

Answer Key & Explanations

Academic Reading Paper 16 — Canals, Consonants and Pilots

Mark your answer sheet before you read this

HOW TO USE THIS

- Mark one point for each correct answer. Spelling must be correct.
- Convert your total with the band table on the next page.
- Then read the explanation for **every** question you got wrong, and for every one you guessed. The explanation names the mechanism the wrong answer was built on.

The band figure is an estimate. A real paper is pre-tested on thousands of candidates and these have not been, so read the band as a position, not a prediction.

Q	Answer	Code	Mechanism	Where
1	sea-level / sea level	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Paragraph 2.
2	storm	E2	Answer sits after its own distractor	Paragraph 2.
3	air	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Paragraph 3.
4	ants	F4	Prose re-sorted into a table; column order $\neq$ passage order	Paragraph 3.
5	two / 2	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Paragraph 5.
6	six hundred / 600	D1	Statement moved from another paragraph	Paragraph 7.
7	TRUE	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Paragraph 2.
8	FALSE	A1	Quantity re-attached to another noun	Paragraph 4.
9	FALSE	A7	Time relation reversed	Paragraph 5.
10	NOT GIVEN	B2	Adjacent proposition on the same subject	Paragraph 5.
11	TRUE	C1	Overstatement — hedge removed	Paragraph 6.
12	FALSE	A3	Category swap inside a pair the passage keeps apart	Paragraph 7.
13	NOT GIVEN	B3	Superlative moved to another dimension	Paragraph 7.
14	H	F1	Answers out of order + repeats allowed	Section H.
15	C	D1	Statement moved from another paragraph	Section C.
16	F	F1	Answers out of order + repeats allowed	Section F.
17	D	F1	Answers out of order + repeats allowed	Section D.
18	G	D2	Intermediate actor named beside the originator	Section G.
19	A	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Section B.
20	B	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Section C.

Q	Answer	Code	Mechanism	Where
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21	C	D2	Intermediate actor named beside the originator	Section F.
22	B	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Section D.
23	A	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Section C.
24	C	E1	Synonym substitution, passage keyword parked on a decoy	Section F.
25	F	E4	Minimal-pair options	Section G.
26	G	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Section D.
27	NO	C2	The extreme version the writer explicitly refused	Paragraph 1.
28	NO	C2	The extreme version the writer explicitly refused	Paragraph 5.
29	NOT GIVEN	B2	Adjacent proposition on the same subject	Paragraph 7.
30	YES	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Paragraph 7.
31	NOT GIVEN	B2	Adjacent proposition on the same subject	Paragraph 4.
32	A	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Paragraph 2.
33	B	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Paragraph 3.
34	C	C2	The extreme version the writer explicitly refused	Paragraph 4.
35	D	D1	Statement moved from another paragraph	Paragraph 6.
36	E	R	Straight retrieval — no trap	Paragraph 7.
37	A	A1	Quantity re-attached to another noun	Paragraph 3.
38	B	D1	Statement moved from another paragraph	Paragraph 4.
39	B	C1	Overstatement — hedge removed	Paragraph 5.
40	A	C2	The extreme version the writer explicitly refused	Paragraph 8.

Score to band

Raw score out of 40	Estimated band
39–40	9
37–38	8.5
35–36	8
33–34	7.5
30–32	7
27–29	6.5
23–26	6
19–22	5.5
15–18	5
13–14	4.5
10–12	4
8–9	3.5
6–7	3
4–5	2.5

Questions 1–6

1 **sea-level / sea level** · Paragraph 2.

'straight through from ocean to ocean with no locks' — the passage's term is a **sea-level** cut. Suez is where the model came from, not the answer.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

2 **storm** · Paragraph 2.

'rises many metres in a single **storm**'.

Mechanism E2 — Answer sits after its own distractor

3 **air** · Paragraph 3.

'believed to come from bad **air** rising off wet ground'.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

4 **ants** · Paragraph 3.

'to stop **ants** climbing into them'. The mosquitoes in the next sentence are the consequence, not the reason.

Mechanism F4 — Prose re-sorted into a table; column order ≠ passage order

5 **two / 2** · Paragraph 5.

'disappeared from the isthmus within about **two** years'.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

6 **six hundred / 600** · Paragraph 7.

'about five thousand **six hundred**'. The French figure sits in the first paragraph and is the number most readers carry.

Mechanism D1 — Statement moved from another paragraph

Questions 7–13

7 **TRUE** · Paragraph 2.

'Engineers on the ground said so. The design was not changed.'

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

8 **FALSE** · Paragraph 4.

He published in 1881, 'the same year the digging began'. Nineteen years is how long the idea was ignored before Reed tested it.

Mechanism A1 — Quantity re-attached to another noun

9 FALSE · Paragraph 5.

Malaria 'was greatly reduced and never eliminated', because its mosquito breeds in a wider range of places.

Mechanism A7 — Time relation reversed

10 NOT GIVEN · Paragraph 5.

The passage says he had run the campaign in Havana. Whether he had any earlier experience of Panama is never stated — a fact sitting immediately beside one you are given.

Mechanism B2 — Adjacent proposition on the same subject

11 TRUE · Paragraph 6.

'Damming the river turned the principal obstacle into the principal asset.'

Mechanism C1 — Overstatement — hedge removed

12 FALSE · Paragraph 7.

'the total volume removed went on rising long after the engineers had stopped predicting it'.

Mechanism A3 — Category swap inside a pair the passage keeps apart

13 NOT GIVEN · Paragraph 7.

The passage says the section stayed hard, describes years of landslides, and says the volume removed kept rising. Cost is never mentioned, and difficulty is not a statement about money.

Mechanism B3 — Superlative moved to another dimension

Questions 14–18

14 H · Section H.

'It is not that recordings are harmful, and it is not that screen time in itself explains anything.'

Matching information does not run in text order.

Mechanism F1 — Answers out of order + repeats allowed

15 C · Section C.

A hearer must treat many productions of a vowel as one vowel, 'and the price of that ability is being unable to hear the differences'. Section A calls the loss a beginning of competence but does not say why.

Mechanism D1 — Statement moved from another paragraph

16 F · Section F.

The synthesised syllable stream in the Saffran experiment.

Mechanism F1 — Answers out of order + repeats allowed

17 D · Section D.

The live-tutor group ended at a level indistinguishable from infants raised in Taiwan.

Mechanism F1 — Answers out of order + repeats allowed

18 G · Section G.

'which is why the second result does not simply cancel the first'. Section F opens by saying the tutoring result is not the whole story, which is a different claim; only G says the two findings stand together.

Mechanism D2 — Intermediate actor named beside the originator

Questions 19–22

19 A · Section B.

Six to eight months against ten to twelve.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

20 B · Section C.

Kuhl's magnet account.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

21 C · Section F.

Two minutes of a synthesised stream with no pauses. Kuhl is the tempting answer because her tutoring study is the one about exposure to a new language, but the probabilities result is not hers.

Mechanism D2 — Intermediate actor named beside the originator

22 B · Section D.

The video and audio conditions gave 'the same result as infants who had heard no Mandarin'.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

Questions 23–26

23 A · Section C.

'Exposure to a language builds **categories**.' *Vocabulary* is what a reader supplies from general knowledge of what infants learn.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

24 C · Section F.

'They had extracted word-like units from nothing but the **probabilities**.' *Repetition* is offered because the passage does say the sequences recurred — true, but not what the sentence is asking for.

Mechanism E1 — Synonym substitution, passage keyword parked on a decoy

25 F · Section G.

'the two results describe a **learner** rather than a recorder'. *Recorder* is offered because it is in the same sentence — as the thing the infant is not.

Mechanism E4 — Minimal-pair options

26 G · Section D.

'The infants with the live **tutor** kept their sensitivity'. The word is in the passage. *Recorder* is the decoy: it sits one sentence away from the answer to 25 and looks like the natural opposite of what is wanted.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

Questions 27–31

27 NO · Paragraph 1.

'Both happen. Neither is the main thing.' The first paragraph names the two usual explanations in order to set them aside.

Mechanism C2 — The extreme version the writer explicitly refused

28 NO · Paragraph 5.

'none of this is an argument against piloting. The alternative to a pilot is a national rollout based on a hunch, and the record of that is far worse.'

Mechanism C2 — The extreme version the writer explicitly refused

29 NOT GIVEN · Paragraph 7.

Funders are mentioned as people who treat a null result as a failure. Who pays for large evaluations is never stated.

Mechanism B2 — Adjacent proposition on the same subject

30 YES · Paragraph 7.

'a null result at scale is a genuine finding about the world'.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

31 NOT GIVEN · Paragraph 4.

Tutoring appears as one of two examples of a size effect, alongside job placement. No claim about which case is clearest is made.

Mechanism B2 — Adjacent proposition on the same subject

Questions 32–36

32 A · Paragraph 2.

'the ones that volunteer tend to be better organised and more interested'.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

33 B · Paragraph 3.

'A small study needs a large apparent effect to reach significance at all', and those are the ones that get published.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

34 C · Paragraph 4.

'may be moving them up a queue rather than creating jobs'. Ending H is the explanation the passage sets aside in its first paragraph.

Mechanism C2 — The extreme version the writer explicitly refused

35 D · Paragraph 6.

'the thing being tested is not the idea but the idea as operated by somebody who has read a manual'.

Mechanism D1 — Statement moved from another paragraph

36 E · Paragraph 7.

'which is information that the alternative ... never produces'. Ending F is nowhere in the passage, which explicitly says nobody is cheating.

Mechanism R — Straight retrieval — no trap

Questions 37–40

37 A · Paragraph 3.

'which will be read as the programme failing when it is the first estimate correcting itself'. B is one of the two explanations the passage sets aside, and it is offered because it is the one readers arrive with.

Mechanism A1 — Quantity re-attached to another noun

38 B · Paragraph 4.

At forty districts the scheme is 'hiring from a different part of the distribution' — a consequence of size. C overstates it into a claim about tutoring itself.

Mechanism D1 — Statement moved from another paragraph

39 B · Paragraph 5.

'a pilot answers the question of whether an intervention *can* work under favourable conditions, and that this is a different question from whether it *will* work under ordinary ones'. A is the other half of the distinction.

Mechanism C1 — Overstatement — hedge removed

40 A · Paragraph 8.

Stated in the final paragraph. C is refused in paragraph 5 and B does not follow from an argument that large nulls and small positives are both informative.

Mechanism C2 — The extreme version the writer explicitly refused