

Alex Ristof

I could hardly believe that it all came down to this.

One ... final ... choice.

But it was too simple – not at all what I'd come to expect from the Professor. Had I finally proven myself? I laughed in spite of my aching bones. Nope. He'd never release his precious blueprint so easily. Not when it could save so many and ruin him forever.

A drop of sweat rolled down my neck, followed by another, escaping the sticky nest of hair plastered to my scalp. I barely flinched as the rivulets raced down my spine. Considering what I'd been through, this was like the arrival of a blowfly after being devoured by mosquitoes.

I shuddered at the memory of the murky mud slurping around my legs as I waded through that last tunnel. It was so thick with darkness, I'd wondered if I'd ever emerge. The incessant biting of my skin as water-beasts surrounded me was too foul a feeling to dwell on. I dragged myself back to the present.

It all came down to this. Not a fight or an ambush. Not a battle or a trap. But a choice.

The Professor's blueprint was finally in front of me, encased in a glass chest with a fluorescent pink force field pulsating powerfully around the chest's razor-sharp edges. Nearby lay a console, with two clearly labelled buttons.

With a closer look I discovered a message: *Your life or the formula, Georgina. You choose.*

This had to be a trap.

Who would come after me if I failed? Was the Professor testing my character, sure that I would I risk my life rather than return empty-handed?

No, he already knew my character.

With a wry chuckle, I reached out ... unsure if I'd make it back alive.

Read each question carefully and circle one answer.

1 Which word is spelled correctly?

- plasterd
- precous
- surrounded
- aching

2 Which word is misspelled?

- devoured
- insessant
- pulsating
- emerge

3 Which is the correct spelling?

- flourescent
- fluorescent
- flouresnt
- fluoresent

4 Which word contains a silent letter?

- murky
- foul
- wry
- ruin

5 Which of these pairs are not homophones?

- through* and *threw*
- were* and *where*
- two* and *too*
- roll* and *role*

6 Which word in this sentence is a compound adjective?

The narrator decided that she could not risk returning empty-handed.

- empty-handed
- risk
- returning
- decided

7 Which suffix can be added to *power* to transform it into a word meaning *with great strength*?

- er
- ly
- fully
- ish

8 In this sentence, what does the verb group *had to be* mean?

This had to be a trap.

- wasn't
- used to be
- never was
- was

9 Which of the following is a synonym for *blueprint*?

- plan
- discovery
- map
- ambush

10 What type of word is *he'd*?

- a common noun
- a contraction
- a preposition
- an abbreviation

11 What is the verb in this sentence?

The Professor's blueprint was encased in a glass chest.

- was
- was encased
- encased
- was encased in

12 In which tense is this sentence written?

I shuddered at the memory of walking through that tunnel.

- present
- future
- past
- perfect

13 Which of the following is a complete sentence?

- It all came down to this.
- Not a battle or a trap.
- Not a fight or an ambush.
- But a choice.

14 Which of these phrases contains an example of alliteration?

- precious blueprint
- the sticky mess of hair
- around my legs
- pink force field

15 Which punctuation mark appears in the middle of this sentence?

I reached out ... unsure if I'd make it back alive.

- colon
- ellipsis
- semicolon
- full stop

16 Which of the following is a compound adjective?

- razor-sharp
- aching
- force-field
- identical

17 What type of sentence is this?

No, he already knew my character.

- a question
- an exclamation
- a statement
- a command

18 Which word in this sentence is a proper noun?

Was the Professor testing my character, sure that I would I risk my life rather than return empty-handed?

- character
- Professor
- life
- risk

19 What is the purpose of the ellipses in this sentence?

One ... final ... choice.

- to indicate pauses between words and thoughts
- to show the writer's uncertainty about what will happen next
- to mimic the delays and pauses in actual thought and speech
- for all of these purposes

20 What is the predicate of this sentence?

The Professor's blueprint was finally in front of me.

- was finally in front of me
- The Professor's blueprint was finally in front of me
- blueprint was finally in front of me
- The Professor's blueprint

Text type: Narrative

NAPLAN*-style questions: Language conventions

- 1 aching
- 2 incessant
- 3 fluorescent
- 4 wry
- 5 *were* and *where*
- 6 empty-handed
- 7 -fully
- 8 was
- 9 plan
- 10 a contraction
- 11 was encased
- 12 past
- 13 It all came down to this.
- 14 pink force field
- 15 ellipsis
- 16 razor-sharp
- 17 a statement
- 18 Professor
- 19 for all of these purposes
- 20 was finally in front of me