ANSWER KEY — 24 NOVEMBER 2026

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

READING COMPREHENSION

Q1 **C** *Inference (ending)* HARD

The closing line glosses the advice: 'It was the first time he had ever told her where the fares were.' Knowing where the fares are is a driver's working knowledge, the kind of thing passed from one driver to another, not from a father to a child he is protecting. A moment earlier he has said the takings were poor, then smoothed a note and replaced it 'exactly where it had been', a wordless gesture of respect for money she earned. Together these show him accepting her, without any speech, as a fellow driver, which is the third option. The first option invents a decision about school; nothing in the passage mentions leaving it. The second option seizes on his remark about a bad day but ignores the gesture that follows it and the tone of the final line. The fourth option imports regret that the father never expresses; the scene shows acceptance, not lament.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The second option tempts because he does comment on the low takings, but the story immediately overturns that remark with the gesture with the note and the practical tip.

Q2 **A** *Inference (character)* MED

The drivers 'watched her reverse in' and 'Nobody spoke': she is a seventeen-year-old girl manoeuvring a heavy vehicle in front of experienced men, a moment in which being stared at would make the task harder and more humiliating. Raghu-anna, who has known her since childhood, deliberately looks away 'with great care', choosing not to watch. The narrator calls this 'the most generous thing he could have done' because it relieves her of an audience at the hardest moment, which is the first option. The second option adds a signal to the other drivers that the passage never describes; he does nothing but look up. The third option contradicts the text, which says he has known her since she rode in the footwell, so recognition is not in doubt. The fourth option reads disapproval into a gesture the narrator explicitly calls generous.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The second option tempts because it also sounds kind, but it attributes a deliberate message to the other drivers that nothing in the scene supports.

Q3 **B** *Inference (implied expectation)* HARD

To be surprised that something cost little is to have expected it to cost more. The 'word' is 'Mine', spoken in answer to 'Whose vehicle is this?'. The cost, then, is the cost of claiming the vehicle as her own, of stepping into the role of its driver rather than presenting herself as a stand-in for her father. She had expected that claim to feel difficult, perhaps presumptuous, and it did not, which is the second option. The first option shifts the expected cost onto the passenger's reaction; the sentence is about what the word cost Kavya, not what the passenger might do. The third option draws on the earlier detail of the learner's licence, but the passenger asks about ownership, not about a licence. The fourth option brings in her father's reaction, of which there is no hint in the scene on the flyover.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The first option tempts because the passenger's question creates tension, but the 'cost' belongs to Kavya's own act of saying 'Mine', not to any fear about the ride.

Q4 **C** *Inference (detail)* HARD

The woman notices the plait and the school-bag strap, asks whose vehicle it is, hears 'Mine', and 'considered this for the length of a traffic light'. Then she makes an ordinary passenger's request, to go slowly over a broken stretch, and the narrator adds that she said it 'as she would have told anyone'. That qualifier is the key: the request is not special treatment of a girl driver but the treatment any driver would receive. After a brief pause of judgement she simply accepts Kavya as her driver, which is the third option. The first option reads doubt into the request, but 'as she would have told anyone' rules out any suggestion that she was singling Kavya out. The second option invents a daily route. The fourth option turns the request into a gesture of welcome, again making it special, which the qualifying phrase denies.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The first option is the trap: a reader expecting prejudice reads the reminder as doubt, but the narrator explicitly says she would have told any driver the same.

Q5 **A** *Function of a detail* ELITE

The handlebar sentence closes a list of things Kavya 'learned' on her first day. For the first hour the handle is warm from her father's grip, the vehicle still his, her role still that of a substitute; after that it is 'warm only from her own'. The physical sensation traces a change in whose vehicle it is and whose work this is, the same movement the story builds towards in 'Mine' and in the father's final advice. That is the first option. The second option reads the line literally and adds an unmentioned morning trip; the father is laid up with his knee and

the warmth is figurative. The third option mistakes the warmth for heat discomfort, which the passage never raises. The fourth option supplies longing for her father, but the sentence points the other way: his trace fades and hers replaces it.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The fourth option tempts as the most sentimental reading, but the detail records his warmth fading and hers taking over, a passage to independence rather than a wish for his company.

Q6 **B** *Main point* HARD

The first paragraph grants that the Tenth Schedule achieved its aim of stopping floor-crossing, then announces 'a quieter illness' in 'the debates it hollowed out'. The second paragraph explains that harm: with votes fixed by the whip, argument cannot change outcomes, so the legislature 'has stopped deliberating'. The third rebuts the defenders, and the fourth offers the remedy: confine disqualification to votes that decide a government's survival and free members on ordinary legislation. The second option combines the diagnosis and the remedy. The first option contradicts the passage, which says few laws 'have achieved their immediate aim so completely'. The third option recommends repeal, which the author expressly rejects because it 'would invite back the trade in legislators'. The fourth option states the defenders' position, which the author says 'proves less than it claims'.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The third option tempts readers who register only the criticism, but the author explicitly rejects repeal in favour of a narrower penalty.

Q7 **D** *Detail (cause)* MED

The second paragraph sets out the reasoning step by step. If a member's vote 'is fixed in advance by the party whip, and a contrary vote can cost the seat, then argument on the floor cannot change the outcome'. Because persuasion cannot work, debate becomes 'a performance for the record and the cameras', addressed to voters outside. The cause the author identifies is therefore the fixing of votes beforehand, which makes speeches unable to affect the decision: the fourth option. The first option invents ministers refusing to answer questions; the passage says only that ministers know the outcome is fixed. The second option makes the cameras the cause, when in the passage they are merely the audience left once persuasion has become pointless; broadcasting is never presented as a cause. The third option claims bills pass with no discussion, but the author says the legislature 'continues to talk'.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The second option tempts because 'cameras' appears in the sentence, but the author names them as the audience of the performance, not as its cause.

Q8 **A** *Structure of a rebuttal* HARD

The defenders argue that 'voters choose parties, not individuals', so members owe the party loyalty. The author grants that voters 'may well choose a party's broad programme' but adds that 'no manifesto anticipates the clause-by-clause detail' of a bill. Binding every clause, the author says, wrongly treats the leadership's judgement 'on matters the voter never considered' as the voter's own. The rebuttal therefore depends on separating endorsement of the broad programme from endorsement of the party's stand on each clause of each bill, which is the first option. The second option introduces party workers, who are never mentioned. The third option contrasts party members with independents, a distinction the passage does not draw. The fourth option takes the two examples, land acquisition and data protection, and treats them as the contrast, when the author uses them together as illustrations of detailed legislation.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The fourth option tempts because the two bills are named in the key sentence, but they serve as joint examples of clause-level detail, not as opposed categories.

Q9 **D** *Application of a proposal* ELITE

Under the proposal, disqualification would be 'confined to votes that decide whether a government survives': motions of confidence, money bills, perhaps the budget. On ordinary legislation members could vote freely, 'answering to their party through its internal discipline and to their voters', but 'not through the loss of their seats'. A data-protection bill is ordinary legislation, so a member who defies the party on one of its clauses keeps the seat but may still face party discipline: the fourth option. The first option reverses the scheme, since a confidence motion is exactly where disqualification would remain. The second option overstates the change by removing every party consequence, ignoring the 'internal discipline' the author keeps. The third option inverts the categories, freeing money bills, which the author places under the penalty, while binding ordinary bills, which the author would free.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The second option tempts readers who take the proposal as total freedom, but the author keeps party discipline and removes only the penalty of losing the seat.

Q10 **B** *Function of a phrase* MED

The phrase follows directly on the concession that 'Few laws have achieved their immediate aim so completely'. The sentence then turns with 'Yet the cure has produced a quieter illness', extending the medical metaphor: the law is a cure that worked on the visible disease of floor-crossing but produced a less noticeable one, the hollowing out of debate. The phrase thus acknowledges success while introducing a hidden cost, which is the second option. The first option contradicts the opening, which describes defections happening 'sometimes more than once in a fortnight', so the law was plainly needed. The third option claims defections continue secretly, but the author says the law stopped them. The fourth option takes 'quieter' literally, as members speaking less, when the passage says the legislature 'continues to talk'; what is quiet is the harm, not the members.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The fourth option tempts through a literal reading of 'quieter', but the author says talk continues; the word describes how unnoticed the harm is.

CRITICAL REASONING

Q11 **D** *Main conclusion* MED

The argument moves from rejecting the defence of merciful lies to a positive prescription in its final sentence: 'The duty of the doctor is therefore to ask the patient, early and gently, how much she wishes to be told, and to follow her answer rather than the family's request.' The word 'therefore' marks this as the conclusion, and the fourth option states it. The first option goes too far: the author denies the family the right to make the choice for the patient but nowhere says relatives should never be consulted at all. The second option contradicts the fourth paragraph, which says the truth should not be 'forced upon a patient' who does not wish to hear it. The third option takes a supporting premise from the third paragraph, that patients often guess, and inflates it into the conclusion, also turning 'frequently' into a claim that concealment is always pointless.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The second option tempts readers who see only the attack on lying, but the author explicitly refuses to force disclosure on a patient who declines it.

Q12 **D** *Assumption* HARD

The second paragraph lists what a patient who knows her time is short can do: decide on further chemotherapy, settle a dispute, forgive a brother, record a message. It then concludes that the lie 'takes from her the only chance she has to choose how her own life ends'. That conclusion requires that, without the truth, she would probably not make these choices; if uninformed patients made them anyway, the lie would take nothing away. The fourth option states this necessary link. The first option is too strong: the examples are illustrations, and the argument does not need most patients to care above all about property. The second option contradicts the passage, which says both doctor and family are 'poorly placed' to decide for her. The third option is not required; the argument concerns the patient's right to choose, whatever chemotherapy achieves.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The first option tempts because property disputes are named, but they are one example among several and the argument does not depend on what most patients want.

Q13 **A** *Weaken* HARD

The third paragraph argues that the lie is not as kind as it looks, because patients 'frequently guess the truth' and the result is 'isolation' rather than hope. Its force depends on patients seeing through the deception. If most uninformed patients never suspect and actually report feeling calmer, the claimed isolation does not arise and the lie looks kinder than the author allows, which is the first option. The second option, relatives' regret, is if anything consistent with the author's view and does not touch what patients experience. The third option compares urban and rural doctors, which bears on how common the practice is, not on whether it isolates patients. The fourth option concerns informed patients refusing treatment, which, if anything, illustrates the second paragraph's point that knowledge allows choice; it does not address whether deceived patients guess.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The fourth option tempts because it sounds like a cost of disclosure, but it concerns the second paragraph's point about choice and leaves the claim about guessing untouched.

Q14 **C** *Function of a statement* ELITE

The fourth paragraph opens by guarding against a misreading: the argument does not require that the truth be 'forced upon a patient' who does not want it. The statement 'A patient may choose not to know, and that choice deserves respect' then shows what the argument actually rests on. The objection to the merciful lie is not that disclosure is always required; it is that the family takes a choice that belongs to the patient. 'But it must be her choice' follows directly. The statement therefore clarifies that the principle is the patient's autonomy rather than disclosure as such: the third option. The first option misdescribes it as conceding the defenders' point; the author still holds that the truth is useful to the patient. The second option is contradicted by the next sentences, which deny the family that right. The fourth option misreads a qualification as a new objection.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The first option tempts because the sentence does concede something, but what it concedes is the patient's right to decline, not the defenders' claim that truth merely frightens.

Q15 **B** *Application of principle* HARD

The author's prescription is that the doctor should 'ask the patient, early and gently, how much she wishes to be told, and to follow her answer rather than the family's request'. Asking the patient directly, before the relatives arrive, how much she wants to hear about her scans is exactly this, which is the second option. The first option describes the practice the author criticises: concealment agreed with the family, without asking the patient. The third option violates the fourth paragraph, which says truth should not be 'forced upon a patient who has clearly signalled that she does not wish to hear it'; disclosing regardless of what each patient has said ignores her wishes. The fourth option hands the decision to the eldest son, but the author says the family's love 'does not give it the right to make that choice for her'.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The third option tempts readers who think the author simply favours disclosure, but the author rejects forcing the truth on a patient who has declined it.

Q16 **D** *Main conclusion* MED

The first paragraph warns that the four-point figure 'does not show what it is said to show', adding that the ban itself is not wrong. The second paragraph explains why the figure is weak. The third offers 'a better case' resting on shared attention in the classroom, and the fourth concludes 'It is the stronger argument nonetheless'. So the conclusion is that bans are better justified by protecting shared attention than by the reported rise in marks: the fourth option. The first option contradicts the author, who says caution is due 'not because the ban is wrong' and never asks for withdrawal; it also claims certainty about the cause that the author does not assert. The second option is the

officials' argument the author rejects. The third option inverts the fourth paragraph, which accepts that schools may restrict phones 'even when no one can show that marks improve'.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The first option tempts readers who stop at the critique of the figure, but the author defends the ban on other grounds rather than calling for its withdrawal.

Q17 B *Assumption* HARD

The author says that because the examination pattern changed in the same year, with more generously scored objective questions, the rise 'cannot simply be credited to the absence of phones'. For this alternative explanation to undercut the officials' claim, the paper change must be capable of producing a rise of roughly the size reported. If the change could account for only a trivial fraction of four points, the objection would collapse. The second option states this. The first option is too strong: the author says objective questions 'tend to be scored more generously', not that they are always easier to answer. The third option concerns what officials knew, which is irrelevant to whether the inference is sound. The fourth option goes far beyond the author, who disputes what caused the rise in marks, not whether marks measure anything worthwhile.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The first option tempts because it restates the premise about objective questions, but in an absolute form the argument does not need.

Q18 C *Weaken* ELITE

The author's objection is that the rise in marks may be due to the revised paper rather than the ban. The best way to weaken it is to separate the two causes. If schools that kept the old paper under a pilot scheme still showed the same four-point rise after the ban, the paper change cannot explain the gain, and the ban again looks like the cause: the third option. The first option tells us only where the schools with informal rules were located, which says nothing about whether the ban or the revised paper raised the marks. The second option is irrelevant unless we know those states' marks. The fourth option concerns teachers' approval, which says nothing about what raised the marks.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The second option tempts because it also concerns revised papers, but without those states' marks it neither separates the two causes nor answers the objection.

Q19 A *Strengthen* HARD

The third paragraph claims that attention in a classroom is shared: a phone does not just distract its user but pulls 'at the students around her and at the teacher, who must now police rather than teach'. Evidence that covert phone use by one student made teachers spend more time on discipline confirms this spillover from one user to the whole room, which is the first option. The second option concerns sleep at home, an individual harm outside the classroom, which the argument does not rely on. The third option shows that students find phones hard to resist, which supports a private-distraction view, the very view the author sets aside in favour of 'noise'. The fourth option reports parental support, which is popularity, not evidence that phones disrupt others' work in class.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The third option tempts because it confirms that phones distract, but it is about the user's own concentration, not the shared-attention claim that carries the argument.

Q20 C *Parallel reasoning* ELITE

The author's argument has a distinctive structure. It rejects a popular justification for a rule because the supporting figure has another explanation (a changed paper), then defends the same rule on a different ground that does not depend on that figure at all (shared attention), accepting that the rule stands 'whatever happens to examination results'. The third option mirrors this: a silence rule is defended not by borrowing figures, which rose for other reasons, but by the shared quiet readers need. The first option keeps the doubtful statistic but defends the curfew with it, the reverse of the author's move. The second option opposes a measure from a single outcome, with no replacement ground. The fourth option opposes, rather than defends, a rule, and does not reject any statistical justification first.

> **Examiner's note — the trap:** The fourth option tempts with the phrase 'whatever happens to injury rates', but it opposes the rule and never discards a weak statistical case.

RAPID FIRE — ANSWERS

1. For how many years had Kavya's father driven the same auto-rickshaw? — **Nineteen**

2. What is the name of the girl who drives the auto-rickshaw in 'Meter Down'? — **Kavya**

3. How old is Kavya in the story? — **Seventeen**

4. What injury keeps Kavya's father from driving? — **An injured knee**

5. For how long did the doctors say he would be off work? — **Six weeks**

6. On which date did the loan instalment arrive every month? — **The fifth**

7. Which flower did Kavya's mother tie to the mirror every Friday? — **Jasmine**

8. On which day of the week was the jasmine tied to the mirror? — **Friday**

9. Name one smell that lingered in the auto-rickshaw from Kavya's father. — **Coconut oil (or beedi smoke)**

10. What smoke did the father swear he had given up? — **Beedi smoke**

11. Where did Kavya keep her learner's licence? — **Folded inside her phone cover**

12. What kind of licence did Kavya hold? — **A learner's licence**

13. Where was the auto stand located? — **Near the railway crossing**

14. Which older driver had known Kavya since she was small? — **Raghu-anna**

15. Where did Kavya ride as a small child? — **In the footwell**

16. What did Raghu-anna study 'with great care' as Kavya reversed in? — **The sky**

17. What did Raghu-anna light while looking away? — **A cigarette**

18. What did the first passenger carry? — **Two cloth bags of vegetables**

19. Where did the first passenger notice Kavya's plait? — **On the flyover**

20. What was still hooked over the meter? — **Kavya's school-bag strap**

21. What did the passenger ask Kavya about the vehicle? — **Whose vehicle it was**

22. What one-word answer did Kavya give the passenger? — "**Mine**"

23. For how long did the passenger consider Kavya's answer? — **The length of a traffic light**

24. Near which place did the passenger ask Kavya to drive slowly? — **The temple**

25. Why did the passenger want her to go slowly near the temple? — **The road there was broken**

26. What did men arguing about the fare look at, instead of Kavya's face? — **The meter**

27. What could a girl driving alone 'never look', according to Kavya? — **Lost**

28. For how long was the handlebar warm from her father's grip? — **The first hour**

29. Where did Kavya count the day's money? — **On the kitchen floor**

30. How was the father's leg resting as he watched her count? — **Raised on two pillows**

31. Compared with his earnings, how much did Kavya make on day one? — **Less than he made on a bad day**

32. What note did the father take from the pile and smooth flat? — **A ten-rupee note**

33. Where did the father put the note back? — **Exactly where it had been**

34. Which road did the father tell Kavya to take tomorrow? — **The station road**

35. Before what time should she take the station road? — **Before seven**

36. Which crowd, per the father, 'pays without arguing'? — **The office crowd**

37. What had the father never before told Kavya? — **Where the fares were**

38. In the story, what does 'footwell' refer to? — **The floor space at a vehicle's feet**

39. In which year was the Tenth Schedule added to the Constitution? — **1985**

40. What is the Tenth Schedule commonly called? — **The anti-defection law**

41. What were legislators doing that the Tenth Schedule set out to stop? — **Changing sides for money or office**

42. How often did some legislators change sides, per the passage? — **Sometimes more than once in a fortnight**

43. What penalty does the law impose on a member who defies the party? — **Loss of the seat (disqualification)**

44. Whose direction, if defied in a vote, can cost a member the seat? — **The party's (via the whip)**

45. What does the author call the hidden harm the law produced? — **A quieter illness**

46. What, per the author, did the law 'hollow out'? — **The debates**

47. Who fixes a member's vote in advance, according to the passage? — **The party whip**

48. To whom are speeches now addressed, per the author? — **Voters outside the House**

49. What does debate become, according to the second paragraph? — **A performance for record and cameras**

50. What has the legislature stopped doing, though it still talks? — **Deliberating**

51. How does the author define 'deliberating'? — **Being open to persuasion by what one hears**

52. What do defenders say voters choose, instead of individuals? — **Parties**

53. On what is a member elected, per the defenders' argument? — **A party's symbol**

54. What, per the author, does no manifesto anticipate? — **The clause-by-clause detail of a bill**

55. Name one bill the author uses as an example of detailed legislation. — **Land acquisition or data protection**

56. Why does the author reject repeal of the anti-defection law? — **It would invite back the trade in legislators**

57. To which votes would the author confine disqualification? — **Votes deciding a government's survival**

58. Name one 'survival' vote listed by the author. — **Confidence motion, money bill or budget**

59. On ordinary bills, to whom would members answer at election time? — **Their voters**

60. Through what would parties still discipline members on ordinary bills? — **Internal party discipline**

61. What would the author's reform restore to the floor of the House? — **The chance that a good argument might win**

62. Would the author's change end party government? — **No**

63. What do families often ask doctors not to tell elderly patients? — **That the cancer has spread**

64. What is the patient told the new treatment is for? — "**To be on the safe side**"

65. What do defenders of the practice call the merciful lie? — **Mercy**

66. Defenders say last months are better spent in hope than in what? — **Dread**

67. Which treatment may a dying patient decide to refuse? — **Another round of chemotherapy**

68. What dispute might a dying patient wish to settle? — **A property dispute**

69. Whom might a dying patient wish to forgive, per the passage? — **A brother**

70. For whom might a dying patient record a message? — **A grandchild**

71. Why are doctor and family poorly placed to make these choices? — **They are not medical decisions**

72. What does the lie take from the patient, per the author? — **The chance to choose how her life ends**

73. From what do patients frequently guess the truth? — **Faces, treatment changes, visitors**

74. What does the lie produce instead of hope? — **Isolation**

75. Which conversation is never had when everyone pretends? — **The one that matters**

76. Must the truth be delivered bluntly, according to the author? — **No**

77. Whose choice must it be whether to know the prognosis? — **The patient's**

78. What does not give the family the right to choose for the patient? — **Its discomfort, however loving**

79. What should the doctor ask the patient, early and gently? — **How much she wishes to be told**

80. Whose answer should the doctor follow rather than the family's? — **The patient's**

81. What did the state ban in secondary schools two years ago? — **Smartphones**

82. By how much did average board marks rise in the first year? — **Four percentage points**

83. What else did the state revise in the year of the ban? — **Its examination pattern**

84. Which share was raised in the revised examination pattern? — **The share of objective questions**

85. Objective questions tend to be scored more generously than what? — **Essays**

86. What do averages fail to reveal, per the author? — **Who improved, and by how much**

87. In which schools might the ban have 'changed little'? — **Those already restricting phones informally**

88. What, per the author, is shared in a classroom? — **Attention**

89. Name one disturbance from a phone that pulls at classmates. — **The glow, the buzz or suppressed laughter**

90. What must the teacher do instead of teaching, when phones intrude? — **Police the class**

91. A phone in class is less like a private distraction than like what? — **Noise**

92. For whose sake may a school regulate noise? — **Everyone who must work in the room**

93. Does the author's better case depend on examination marks? — **No**

94. What can schools no longer point to under the author's argument? — **Marks, when defending the rule**

95. On what does the author's stronger argument rest? — **What teachers observe every day**

96. What can 'manufacture' a statistic, according to the author? — **A change of question paper**

97. In 'The Vote Already Counted', what is 'the whip'? — **The party's voting direction to members**