — **A person's settled disposition or cast of mind.**

33. 'Deontology' vs 'consequentialism'? — **Duty-based judgement versus judgement by outcomes.**

34. 'Akrasia' means? — **Acting against one's own better judgement; weakness of will.**

35. 'Determinism'? — **The view that every event is fixed by prior causes.**

36. 'Culpability' vs 'liability'? — **Culpability is moral blame; liability is legal responsibility.**

37. 'Sheer accident' means? — **Pure chance, with no contribution from anyone's choice.**

38. 'Overdiagnosis' means? — **Detecting disease that would never have caused symptoms or death.**

39. 'Lead-time bias'? — **Survival looks longer only because diagnosis came earlier.**

40. 'Length-time bias'? — **Screening preferentially catches slow-growing, less dangerous disease.**

41. 'Incidence' vs 'mortality'? — **Incidence is new cases recorded; mortality is deaths from the disease.**

42. A 'mortality endpoint' in a trial? — **An outcome measured as deaths, not as detections or survival rates.**

43. A 'surrogate endpoint'? — **A stand-in measure assumed to predict the outcome that really matters.**

44. 'Sensitivity' of a test? — **The proportion of true cases the test detects.**

45. 'Specificity' of a test? — **The proportion of non-cases the test correctly clears.**

46. 'Numerator' vs 'denominator'? — **The top and the bottom of a fraction respectively.**

47. An 'autopsy study'? — **Examining people who died of other causes to see what disease was present.**

48. 'Natural history' of a disease? — **How it behaves if it is left untreated.**

49. 'Active monitoring' of a tumour? — **Watching a detected condition instead of treating it at once.**

50. 'Burden of proof'? — **The duty to establish a claim rests on whoever asserts it.**

51. A 'papillary' tumour? — **A tumour with finger-like projections; the commonest thyroid type.**