

## Check your ALCE Grammar Skills: Activity 2

### Key and item analysis

---

#### Question 1

If Japan's and Europe's markets \_\_\_\_\_, the US trade deficit would be reduced.

- A. had started the rapid growth
- B. would have started rapidly growing
- C. were to start growing rapidly
- D. have started rapidly to grow

#### ANSWER KEY

C.

#### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

#### ITEM INFORMATION

C fits the gap because it is a hypothetical sentence referring to the present and is a variation of conditional 2 – was/were + full infinitive. A needs 'of' + an object and refers to a past action, B is a result clause of conditional 3 referring to the past, while D would form part of conditional 1, referring to the future or a general truth. Therefore, C is the correct answer choice.

---

#### Question 2

The foundation \_\_\_\_\_ his argument is built is faulty at best.

- A. over which
- B. which is
- C. upon which
- D. where in

#### ANSWER KEY

C.

#### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

More challenging

#### ITEM INFORMATION

C fits the gap because it forms part of a noun phrase made from 'his argument is built upon a foundation which...' An argument cannot be built 'over' a foundation, so A contains an incorrect preposition. B would mean that the foundation *is* his argument. D contains 'in' which would mean 'his argument is built in a foundation' which does not collocate. Therefore, C is the correct answer choice.

---

### Question 3

\_\_\_\_\_ of the outcome of the merger, this company will continue to operate.

- A. Regarding
- B. With regard
- C. Regardless
- D. To regard

#### ANSWER KEY

C.

#### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

#### ITEM INFORMATION

C fits the gap because 'regardless' is followed by the preposition 'of'. A contains 'regarding' which is followed by a noun or noun phrase; B contains 'with regard' which is followed by the preposition 'to'; while D contains 'to regard' which requires an object + 'as'. Therefore, C is the correct answer choice.

---

### Question 4

\_\_\_\_\_ BMW is a German car, it is also manufactured in American factories.

- A. Despite
- B. Although
- C. However
- D. Besides

#### ANSWER KEY

B.

#### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Less challenging

#### ITEM INFORMATION

B fits the gap because it contains 'although' which is followed by a clause. A and D would require a gerund; C would be followed by an adjective/adverb. Therefore, B is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 5

The chairperson, \_\_\_\_\_ the nomination for a second term in office, thanked her supporters.

- A. accepts
- B. accepted
- C. to accept
- D. accepting

### ANSWER KEY

D.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

### ITEM INFORMATION

D fits the gap because the sentence requires a non-defining relative clause between the two commas beginning with a present participle. A and B would contain main verbs without a subject, while C would mean 'in order to'. Therefore, D is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 6

Scientists have found a way for cooking oil \_\_\_\_\_ specially converted vehicles.

- A. powering
- B. powered
- C. to power
- D. to be powered by

### ANSWER KEY

C.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

More challenging

### ITEM INFORMATION

C fits the gap because the phrase 'find a way' is followed by a full infinitive. A and B would require a full infinitive after 'vehicles', while D would mean that vehicles would power cooking oil. Therefore, C is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 7

Future Corp announced \_\_\_\_\_ electronic skin for the robots of the future.

- A. but for its researchers'
- B. its researchers have invented
- C. that researchers inventing
- D. researchers' invention of

### ANSWER KEY

B.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

More challenging

### ITEM INFORMATION

B fits the gap because it forms a clause after 'announced' in which 'that' can be omitted, i.e. 'announced (that) its researchers...' A and C would require a main clause after 'future'; while D would require 'their' before 'researchers'. Therefore, B is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 8

The human populations in Africa \_\_\_\_\_ to make animal conservation a priority.

- A. are not too prosperous yet
- B. are not yet prosperous enough
- C. not yet have enough prosperity
- D. not having prosperity yet

### ANSWER KEY

B.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

### ITEM INFORMATION

B fits the gap because the sentence requires a main verb and of the two choices, A and B, B has the correct meaning of 'insufficiently', whereas A contains 'too' which implies an undesirable surplus. C contains a main verb, but would need the auxiliary 'do', while D does not contain a main verb. Therefore, B is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 9

Studies have shown that \_\_\_\_\_ to pesticides can cause Parkinson's disease.

- A. high exposure
- B. exposed highly
- C. being exposed highly
- D. highly exposing

### ANSWER KEY

A.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

### ITEM INFORMATION

A fits the gap because the noun phrase ' \_ to pesticides' requires a noun, but C needs to be immediately followed by a verb in a present or past tense, e.g. '...highly increases the risk of', etc. D requires an object and B does not contain a noun. Therefore, A is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 10

Researchers would have been granted more funds \_\_\_\_\_ more media attention.

- A. had their experiments received
- B. their experiments had received
- C. having received the experiments
- D. receiving the experiments

### ANSWER KEY

A.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

### ITEM INFORMATION

A fits the gap because it is an inverted form of 'if their experiments had received'. None of the other answer choices express a conditional. Therefore, A is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 11

\_\_\_\_\_ affected in so many countries by such a deadly form of bird flu.

- A. Never before have poultry been
- B. Poultry never before have
- C. Have poultry ever before
- D. Poultry have not ever before

### ANSWER KEY

A.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

### ITEM INFORMATION

A fits the gap because it is the correct form of an inversion after 'never' and forms the present perfect tense in the passive voice. B and D do not form the passive voice and the meaning is therefore incorrect for the sentence. C is a question form, but the sentence is not a question. Therefore, A is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 12

Nowadays, stem cell research \_\_\_\_\_ into one of the most promising technologies in history.

- A. grows
- B. has grown
- C. has been grown
- D. was growing

### ANSWER KEY

B.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

More challenging

### ITEM INFORMATION

B fits the gap because the sentence describes a process continuing into the present and so the present perfect is the appropriate tense. A contains the present simple and would describe a general truth, whereas the sentence contains 'nowadays' for something current. D is not correct for the same reason that it does not describe a current process. C is the passive voice and is not appropriate for the meaning of the sentence. Therefore, B is the correct answer choice.

---

### Question 13

A not-for-profit enterprise is pioneering new ways \_\_\_\_\_ to help underdeveloped countries.

- A. of developing drugs
- B. of drugs developed
- C. for drugs developed
- D. for drugs to be developing

#### ANSWER KEY

A.

#### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Less challenging

#### ITEM INFORMATION

A fits the gap because 'ways' is followed by 'of' + gerund. Although 'ways can also be followed by 'for' + object, D would require the passive voice, while C requires that 'drugs developed to help underdeveloped countries' should be followed by a full infinitive, e.g. *to be sold more cheaply*. Therefore, A is the correct answer choice.

---

### Question 14

Geologists have produced evidence of life on earth from a period when others say \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. ice covered the entire planet
- B. ice is covering the planet entirely
- C. ice could cover the entire planet
- D. the planet covered entirely by ice

#### ANSWER KEY

A.

#### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

More challenging

#### ITEM INFORMATION

A fits the gap because the sentence refers to a specific time in the past and A contains the simple past. B refers to the present, C refers to a hypothetical time in the present/future, and D contains no main verb. Therefore, A is the correct answer choice.

---

## Question 15

Bankruptcy rates in the US have been growing \_\_\_\_\_ levels of personal income.

- A. despite generally rising
- B. which generally rises the
- C. but generally rises the
- D. with generally rising

### ANSWER KEY

A.

### LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Medium

### ITEM INFORMATION

A fits the gap because the use of despite shows a contrast between the increase in bankruptcy rates and rising levels of personal income, with 'rising' an adjective of 'levels'. B and C contain the verb 'rise' which does not take an object and would not fit the meaning of the sentence, while D would imply a link between increasing bankruptcy rates and rising levels of personal incomes, something which is not a logical meaning. Therefore, A is the correct answer choice.

---