

Would you have marked it wrong?

The candidate wrote:

1. His father presented *him* a lathe.
2. When Henry was a boy he did not attend school very *much*.
3. Scarcely had they marched a few miles when fierce gales *sprang up*.
4. Would you be so kind *and* read it through again.
5. One day his *small* sister came to him.
6. One day his sister begged him to write her name *into* a book.
7. I drank to my heart's content and the refreshment *seemed divine to me*.
8. *Practically* it means that I am going to have two workshops instead of one.
9. The Hargreaves could not think to *be* without Old Elizabeth.
10. When he was thirty years old he had enough money *for a comfortable life*.
11. So far he had made his career *due to* his father's assistance.
12. I cannot afford to wait *longer*.

The examiner corrected:

... *him with a lathe*.

... *often*.

... *began to rage*.

... *as to ...*

... *little ...*

... *in ...*

... *seemed to me divine*.

In practice ...

... *of being ...*

... *to live in comfort*.

... *owing to ...*

... *any longer*.

Would you have marked it wrong? Schlüssel

Vergleiche Seite 68.

1. His father presented *him a lathe*. ... *him with a lathe*.

The examiner is correct. After "present", in the sense of "make s. o. a gift" or "bring into the presence of", you may find the direct and indirect objects in either position, e. g. "His father presented a lathe to him" and "... him with a lathe"; and in the latter case, "with" is normal. (Cf. also "His father presented the evidence to him" / "... him with the evidence".) I have heard the "with" omitted, but this is rare, and should not be recommended because of possible ambiguity.

2. When Henry was a boy he did not attend school *very much*. ... *often*.

There is nothing grammatically wrong with the candidate's version, but the meaning is slightly different. "Much" means basically "to a great extent"; in one of its senses it takes on the idea of frequency, and here "often" could be used. But one doesn't have to emphasise the idea of frequency of occurrence in summarising a period of time; and the candidate's sentence thus simply means – "taking the period as a whole, a relatively small proportion of time was spent in school".

3. Scarcely had they marched a few miles when fierce gales *sprang up*. ... *began to rage*.

Both versions are correct. The sentences mean different things, of course. (Incidentally, one should note a stylistic difference in the use of "scarcely": initial position is normal for dramatic narrative; but for conversation, it would be more normal to put the adverb before the verb, viz. "They had scarcely marched ...")

4. Would you be so kind *and* read it through again. ... *as to* ...

The candidate has mixed up two constructions here. Both the following sentences are acceptable – though the first is rather formal (it might be an extremely – almost artificially – polite request or command), and the second is extremely colloquial. "Would you be so kind as to read it through again"; "Would you be kind and read it through again".

5. One day his *small* sister came to him. ... *little* ...

"Small" and "little" are sometimes interchangeable in English, but there is often an implied difference in meaning. "Small" usually applies to objects whose magnitude is seen in terms of quantity, number, size, value, capacity, or significance (e. g. "small audience", "this room is a small size", "you have a small mind"). "Little" is usually more absolute than this, often carrying with it the

idea of tininess, or insignificance, either literally or figuratively (e. g. "he's a little man", "You are a little girl, aren't you"). The two words may overlap in meaning, however. In the present case, "little sister" can only mean "younger sister" – it could be said by a 25 year-old man about his 6 foot, 23 year-old sister, for instance (with humorous effect intended, of course); "small sister" *could* also mean "younger sister", but its quantitative implications would also suggest an interpretation of "small in stature". One can see this more clearly by adding "dear": "this is my dear little sister" vs. "this is my dear small sister" – the latter would be extremely rude (implying stunted physical growth, or unimportance). But I do *not* want to suggest that the candidate is wrong: the context would generally make it clear that the "neutral" sense of "small" was intended.

6. One day his sister begged him to write her name *into* a book. ... *in* ...

You *can* write someone into something, in the general sense of "develop through one's skill in writing", e. g. "X has written the working-class character into his plays in a new way", "Y has written himself into fame and fortune". But I don't think this is what the candidate intended here.

7. I drank to my heart's content and the refreshment *seemed divine to me*. ... *seemed to me divine*.

This is a purely stylistic difference. The examiner's version is probably more in keeping with the rather artificial, high-blown style of the sentence (it provides a more balanced rhythm, and ensures that the end of the sentence has an appropriate climax – the candidate's version is rather pathetic). But both are possible.

8. *Practically* it means that I am going to have two workshops instead of one. *In practice* ...

This is an elementary confusion of senses, as well as a syntactic error. "Practically" means "almost", and would normally be placed after "it" in the candidate's sentence. "In practice" means "in effect", and would normally occur initially. In the examiner's sentence, the man has got the equivalent of two workshops; in the candidate's, he hasn't.

9 The Hargreaves could not think *to be* without Old Elizabeth. ... *of being* ...

"Think" is a rather weak verb here –

"conceive" would be more appropriate. In either case, the examiner is correct.

10. When he was thirty years old he had enough money *for a comfortable life*. ... *to live in comfort*.

Both versions are possible, and mean the same. The examiner's version is slightly more idiomatic.

11. So far he had made his career *due to* his father's assistance. ... *owing to* ...

This is a long-standing shibboleth of English grammar. Grammarians have attempted to distinguish rigidly between the two in usage, prescribing when to use the one and not the other. The grounds for their doing so are however highly dubious. It is claimed that as "due" is an adjective, then it should not be allowed to introduce adverbial phrases of this kind. But *is* "due" an adjective? It hardly seems very adjective-like in its syntactic behaviour! Taking the sentence "His absence is due to illness", we cannot derive other sentences from this (such as *should* be possible if the word is like the vast majority of English adjectives): * "His absence is due to illness", * "His absence is very due to illness", or * "His absence is due" (not in the *same* sense of "due"). Whatever its origins in the history of English, we have to argue that nowadays, "due to" functions as an idiomatic unit, capable of being used as a preposition. In current English, therefore, you will find both "due to" and "owing to" being used interchangeably by many people; and I think there is little to be gained by forcing a largely unnecessary rule onto students. (There is of course a great deal to be lost – namely, confidence in one's usage. This even affects native speakers, some of whom are so worried by the thought that people might criticise them for making a "mistake" that they go out of their way to avoid using either of the above so that they don't have to make a choice – they would substitute "thanks to" or "because of" in the above example.)

12. I cannot afford to wait *longer*. ... *any longer*.

The examiner is correct. "Longer" on its own is literary or archaic, and would hardly be used in conversational English, unless one were deliberately trying to produce a "dramatic" effect.

DAVID CRYSTAL

Would you have marked it wrong?

The candidate wrote:

1. But *in spite of loving* my school as sincerely as the others did, ...
2. It is a bit too difficult *to translate* some sentences *fluently* you have never seen before.
3. Some modern writers *speak* in their reminiscences *about* school that they ...
4. As I was young, I often saw in my dreams boys playing soccer.
5. When she was a young girl, she *had had* a dangerous scarlet fever.
6. George was very glad about the privilege *to take* care of the frail and delicate woman.
7. He was sitting *in* a chair.
8. Of course the population of our school was *no* collection of saints.
9. I had only reached the first step, but *how could* I reach the second one?

The examiner corrected:

... *though I loved* ...

... *to fluently translate* ...

... *say ... of* ...

When ...

... *had been dangerously ill with* ...

... *of taking* ...

... *on* ...

... *not a* ...

... *how to* ...

Die Besprechung der einzelnen Punkte erfolgt auf Seite 215.

Would you have marked it wrong? Schlüssel

Vergleiche Seite 200.

1. But *in spite of* loving my school as sincerely as the others did ... *though I loved* ...

Both versions are possible. "In spite of" and "though" can be synonymous, but there is usually a marked difference in emphasis implied, the former allowing a more *intense* interpretation than the latter: it implies opposition in the face of adverse circumstances, whereas "though" often means no more than "while".

2. It is a bit too difficult to *translate* some sentences *fluently* you have never seen before. ... *to fluently translate* ...

The normal position for adverbials is at the end of the sentence, i. e., "It is difficult to translate sentences fluently". The problem arises when the object is postmodified using a relative clause, as this provides another verb which any final adverb might mistakenly be related to, e. g. "John has been questioning the man you spoke to thoroughly" – here we cannot be certain whether the thoroughness applies to the "questioning" or the "speaking". Now in the present sentence, there is no ambiguity, because you cannot see *fluently*; hence, "It is difficult to translate sentences you have never seen before fluently" would cause no problem, and it will be heard. However, many people, aware of the possibility of structural ambiguity arising in such cases, try to avoid the final position for the adverb. Where else can it go, then? The obvious place to put it is in the position which it would have held if the relative clause had not been there, as in the candidate's version; but inserting the adverb into the middle of the structure of the noun phrase is very awkward. However, the alternatives have problems too. If the adverb is attached to the verb, and placed within the infinitival construction (which is what the examiner has done), then this produces a nicely colloquial alternative, but you run the risk of being criticised by the pedantic for "splitting the infinitive" (though I should emphasise that infinitive-splitting is a very common process in conversational English these days, as Jespersen long ago pointed out). Putting the adverb either before or after the infinitive provides further possibilities, but in both cases, the result is distinctly stilted.

Other oddities in the candidate's version: "a bit" is an oddly colloquial choice for a (presumably) serious discussion, and I would prefer to see the whole construction "a bit too" replaced by "extremely", or some such intensifier; "some" is also unnecessary, unless a particular contrast is intended.

3. Some modern writers *speak* in their reminiscences *about* school that they ... *say* ... *of* ...

Both "speak" and "say" are possible. "Of" is a much more literary locution than "about".

4. As I was young, I often saw in my dreams boys playing soccer. *When* ...

Both versions are possible; it depends what was meant. The candidate's version can only mean "since" or "because" in this context.

5. When she was a young girl, she *had had* a dangerous scarlet fever. ... *had been dangerously ill with* ...

There is nothing syntactically wrong with the candidate's version. "Had had" is perhaps a little awkward, and is rather weak to indicate possession of a dangerous thing like a fever; but the usage is quite possible, as is the examiner's.

6. George was very glad about the privilege to *take care* of the frail and delicate woman. ... *of taking* ...

The crux of this problem is the word "glad". After "glad", the normal preposition is "of", with either form of the verb being used (cf. "I was very glad of the chance to do it/of doing it"). But one cannot have "George was very glad of the privilege to take care of the woman"; and "... of taking care of the woman" is unlikely. The reason seems to be due to the incongruity of the semantic juxtaposition of "glad" and "privilege". It is not the fact of there being a privilege which is making George glad, it is rather the fact that he has been granted the privilege. Consequently one needs to insert extra information into the sentence to avoid the incongruity, as in "George was very glad to have (or that he had ...) the privilege of taking care ...". "About" is often used as a colloquial alternative for "of" (as we have seen in sentence 3 above), so one *might* hear "George was very glad about the privilege of taking care ...", but this would be rather imprecise, and it sounds odd to a sensitive ear.

7. He was sitting *in* a chair. . . . *on* . . .

Both are possible; but to sit *in* a chair, you must in some measure be surrounded by it. Minimally, it must have arms.

8. Of course the population of our school was *no* collection of saints. . . . *not a* . . .

The distinction between "not a" and "no" in this kind of sentence is very subtle, and I should be surprised if the candidate intended it; but his version *is* possible. In the two utterances "I can't tell you; I'm not a chemist" and "I can't tell you; I'm no chemist", there is a nuance in the latter which is totally lacking in the former, but it is very difficult to define this precisely. Assuming the same intonation pattern for both, then the two utterances are both quite emphatic, but the former is more a serious statement of fact, whereas the latter implies a less serious – almost a jocular – attitude on the part of the speaker. An example like "He's not a coward", as opposed to "He's no coward" again displays a "softening" of the seriousness of the speaker's attitude in the latter case. In other

words, the use of "no" here produces a more informal attitude for expressing emphatic negation, and it is frequently to be heard in everyday conversation. (Incidentally, are readers familiar with the idiom "no great shakes", as in "He's no great shakes as a musician"? This means "He's not very good as a musician", and it is not possible in this case to substitute "not a".)

9. I had only reached the first step, but *how could I* reach the second one? . . . *how to* . . .

The candidate uses an odd tense-sequence in his sentence, which might be improved by (for instance) "how was I going to be able to reach . . ."; also, the use of "but" clashes semantically to some extent with the use of "only" in the preceding clause. The examiner's version sidesteps the tense issue, but produces a rather literary, rhetorical construction (which is used a lot in the expression of "stream of consciousness" literature, for example). I would not recommend its introduction early on in a course, as it is a structure which is frequently used in error by foreign students of English.

DAVID CRYSTAL

Would you have marked it wrong?

The candidate wrote:

1. Agincourt and the wars of the *ancient people* were of minor interest *than* the battle of the school playing in the Cup Final.
2. He is *very interested* in learning them (= the Latin and Greek languages).
3. On the other hand we should not forget that those actions of humanity cannot be anything else *but* a gesture towards a real humanity.
4. He did not give up playing golf because I *told him*, but for some other reason.
5. On the morning of the wedding Louise died gently forgiving Iris *that she had killed her*.
6. She was *older than forty* but she looked as if she was ...
7. And yet I felt no hostility or indifference *towards learning*.
8. Seldom was the treatment *of our masters* apt to alienate our loyalty to school.
9. *Next morning* he went to this street again.
10. Bruce *fixed me with his eyes*.
11. Nobody could hear me except the water-fowl which was living in the reed.
12. The valley was full of gray, *slow moving*, cloudlike mist.
13. *If I had, however*, the choice among *all schools* of the world, I would not hesitate a second to choose my own.
14. Will people one day be so intelligent *that they admit* that their own university is inferior to any other?
15. It was quite different *than nowadays*.

The examiner corrected:

... *ancients* ... compared with ...

... *very much interested* ...

... *than* ...

... *told him to* ...

... *for having killed her*.

... *over forty* ...

... *to learning* ...

... *by* ...

The next morning ...

... *fixed his eyes on me*.

... *were* ...

... *slowly* ...

However, if I had ... *all the schools* ...

... *as to* ...

... *from what it is* ...

Die Besprechung der einzelnen Punkte erfolgt auf Seite 330

Would you have marked it wrong? Schlüssel

Vergleiche Seite 260

1. Agincourt and the wars of the *ancient people* were of minor interest *than* the battle of the school playing in the Cup Final. ... *ancients* ... *compared with* ...

The candidate has conflated two distinct constructions here: "minor" needs to be followed by "compared with", and "than" would require to be preceded by "less".

More complex is the first correction. Two errors are involved, but the examiner has corrected only one of them. "The ... people" would mean "that specific community previously mentioned or understood", which is unlikely to be the sense intended; whereas a correction to "ancient peoples" would capture the presumably intended sense of

many, unspecified communities. But this would still contain an inappropriate adjective: "ancient" refers to the *remote* past (e. g. pre-historic times), far too distant for such wars to be linked with Agincourt, which is a relatively recent battle. The examiner's version does not avoid this incongruity. A possible, but rather literary alternative would be "peoples of old"; otherwise, a circumlocution is needed, e.g. "peoples of past centuries".

2. He is very interested in learning them (= the Latin and Greek languages). ... *very much* ...

Both versions are possible, the examiner's being rather more emphatic.

3. On the other hand we should not forget that those actions of humanity cannot be anything else but a gesture towards a real humanity. . . . *than* . . .

The basic sentence relevant to the point at issue is "The actions cannot be anything else but a gesture", and this is quite acceptable. A rather more formal way of putting this would be: "... anything (else) other than ..." I would not accept the examiner's version as it stands; but this is a very indeterminate corner of English, about which little is known, and I hesitate to deny the possibility of, say, such related sentences as "The actions can be nothing else than a gesture", or "This is nothing else than a fake" (where "else" = "more").

4. He did not give up playing golf because I *told him*, but for some other reason. . . . *told him* to . . .

Both versions are possible, but are very different in meaning. The examiner's version means that I instructed him to give up golf; the candidate's means that I gave him some information, not specified here (e.g. that his wife didn't like golf), and it was this which he ignored.

5. On the morning of the wedding, Louise died, gently forgiving Iris *that she had* killed her. . . . *for having* . . .

The examiner is correct. "Forgive" cannot take a "that"-construction.

6. She was *older than* forty, but she looked as if she was *over* . . .

The examiner's version is the normal one; but the candidate's is possible, particularly if a strongly contrastive sense is involved ("no, she was *older than* forty . . .").

7. And yet I felt no hostility or indifference *towards* learning. . . . *to* . . .

Both are possible. "Towards" is often used as a more specific preposition than "to", and is perhaps more likely to suggest an interpretation of the word following as a noun (= "scholarship") and not as a verb (= "act of learning"); but both are acceptable.

8. Seldom was the treatment of our masters apt to alienate our loyalty to school. . . . *by* . . .

The examiner is right to remove the ambiguity in the word "of" here. This is the "subjective"/"objective" distinction in the meaning of "of", well recognised in the literature, and illustrated by such phrases as "the love of God" (= for him from us, or from him to us). (In passing, one should note that "school", in this sense of institution with a particular

identity, would normally be preceded by the definite article.)

9. Next morning he went to this street again. *The next* . . .

Both are possible. Adding the article adds greater definiteness to the time, but the nuance is very slight.

10. Bruce *fixed me with his eyes* . . . *fixed his eyes on me*.

The meanings are different. The examiner's version is the more everyday, and is presumably the one intended, i.e. "he stared at me". The candidate's is rather more imaginative, i.e. "I was transfixed by his stare". But both are possible.

11. Nobody could hear me except the water-fowl which was living in the reeds. . . . *were* . . .

The question is, how many water-fowl heard him? "Fowl" is one of those nouns which may have an unchanged plural form (though a plural in -s is also available). Like "duck", and many others, the unchanged plural tends to be used as a stylistically restricted form (by "professionals", such as the game-keeper or the poulterer). Both versions, then, could be right.

12. The valley was full of gray, *slow moving*, cloudlike dust. . . . *slowly* . . .

"Slow-moving" (generally hyphenated) is a perfectly reasonable coinage as a compound adjective, which seems quite appropriate in this context. If an adverb is required, then it would have to be "slowly", in standard English.

13. *If I had, however*, the choice among *all schools* of the world, I would not hesitate a second to choose my own. *However, if I had* . . . *all the schools* . . .

The candidate's position for "however" makes it *extremely* emphatic, but it is possible. The examiner puts it in the expected position. It is also usual to find the article being used after "all" in this sense. And a more normal alternative to "of" would be "in".

14. Will people one day be so intelligent *that they* admit that their own university is inferior to any other? . . . *as to* . . .

After "so", both "that" and "as" constructions will be found in English, both with the meaning "to such a degree . . . that". However, when the intended meaning is specifically "with the particular consequence that . . ." (and especially when the preceding construction contains a negative), then "as to" is more likely. As

this sense of "particular consequence" seems to be the one intended here, I feel the examiner's version is better; but the candidate's version could be heard – assuming the verb were in the appropriate tense (i. e. "... that they will admit ..."). The value of the "that" construction, of course, is that it permits expression of pronoun, tense, etc. variation, which "as to" does not allow. There is no "as to" correlate of the following sentence, for instance: "The difficulties he encountered so weakened him that he never recovered" (unless one enters into an unwieldy circumlocution such as "as to deny him recovery").

15. It was quite different *than* nowadays.
... *from* ...

"Different" will these days be heard followed by "than" ("it was very different than it was

20 years ago"), "from" ("it was very different from what it was ..."), and "to" ("it was very different to what it was ..."). Prescriptive grammars usually insist on one's using "from" in all cases; they are strongly against "to", usually on the (irrelevant) grounds that "to" contradicts the underlying meaning of the historical prefix "dis-" (i. e. separation), whereas "from" reinforces it. Another reason given in favour of "from" is that this usage parallels that found in the verb "to differ from". The fact of the matter is that "to" is quite common in (especially colloquial) British English; it is less common in American English ("than" being more widely used there); but in both areas, "from" is generally felt (perhaps for the wrong reason!) to be the correct form.

DAVID CRYSTAL

Would you have marked it wrong?

The candidate wrote:

1. His teacher went as far as conscience allowed him *stressing* that his pupil would be succesful in writing legibly after some time.
2. In the initial passage there *stands* the sentence ...
3. She danced *up* to five o'clock in the morning.
4. He wanted her to have a very good time *the last few years* she had to live.
5. They would have no need *for fearing* him any longer.
6. One might think he *has* seen a ghost.
7. The trouble is how to *find out the public taste*.
8. *It is the question* if our world of foundering tradition ...
9. This contrast produced in him a feeling which he describes *with* being pulled two different ways.
10. I at once began to read the manuscript urged by the wish of *helping* him.
11. *Breathlessly* I paused.
12. The tall figure seemed to burst out *in* a loud laughter.
13. The strange apparition seemed to have *lost interest* in me.

The examiner corrected:

... *stressing the fact* ...

... *is* ...

... *till* ...

... *during the last few years* ...

... *to fear* ...

... *had* ...

... *find out about the public taste*.

The question is ...

... *as* ...

... *to help* ...

Out of my breath ...

... *into* ...

... *lost (all) its interest* ...

Would you have marked it wrong? Schlüssel

Vergleiche Seite 402.

1. His teacher went as far as conscience allowed him *stressing* that his pupil would be successful in writing legibly after some time. ... *stressing the fact* ...

The examiner's correction is not necessary, from the grammatical point of view. Introducing "the fact" simply places a particular emphasis on the clause which follows – namely, that the teacher views the pupil's success as being a fact. But he could have emphasised other things, and said "stressing the idea" or "stressing the point". A rather more important alteration to the candidate's sentence would be the omission of "him", which this particular construction does not require.

2. In the initial passage there *stands* the sentence. ... *is* ...

The examiner is right to correct: "stands" is laughable in this context. The stylistic context appropriate for "there stands" is usually a dramatic or poetic one (cf. the implication of permanence in "In the courtyard there stand the ruins of an old house"), and this is lacking here. (One should note, incidentally, that this is the unstressed use of "there".) Sometimes, when "stand" more literally refers to a person's vertical position, it can be used without any dramatic overtone (e.g. "I went into the shop, and there stood Mr. Jones", where "there was Mr. Jones" would give no indication as to whether he was upright or not); but in a metaphorical sense, as in the candidate's version, the melodrama is unavoidable.

3. She danced *up to* five o'clock in the morning. ... *till* ...

In colloquial speech, it is possible to hear "up to" being used with reference to time, and I suspect that this usage is on the increase; but usually the temporal relationship involved is expressed with "until" or "till", "up to" being used for locative quantities, where time-specific prepositions would be inappropriate (e.g. "I was up to my knees in paper"). I would thus recommend the examiner's version, as for many native speakers the candidate's sounds a little odd (as if "five o'clock" were a place somewhere!).

4. He wanted her to have a very good time *the last few years* she had to live. ... *during the last few years* ...

The examiner is correct. Colloquially it is sometimes possible to drop the temporal preposition from an adverbial phrase, especially initially in a sentence (e.g. "During these past months ...", "These past months, ..."). I do not know of any work which has been done on formulating the rules involved, however; and until a study is made, the safer usage is to keep the preposition in. The rules are not obvious. "During", for instance, is optional in the first of the two sentences following, but would rarely be omitted in the second: "I've seen him a lot (during) these past few years", "I've seen him a lot during the past few years".

5. They would have no need *for fearing* him any longer. ... *to fear* ...

The examiner is correct. When "need" is followed by a verb, the infinitive form is used.

6. One might think he *has* seen a ghost. ... *had* ...

A little more context would help, but as it stands this looks like a normal case of the need to maintain sequence of tenses, where "had" is the expected form. But it should be noted that when the "possibility" sense of "might" is being strongly emphasised, the candidate's sequence can be heard, as in "When you see him, you *might* think he's ill, but he isn't really".

7. The trouble is how to *find out* the public taste. ... *find out about* ...

The usual sense of "find out" is "discover something specific", often with the implication that some particular facts are being deliberately concealed. Thus "find out the result" is a definite instruction, with a clear conclusion envisaged. As soon as "about" is introduced, the sentence becomes much less specific: "find out about the results" simply requires that some information relevant to the issue should be gathered (which may of course include the actual results). In other words, the vaguer the notion being searched for, the more likely we will be to find "about" being used: and in the present case, the highly inspecific "public taste" makes its use very appropriate. The examiner is therefore correct. The candidate's version implies that there is some definite object, "the public taste", which it is the object of the exercise to discover, which is an unlikely interpretation.

8. *It is the question* if our world of foundering tradition ... *The question is* ...

The candidate is in error. He might have said, "This is the question: if ..."; but the examiner's version is undoubtedly the more everyday.

9. This contrast produced in him a feeling which he describes *with* being pulled two different ways. ... *as* ...

An elementary error has been made in the choice of preposition here.

10. I at once began to read the manuscript, urged by the wish *of helping* him. ... *to help* ...

In cases where a noun may be postmodified either by an *of* participial phrase or by an infinitive, the former usually implies past time. Compare, for instance, "He has the knowledge of helping him" with "He has the knowledge to help him". The former means that the helping has taken place, i. e. the knowledge is of an event. The latter means that the helping has yet to take place, i. e. the knowledge is of information. "Whish", in the present example, is clearly future orientated, and thus the "to" is appropriate.

11. *Breathlessly* I paused. *Out of my breath* ...

The sense of "breathlessly" as "in suspense, expectantly" is missed by the examiner in his correction, which can only mean "exhausted". Incidentally, the "my" in his version is omissible.

12. The tall figure seemed to burst out *in* a loud laughter. ... *into* ...

There are all sorts of strange things in the candidate's sentence. To begin with, "laughter" is usually used in an uncountable way, and in its normal sense would not permit the indefinite article. Also, "seem" is an odd verb here - there is surely no uncertainty over whether the tall figure has burst out into loud laughter or not! "Out" is redundant, and could be omitted. But the change of preposition is the main thing. The range of prepositions following "burst" is fairly restricted, and usually expresses direction. "Into" is extremely common, continuing the implication of forcefulness contained in the verb (cf. "burst into flame/bloom/song ...").

13. The strange apparition seemed to have *lost interest* in me. ... *lost (all) its interest* ... All three possibilities are acceptable. Introducing "its" causes no change of meaning.

DAVID CRYSTAL