Reading Year 10 — Practice Paper 1 — Answers & Explanations

Answers to the 16 questions in the free preview.

What the River Kept

1. C. Looking implies knowing what you are after, and the dredge took whatever was there

The narrator explains the distinction directly: "Looking implied you knew what you were after", whereas the dredge simply raised whatever the riverbed happened to hold.

2. A. conveying the sheer accumulated randomness of what came up

The clipped, unconnected fragments imitate objects arriving one after another with no relationship to each other, which is the point being made about the riverbed.

3. D. To undercut the one glamorous item in the list and keep the tone unromantic

The coin is the only find with any romance to it, and the clause immediately withdraws that romance — which keeps the passage from turning the work into an adventure.

4. B. give the fact the weight the list denied it

Everything before it is a run of objects in a single paragraph. Isolating this line refuses to let a human being sit in that list, and the pause forces the reader to register it.

5. B. That the story was really about the wallet, not the body

The narrator says he "understood partway through that he was not telling me a story about a body. He was telling me a story about a wallet."

6. D. That thirty years of heavy objects mattered less than one small surviving thing

The paragraph sets three decades of hauled-up weight against four inches of card, and it is the card he could still describe forty years later.

7. A. It suggests that efficiency has removed the act of noticing

The new system raises everything the old one did, but "nothing is looked at on the way past" — so what is lost is not material but attention, and with it the stories that attention produced.

8. C. Restrained and reflective

The narrator withholds emotion — even the body is reported plainly — and works instead by turning the memory over. He resists sentiment while clearly finding the memory significant.

The Tyranny of the Reasonable Voice

9. D. It costs the speaker nothing and buys a great deal of credibility

The writer says the concession "costs them nothing and purchases a great deal", presenting it as a tactic rather than as honesty.

10. B. It removes the person who did the thing

The examples given — "mistakes were made, concerns have been raised" — report events with no actor, "so that no one is ever the person who did it".

11. C. Because objecting to the label appears to confirm it

The writer explains that "the more strongly you object to being called emotional, the more emotional you appear" — the accusation is constructed so that resisting it counts as evidence for it.

12. A. Because a lie would be easier to identify and answer

The danger the writer is describing lies precisely in a performance built from true sentences: there is nothing false to point at, yet the conclusion is still unsupported.

13. A. That composure is easiest for whoever has least at stake

The writer uses the pair to show the two speakers "are not equally free to be measured", so calmness reflects position rather than the strength of the case.

14. C. That anger is not an argument either

The writer states "I am not arguing for shouting. Anger is not an argument either", which narrows the claim and makes it harder to dismiss as a defence of outbursts.

15. B. Rewriting both speakers’ claims flatly and comparing them

The final paragraph asks the reader to strip each speaker’s claims of concessions and passive constructions and set the flattened versions side by side.

16. D. That we credit manner as though it were reasoning, and manner favours the powerful

The writer states the claim as "narrower" than a condemnation: we "routinely credit a manner as though it were a reason, and the manner is cheapest for whoever has the most power in the room."

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PREVIEW

That’s the end of the preview answers

These are the answers to the 16 preview questions. The full answer key covers all 39 questions in Reading Year 10 — Practice Paper 1, with the working behind every mark.

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