Commonly Confused Words – Test 1

Name: Class: Date: Score: / 30

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Choose the best option (A, B, C or D) for each question.

Part 1: Everyday word pairs

Choose the word that correctly completes each sentence.

1. The new rules will _____ everyone who works in the building.
   A effect **B** infect **C** affect **D** effort

2. Could you _____ me your charger for an hour? Mine is at home.
   A borrow **B** owe **C** rent **D** lend

3. These jeans are too _____ — I need a belt.
   A loose **B** lose **C** loss **D** lost

4. Prices tend to _____ during the summer holidays.
   A raise **B** arise **C** rise **D** rose

5. If you feel tired, go and _____ down for a while.
   A lay **B** lie **C** laid **D** lain

6. My sister gave me some excellent _____ about choosing a university.
   A advise **B** advices **C** adviser **D** advice

7. The car was _____ at the traffic lights when the bike hit it.
   A stationery **B** stationed **C** stationary **D** station

8. She finished her homework and _____ went out with her friends.
   A then **B** than **C** them **D** that

9. We need to leave now — _____ going to miss the train.
   A their **B** there **C** there's **D** they're

10. _____ being a talented musician, Amira is also a brilliant cook.
    A Beside **B** Besides **C** Except **D** Despite

Part 2: Meaning, collocation and correct usage

Choose the correct word, sentence or meaning, or find the word used incorrectly.

11. Small cars are usually more _____ to run than large ones.
    A economic **B** economics **C** economy **D** economical

12. Jonas is very _____; he gets upset if anyone criticises his work.
    A sensitive **B** sensible **C** sensational **D** sensory

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13. Which sentence is correct?
    A Someone robbed my bike from outside the library.
    B Someone robbed me my bike from outside the library.
    C Someone stole my bike from outside the library.
    D Someone stole me of my bike from outside the library.

14. The _____ reason I moved here was to be closer to my family.
    A principle **B** principal **C** principality **D** principled

15. Thank you for the _____ — it's nice to hear that you liked my presentation.
    A complement **B** complementary **C** compliment **D** complimentary

16. Please _____ that all the windows are closed before you leave.
    A assure **B** insure **C** reassure **D** ensure

17. "The museum is housed in a historic building." What does 'historic' mean here?
    A connected with the study of history **B** very old-fashioned
    C important in history **D** recently restored

18. Find the word used incorrectly: "Please remember me to call the dentist tomorrow morning."
    A Please **B** remember **C** call **D** morning

19. Which sentence is correct?
    A Could you say me how this machine works?
    B Could you tell to me how this machine works?
    C Could you explain me how this machine works?
    D Could you explain to me how this machine works?

20. The new heating system is more _____: it uses less energy to heat the same space.
    A efficient **B** effective **C** sufficient **D** proficient

Part 3: Confused words in context

Read the text and choose the best word for each numbered gap.

Moving to a New City

When Lena accepted a job in a city three hundred kilometres from home, she knew it would have a big (21) ___ on her life. The first weeks were harder than she had imagined. Her flat was small, and the rent was so high that she had to (22) ___ money from her brother to pay the deposit.

At work, things went better. Her manager gave her some (23) ___ advice: 'Don't try to do everything at once.' Lena found it difficult to follow at first, because she had always been someone who worked late and (24) ___ took breaks.

She also made an effort to meet people. She joined a running club, and (25) ___ a few weeks she had a small group of friends. One of them, Kofi, offered to show her around the (26) ___ centre of the city, which dates back to the twelfth century.

Of course, there were some (27) ___ moments. Once she fell asleep on the train, missed her stop and had to ask a stranger for directions in the rain. But (28) ___ she felt more confident. She no longer felt like a stranger; the streets had become (29) ___ to her.

Six months later, Lena's mother came to visit. 'You seem so much happier,' she said. Lena smiled. 'I never expected to feel so (30) ___ here.'

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21. (21) She knew it would have a big _____ on her life.
A affect **B** effort **C** effect **D** efficient

22. (22) She had to _____ money from her brother to pay the deposit.
A lend **B** borrow **C** loan **D** owe

23. (23) Her manager gave her some _____ advice.
A sensitive **B** sensibly **C** sense **D** sensible

24. (24) She had always been someone who worked late and _____ took breaks.
A hard **B** hardly ever **C** harder **D** hardest

25. (25) She joined a running club, and _____ a few weeks she had a small group of friends.
A during **B** while **C** within **D** among

26. (26) Kofi offered to show her around the _____ centre of the city.
A historic **B** historical **C** history **D** historian

27. (27) Of course, there were some _____ moments.
A embarrassed **B** embarrassing **C** embarrass **D** embarrassment

28. (28) But _____ she felt more confident.
A actually **B** lately **C** possibly **D** eventually

29. (29) The streets had become _____ to her.
A familiar **B** family **C** familiarly **D** familiarity

30. (30) 'I never expected to feel so _____ here.'
A comfort **B** comfortably **C** comfortable **D** comforting

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Answer key – Commonly Confused Words – Test 1

1 C	2 D	3 A	4 C	5 B	6 D	7 C	8 A	9 D	10 B
11 D	12 A	13 C	14 B	15 C	16 D	17 C	18 B	19 D	20 A
21 C	22 B	23 D	24 B	25 C	26 A	27 B	28 D	29 A	30 C

Explanations

1. **C** – 'Affect' is the verb meaning 'to have an influence on'; 'effect' is usually a noun.
2. **D** – You 'lend' something to someone; you 'borrow' something from someone.
3. **A** – 'Loose' is an adjective meaning 'not tight'; 'lose' is a verb.
4. **C** – 'Rise' has no object (prices rise); 'raise' needs an object (they raise prices).
5. **B** – 'Lie down' means to rest in a flat position; 'lay' needs an object.
6. **D** – 'Advice' is an uncountable noun; 'advise' is the verb.
7. **C** – 'Stationary' means 'not moving'; 'stationery' means paper, pens and similar items.
8. **A** – 'Then' refers to time or sequence; 'than' is used in comparisons.
9. **D** – 'They're' is the short form of 'they are', which fits before 'going to'.
10. **B** – 'Besides' means 'in addition to'; 'beside' means 'next to'.
11. **D** – 'Economical' means 'not using much money or fuel'; 'economic' relates to the economy.
12. **A** – 'Sensitive' means 'easily upset'; 'sensible' means 'practical and reasonable'.
13. **C** – You 'steal' a thing; you 'rob' a person or place (of something).
14. **B** – 'Principal' as an adjective means 'main'; a 'principle' is a rule or belief.
15. **C** – A 'compliment' is something nice said about someone; a 'complement' is something that completes or goes well with another thing.
16. **D** – 'Ensure' means 'make certain'; 'assure' and 'reassure' are about telling people something to remove doubt, and 'insure' is about insurance.
17. **C** – 'Historic' describes something famous or important in history; 'historical' relates to the study of history or the past.
18. **B** – To make someone remember something you 'remind' them: 'Please remind me to call…'.
19. **D** – We say 'explain (something) to someone' and 'tell someone', but never 'explain me' or 'say me'.
20. **A** – 'Efficient' means getting results without wasting energy or time; 'effective' simply means producing the desired result.
21. **C** – The noun 'effect' is used in the collocation 'have an effect on'.
22. **B** – You 'borrow' something from someone; her brother lends it to her.
23. **D** – 'Sensible advice' is practical and wise advice; an adjective is needed before the noun.
24. **B** – 'Hardly ever' means 'almost never'; 'hard' is an adjective or an adverb meaning 'with effort'.
25. **C** – 'Within a few weeks' means 'before a few weeks had passed'; 'during' needs a specific period and 'while' needs a clause.
26. **A** – 'Historic centre' is the standard collocation for the old, historically important part of a city.
27. **B** – '-ing' adjectives describe the thing that causes the feeling; Lena felt embarrassed, but the moments were embarrassing.
28. **D** – 'Eventually' means 'in the end, after some time'; 'actually' means 'in fact', not 'finally'.
29. **A** – After 'become' we need the adjective 'familiar' (well known to someone).
30. **C** – After 'feel' we need an adjective describing the person, so the answer is 'comfortable'; 'comforting' describes something that makes others feel better.

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Notes for teachers: Use this test as a diagnostic before a vocabulary unit or as a review after one. Each answer key explanation names the distinction being tested, so the explanations are useful for feedback. Part 1 covers high-frequency pairs (lend/borrow, lie/lay, loose/lose), Part 2 covers B2 adjective pairs and verb patterns (economical, sensitive, explain to someone), and Part 3 tests the words in a connected text. For follow-up, ask students to write their own example sentences for the pairs they got wrong, or to keep a personal list of confused words.

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