PRACTICE EXAM 6: SCENARIO-BASED REASONING — 105 QUESTIONS

1. A commercial pilot is running late for a charter pickup and thinks, "I've flown in worse than this — let's just go." Which hazardous attitude is this?

A. Resignation

B. Macho

C. Anti-authority

2. A pilot dismisses a controller's instruction, thinking, "Nobody can tell me how to fly my airplane." Which antidote applies?

A. It could happen to me

B. Taking chances is foolish

C. Follow the rules; they are usually right

3. Approaching a destination, a pilot notices the ceiling dropping below personal minimums but feels pressure to land because passengers have a connection to catch. What is the safest decision?

A. Divert to the planned alternate rather than press in

B. Continue the approach since the passengers are in a hurry

C. Descend below minimums briefly to see the runway

4. A pilot completes the IMSAFE checklist and realizes a head cold is affecting concentration. What does sound ADM suggest?

A. Fly anyway since the route is familiar

B. Take a decongestant and depart immediately

C. Postpone the flight until fit to fly

5. During cruise, a pilot detects a faint headache and slight drowsiness with the cabin heat on. What is the most appropriate first action?

A. Open the throttle to climb away from the symptoms

B. Shut off the cabin heat, open fresh-air vents, and consider carbon monoxide

C. Ignore the symptoms as ordinary fatigue

6. A pilot facing deteriorating weather thinks, "There's nothing I can do; whatever happens, happens." Which hazardous attitude is this?

A. Impulsivity

B. Resignation

C. Invulnerability

7. A new commercial pilot is offered a flight that would require carrying passengers for hire 80 NM at night, but the pilot holds no instrument rating. What is the correct response?

A. Decline, because the certificate limitation prohibits this flight

B. Accept, since a second-class medical removes the limitation

C. Accept, but stay below 3,000 feet to avoid the rule

8. En route, a pilot becomes unsure of position over unfamiliar terrain. Applying the Four Cs, what should the pilot do first?

A. Climb to improve reception, range, and visibility

B. Continue on the last heading and hope to spot a landmark

C. Descend to read ground features more closely

9. A pilot notices the fuel gauges reading lower than planned with the destination still 40 minutes away and a 30-minute reserve required. What is the prudent action?

A. Continue and hope the gauges are inaccurate

B. Increase power to arrive sooner and burn less total fuel

C. Divert to a nearer airport to ensure an adequate reserve

10. A pilot reacts to an unexpected gust on final by abruptly yanking the controls, thinking "Do something now!" Which hazardous attitude is shown?

A. Macho

B. Anti-authority

C. Impulsivity

11. Before a flight, a pilot uses PAVE to assess risk. Which element covers external pressures such as a schedule or a waiting customer?

A. The "P" for Pilot

B. The "E" for External pressures

C. The "A" for Aircraft

12. A pilot encounters an active thunderstorm ahead with an intense radar echo. What is the correct decision?

A. Remain at least 20 NM away and reroute

B. Fly beneath the storm to stay below the turbulence

C. Penetrate the storm quickly to minimize exposure

13. A commercial pilot is asked by a client to fly into marginal weather and feels the urge to comply to keep the business. What is the best practice?

A. Hold to established personal minimums and decline if they are exceeded

B. Accept the flight because the customer relationship is at stake

C. Depart and reassess only after takeoff

14. A pilot rolls out of a steep turn at low altitude in the pattern with the ball off-center. What is the primary hazard of this uncoordinated, skidding turn?

A. A gear-up landing

B. An inadvertent stall-spin from base to final

C. A vacuum system failure

15. A pilot's friend says the airplane "always flies fine over gross by a little." When asked to fly it overweight, what should the commercial pilot do?

A. Trust the friend's experience and depart

B. Add power to compensate for the extra weight

C. Refuse, because exceeding maximum gross weight is unsafe and illegal

16. During preflight, a pilot finds the required position light inoperative for a planned night flight. What does sound decision-making require?

A. Depart and replace the light at the destination

B. Cover the broken light and proceed

C. Resolve the discrepancy before a night flight, since the light is required

17. A pilot feels invulnerable, thinking "Accidents happen to other people, not me." What is the correct antidote?

A. Not so fast; think first

B. It could happen to me

C. I'm not helpless

18. A pilot on a cross-country notices the alternator has failed (continuous ammeter discharge). What is the most appropriate action?

A. Shed electrical loads and land to address the failure

B. Increase RPM to restore alternator output

C. Continue normally since the engine will keep running

19. A pilot is tempted to continue VFR into lowering ceilings and reducing visibility. What is the best decision?

A. Press on slowly while descending to stay below the clouds

B. Turn around or divert before conditions deteriorate further

C. Climb into the clouds to get on top

20. A pilot exhibits get-there-itis near the destination as fuel runs low and weather worsens. What underlying principle should guide the decision?

A. A completed flight is always better than a delay

B. The passengers' schedule outweighs the reserve

C. A canceled or diverted flight is recoverable; an accident is not

21. A pilot reviewing the 5 P's in flight wants to reassess the route and weather. Which "P" covers this?

A. The "P" for Pilot

B. The "P" for Plan

C. The "P" for Passengers

22. A pilot suspects hypoxia at altitude, noticing euphoria and slowed thinking. What is the immediate action?

A. Use supplemental oxygen and descend

B. Increase the cabin temperature

C. Continue, since euphoria indicates well-being

23. A pilot recognizes a skidding turn is developing close to a stall. What is the correct recovery emphasis?

A. Reduce the angle of attack and coordinate with rudder

B. Add aft elevator to tighten the turn

C. Apply full power and hold the bank

24. A commercial pilot is offered work flying members of the public point-to-point for a fee with no air carrier certificate. What is the correct response?

A. Accept, since a commercial certificate authorizes any paid flying

B. Accept if the flights stay under 50 NM

C. Decline, because this is illegal common carriage

25. A pilot must decide whether to depart with a forecast of strong gusty crosswinds exceeding the airplane's demonstrated crosswind component. What does sound ADM suggest?

A. Depart and use extra aileron to compensate

B. Depart and hope the gusts subside

C. Delay until the crosswinds are within the airplane's capability

26. A pilot completes DECIDE after detecting a problem. What does the first "D" stand for?

A. Detect the change

B. Do the action

C. Decide to continue

27. A pilot experiences hyperventilation due to stress, with tingling and lightheadedness. What is the correct response if hypoxia is ruled out at low altitude?

A. Breathe faster to increase oxygen

B. Slow the breathing rate to restore carbon dioxide balance

C. Climb to a higher altitude

28. A pilot is pressured to skip the preflight inspection to save time for a paying customer. What is the correct decision?

A. Skip the inspection since the airplane flew earlier that day

B. Complete the full preflight inspection regardless of the time pressure

C. Perform only a partial walkaround

29. A pilot encounters unexpected wind shear on final with a rapid loss of indicated airspeed. What is the correct action?

A. Continue the approach and add aft elevator

B. Reduce power to settle onto the runway

C. Add power and execute a go-around

30. A pilot loses two-way radio communication near a towered airport. What should the pilot do?

A. Squawk 7600 and watch for light gun signals

B. Squawk 7700 and land immediately on any runway

C. Squawk 1200 and continue without further action

31. A pilot is determined to complete a flight despite a developing line of thunderstorms across the route. What is the safest course?

A. Climb above the storms to overfly them

B. Fly between the cells at low altitude

C. Delay, reroute, or cancel to avoid the convective line

32. A pilot notices a passenger is anxious and distracting during a critical phase of flight. What does good cockpit management suggest?

A. Engage in a long conversation to calm the passenger

B. Brief the passenger to remain quiet during critical phases

C. Hand the controls to the passenger

33. A pilot recognizes fatigue setting in during a long duty day with another leg planned. What does IMSAFE-based judgment suggest?

A. Push through since the next leg is short

B. Drink coffee and continue immediately

C. Rest before continuing, as fatigue degrades performance

34. A pilot must cross a mountain ridge with strong winds aloft. What is the recommended technique?

A. Approach at about a 45° angle with generous altitude, expecting lee-side downdrafts

B. Cross perpendicular at minimum altitude to save time

C. Cross directly downwind at the lowest safe speed

35. A pilot is offered a banner-towing job but has no waiver or special training. What is the correct response?

A. Decline until obtaining the required waiver and training

B. Accept since a commercial certificate is sufficient

C. Accept and learn the technique during the first flight

36. A pilot experiences spatial disorientation in clouds, feeling a turn that the instruments do not confirm. What should the pilot do?

A. Trust the bodily sensation over the instruments

B. Trust and fly the flight instruments

C. Close the eyes until the sensation passes

37. A pilot must decide whether to accept an aircraft just released from maintenance without personally verifying its condition. What does §91.7 require?

A. Accept the mechanic's release as final

B. Personally determine the aircraft is in condition for safe flight

C. Defer the decision to the operator

38. A pilot is tempted to descend below the minimum safe altitude over a congested area to get a better view for a client's photographs. What is the correct decision?

A. Descend briefly since the client is paying

B. Descend and circle the area at low altitude

C. Maintain at least 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within 2,000 feet unless the operation legally allows lower

39. A pilot notices the temperature and dewpoint converging on a cool evening at the destination. What should the pilot anticipate and plan for?

A. Possible fog formation that could lower visibility below minimums

B. Improving visibility and clear skies

C. Strong gusty winds developing

40. A pilot is asked to fly with a known inoperative instrument required for the flight. What does sound decision-making require?

A. Depart and address it later

B. Placard it and depart regardless

C. Resolve the discrepancy before flight, since the instrument is required

41. A pilot recognizes the urge to "beat the weather home" before a front arrives. What does this scenario most illustrate?

A. Sound risk management

B. Get-there-itis pressuring an unsafe decision

C. Proper use of personal minimums

42. A pilot must decide between VX and VY after takeoff with tall trees off the departure end. Which is correct and why?

A. VY, because it climbs fastest in time

B. VA, because it is the safest maneuvering speed

C. VX, because it gives the most altitude over the shortest distance to clear the obstacle

43. A pilot is uncertain whether the weather meets requirements and considers launching to "take a look." What is the safer approach?

A. Make the go/no-go decision on the ground using all available information

B. Launch and decide after airborne

C. Depart and climb to assess from altitude

44. A pilot encounters carburetor icing with a gradual RPM loss on a humid day. What is the correct action?

A. Apply carburetor heat

B. Lean the mixture aggressively

C. Reduce the propeller RPM further

45. A commercial pilot recognizes that accepting a flight would require exceeding duty and rest limits, risking fatigue. What is the correct decision?

A. Accept since the pilot feels fine

B. Decline or arrange rest to avoid operating fatigued

C. Accept but plan to nap en route

46. A pilot must decide whether to continue toward an airport reporting deteriorating conditions or divert while options remain. What does prudent ADM favor?

A. Diverting early while alternatives and fuel remain

B. Continuing until the destination is in sight

C. Holding overhead until the weather clears

47. A pilot feels pressure from a passenger questioning the decision to cancel for weather. How should the pilot respond?

A. Reverse the decision to satisfy the passenger

B. Depart and reassess once airborne

C. Hold firm on the safety decision and explain it calmly

48. A pilot notices the engine running rough at altitude with the mixture full rich. What is the most likely cause and action?

A. The mixture is too rich for the altitude; lean appropriately

B. The magnetos have failed; land immediately

C. The propeller governor has failed; reduce RPM

49. A pilot must decide whether to fly into an area with an active TFR for a presidential movement. What is the correct decision?

A. Enter quickly to minimize exposure

B. Avoid the TFR entirely and reroute

C. Request a pop-up clearance to transit

50. A pilot is tempted to rely solely on the airspeed indicator to avoid a stall in a steep turn. What is the danger?

A. The airspeed indicator is always inaccurate in turns

B. The wing can stall at any airspeed if the critical angle of attack is exceeded

C. Stall speed never changes, so the indicator is sufficient

51. A pilot recognizes that a planned night cross-country exceeds personal minimums for night currency and recent experience. What is the prudent decision?

A. Fly anyway since the route is familiar

B. Depart and gain the experience during the flight

C. Decline or gain recency before the flight

52. A pilot experiences a vacuum failure in instrument conditions and notices the attitude indicator slowly becoming unreliable. What should the pilot do?

A. Continue trusting the attitude indicator

B. Cross-check with other instruments and use partial-panel technique

C. Cover all the instruments and fly by feel

53. A pilot must determine the right action when a restricted area along the route is active. What is correct?

A. Obtain permission from the controlling agency or reroute

B. Enter freely since VFR aircraft are exempt

C. Descend beneath the area's floor to pass

54. A pilot is offered a flight that would require landing at a high-elevation airport on a hot afternoon near the airplane's performance limits. What does sound ADM require?

A. Carefully compute density-altitude performance and add margins before deciding

B. Depart and assess performance during the takeoff roll

C. Reduce fuel below reserve minimums to lighten the load

55. A pilot's first sign of trouble is a continuous discharge on the ammeter. What does this indicate and require?

A. A healthy battery; no action needed

B. The magnetos have failed; expect engine stoppage

C. An alternator failure; shed loads and plan to land

56. A pilot considers scud-running beneath a low overcast to reach the destination. What is the safest decision?

A. Continue at low altitude beneath the clouds

B. Climb into the overcast to get on top

C. Divert or land to avoid controlled flight into terrain

57. A pilot is asked to carry a load that would place the CG aft of the limit, though total weight is acceptable. What is the correct response?

A. Accept since the total weight is within limits

B. Refuse or rearrange the load, because an aft CG beyond the limit is dangerous

C. Add nose weight beyond the airplane's approved provisions

58. A pilot must decide how to respond to a passenger pressuring for a lower, "more scenic" flight near terrain. What is the correct decision?

A. Descend to satisfy the passenger

B. Maintain safe altitudes and explain the reason

C. Hand the passenger the controls for the scenic portion

59. A pilot recognizes the antidote "I'm not helpless; I can make a difference." Which hazardous attitude does it counter?

A. Macho

B. Impulsivity

C. Resignation

60. A pilot encounters an unexpected layer of cloud at the planned altitude in marginal VFR. What is the prudent action?

A. Descend to remain clear of clouds and reassess, diverting if needed

B. Climb into the layer to continue on course

C. Maintain altitude and enter the cloud briefly

61. A pilot must decide whether to fly a passenger-for-hire cross-country of 40 NM during the day without an instrument rating. What is correct?

A. Decline, because any passenger-for-hire flight is prohibited

B. Decline, because daytime flights are always prohibited

C. The flight is permissible, since the limitation restricts night and over-50-NM operations

62. A pilot notices the gear warning horn sounding as the throttle is retarded on approach. What does this most likely indicate and require?

A. The flaps are extended; retract them

B. The gear is not down and locked; verify and extend the gear

C. The mixture is too lean; enrich it

63. A pilot is determined to land at the destination despite a microburst alert near the field. What is the correct decision?

A. Land quickly before the microburst intensifies

B. Continue the approach and add power if needed

C. Avoid the area and delay or divert until the hazard passes

64. A pilot considers departing without checking NOTAMs to save time. What is the risk this overlooks?

A. Active TFRs, closed runways, or navaid outages

B. The aircraft's weight and balance limits

C. The pilot's medical currency

65. A pilot recognizes that completing the flight would require flying beyond the fuel reserve minimums. What is the correct decision?

A. Land or divert to refuel rather than burn into the reserve

B. Continue and lean aggressively to stretch the fuel

C. Increase power to arrive before the fuel runs out

66. A pilot must decide whether to trust bodily sensations or the instruments after entering a cloud and feeling a bank. What is correct?

A. Trust the sensation, since the inner ear is reliable

B. Trust the flight instruments and disregard the false sensation

C. Split the difference between the two

67. A pilot detects symptoms suggesting carbon monoxide while using cabin heat. What is the correct sequence of actions?

A. Shut off cabin heat, open fresh-air vents, and land as soon as practical

B. Increase the cabin heat to mask the symptoms

C. Continue the flight and monitor the symptoms

68. A pilot is tempted to accept a flight despite recognizing several PAVE risk factors stacking up. What does good risk management suggest?

A. Accept since each factor alone is minor

B. Accept and manage the risks in flight

C. Reassess and consider declining when multiple risks accumulate

69. A pilot must decide how to handle an engine failure after takeoff. What is the immediate priority?

A. Attempt an immediate turn back to the runway regardless of altitude

B. Troubleshoot the engine before flying the airplane

C. Fly the airplane and establish best glide speed

70. A pilot recognizes the urge to show off a steep, low maneuver for onlookers. Which hazardous attitude does this reflect, and what is the antidote?

A. Resignation; "I'm not helpless"

B. Macho; "Taking chances is foolish"

C. Anti-authority; "Follow the rules"

71. A pilot must decide whether to continue into an area forecast for moderate icing without anti-ice equipment. What is correct?

A. Avoid the icing conditions, since the airplane is not equipped for them

B. Continue and descend if ice accumulates

C. Continue and increase airspeed to shed the ice

72. A pilot is unsure whether the destination weather will hold and considers an outlook briefing because departure is seven hours away. Is this appropriate?

A. No; a standard briefing is required this far out

B. Yes; an outlook briefing suits a departure six or more hours away

C. No; an abbreviated briefing is required

73. A pilot recognizes that a skidding base-to-final turn at low altitude is dangerous. What is the correct way to fly the turn?

A. Increase the bank and add inside rudder to tighten it

B. Add aft elevator to maintain altitude

C. Keep the turn coordinated and respect the angle of attack

74. A pilot must decide whether to accept a flight when the IMSAFE check reveals recent stress and emotional strain. What does sound judgment suggest?

A. Fly anyway since stress is normal

B. Honestly assess fitness and decline if impaired

C. Take medication to manage the stress and depart

75. A pilot encounters a thunderstorm that appears to be in its mature stage. Why is this the most dangerous stage?

A. It has both updrafts and downdrafts with the greatest turbulence

B. It has only building cumulus with light winds

C. It is dissipating with weakening downdrafts

76. A pilot must decide how to respond when a controller's instruction seems unsafe. What is the correct action?

A. Advise "unable" and request an alternative

B. Comply silently despite the safety concern

C. Ignore the instruction and continue

77. A pilot is offered a glider-towing job but has not met the §61.69 endorsement and experience requirements. What is correct?

A. Accept since any commercial pilot can tow gliders

B. Decline until meeting the endorsement and experience requirements

C. Accept and obtain the endorsement afterward

78. A pilot recognizes that descending below decision minimums to find the runway is unsafe. What is the correct action on a missed approach?

A. Continue descending until the runway appears

B. Level off and circle below minimums

C. Execute the missed approach and divert if needed

79. A pilot must decide whether to fly into an area with an active SIGMET for severe turbulence. What is correct?

A. Continue since the airplane is sturdy

B. Avoid or reroute, since a SIGMET warns all aircraft of severe hazards

C. Slow to maneuvering speed and continue through it

80. A pilot notices the airplane is difficult to flare on landing, with the nose barely rising. What loading condition is likely, and what is the lesson?

A. A forward CG near the limit; verify loading is within the envelope before flight

B. An aft CG beyond the limit; add tail weight

C. A perfectly centered CG; no action needed

81. A pilot is pressured to depart into conditions exceeding personal minimums by a friend who says, "You're being too cautious." What is the correct response?

A. Maintain the personal minimums and decline if exceeded

B. Lower the minimums just this once

C. Depart and reassess after takeoff

82. A pilot must decide how to respond to a rapidly narrowing temperature/dewpoint spread at the destination near dusk. What is the prudent plan?

A. Expect clearing skies and continue

B. Expect strong winds and add power

C. Plan for possible fog and have an alternate ready

83. A pilot recognizes that the antidote "Not so fast; think first" applies to a particular tendency. Which hazardous attitude is it?

A. Anti-authority

B. Impulsivity

C. Invulnerability

84. A pilot must decide whether to fly an aircraft to a maintenance base when it does not currently meet airworthiness requirements but is safe for the flight. What is needed?

A. A flight review

B. A second-class medical

C. A special flight permit (ferry permit)

85. A pilot is tempted to continue a VFR flight as visibility drops toward 1 mile in haze. What is the prudent decision?

A. Land or divert before conditions deteriorate into IMC

B. Continue at reduced speed beneath the haze

C. Climb above the haze layer into the clouds

86. A pilot must decide how to handle a passenger who removed a seatbelt during turbulence. What is the correct action?

A. Allow it since the passenger is uncomfortable

B. Ignore it to avoid conflict

C. Instruct the passenger to refasten the seatbelt immediately

87. A pilot recognizes the engine magneto check shows no RPM drop at all on one magneto. What does this indicate?

A. The magneto is functioning perfectly

B. A grounding problem in the ignition system requiring maintenance

C. The propeller governor has failed

88. A pilot must decide whether to accept a flight requiring operation above 14,000 feet cabin altitude without supplemental oxygen for the crew. What is correct?

A. Accept since brief exposure is acceptable

B. Accept if staying below 15,000 feet

C. Decline, because the crew must use oxygen the entire time above 14,000 feet

89. A pilot is determined to reach the destination despite a forecast of a microburst-producing thunderstorm over the field at the planned arrival. What is correct?

A. Delay arrival or divert until the convective hazard passes

B. Land quickly between cells

C. Fly beneath the storm on final

90. A pilot recognizes that a flight would require exceeding the airplane's maximum gross weight. What is the correct decision?

A. Depart and add power to compensate

B. Depart since the CG is within limits

C. Reduce the load to remain within maximum gross weight

91. A pilot must decide how to respond to recognizing get-there-itis in their own thinking. What is the healthiest response?

A. Suppress the feeling and continue the flight

B. Acknowledge the bias and make a conservative, fact-based decision

C. Speed up to reach the destination before doubts grow

92. A pilot encounters an unexpected crosswind gust on landing that exceeds comfortable control. What is the correct action?

A. Force the airplane onto the runway

B. Execute a go-around and reassess

C. Reduce power abruptly to land short

93. A pilot is asked to fly a flight that would constitute holding out to the public for hire without an air carrier certificate. What is the correct response?

A. Decline, because this is illegal common carriage

B. Accept since a commercial certificate is enough

C. Accept if the flight is under 50 NM

94. A pilot recognizes that the safest response to disorientation in clouds is to rely on training. What does that training emphasize?

A. Trusting and interpreting the flight instruments

B. Following bodily sensations of motion

C. Making large control inputs to regain feel

95. A pilot must decide whether to depart with a known fuel leak discovered during preflight. What is correct?

A. Depart and monitor the fuel quantity

B. Resolve the leak before flight, since it affects airworthiness

C. Depart with extra fuel to compensate

96. A pilot is pressured by schedule to skip computing weight and balance for a heavily loaded flight. What does sound judgment require?

A. Estimate the loading mentally and depart

B. Depart since the airplane "looks balanced"

C. Compute weight and balance before flight

97. A pilot recognizes that flying while under the influence of alcohol is prohibited. What does §91.17 require at minimum?

A. A 4-hour wait and any BAC below 0.10%

B. At least 8 hours from bottle to throttle and a BAC below 0.04%, and not under the influence

C. A 12-hour wait regardless of BAC

98. A pilot must decide how to respond when a thunderstorm cell is reported 15 NM from the planned route. What is the prudent action?

A. Widen the route to maintain at least 20 NM from the severe cell

B. Continue on the planned route since 15 NM is sufficient

C. Fly directly toward the cell to pass quickly

99. A pilot recognizes that the first action after any engine failure is to fly the airplane. What is the next priority?

A. Open the cabin door for egress

B. Establish best glide speed and select a landing site

C. Restart attempts before establishing glide

100. A pilot must decide whether to continue after the vacuum pump fails in clear VMC. What is the reasonable action?

A. Land immediately on any available surface

B. Declare an emergency and squawk 7700

C. Continue using pitot-static and backup references, and plan a normal landing

101. A pilot is tempted to fly an approach below personal minimums because the destination is "almost in sight." What is correct?

A. Continue since the runway is nearly visible

B. Descend slightly to confirm the runway

C. Respect the personal minimums and execute a missed approach or divert

102. A pilot recognizes a passenger's connection flight is creating pressure to launch into bad weather. What is the best practice?

A. Make the decision based on safety, not the passenger's schedule

B. Launch to attempt the connection

C. Lower the minimums to accommodate the schedule

103. A pilot must decide how to handle an active MOA along the route while VFR. What is correct?

A. The pilot is prohibited from entering an active MOA

B. The pilot may transit but should exercise extreme caution

C. The pilot must obtain a clearance into Class B

104. A pilot notices a continuous narrowing of options as weather, fuel, and daylight all degrade together. What does this scenario illustrate?

A. Accumulating risk factors that warrant a conservative decision to land or divert

B. Normal flight conditions requiring no change

C. A reason to speed up and press on

105. A pilot recognizes that the safest decision sometimes is not to fly at all. What principle supports this?

A. A completed flight always outweighs a cancellation

B. Schedule pressure should drive the decision

C. A canceled flight is always recoverable; an accident is not

Exam 6 Answer Key with Full Answer Explanations

1. B — "I've flown in worse — let's just go" reflects the macho attitude, taking chances to prove capability. Its antidote is "Taking chances is foolish." Recognizing the attitude is the first step to countering it.

2. C — Dismissing a controller's instruction is the anti-authority attitude, countered by "Follow the rules; they are usually right." The other options are antidotes to different attitudes. Matching the attitude to its antidote is the skill being tested.

3. A — When the ceiling drops below personal minimums, the safest decision is to divert to the planned alternate rather than press in under schedule pressure. Continuing or descending below minimums invites controlled flight into terrain. Personal minimums exist precisely for this moment.

4. C — A head cold affecting concentration means the pilot is not fit to fly, so the flight should be postponed. Flying anyway or self-medicating before departure does not restore fitness. IMSAFE exists to catch exactly this.

5. B — A headache and drowsiness with cabin heat on suggest carbon monoxide; the first action is to shut off the heat, open fresh-air vents, and consider CO. Climbing or ignoring the symptoms does not address the source. CO is odorless and mimics fatigue.

6. B — "Whatever happens, happens" reflects resignation, the belief that the pilot cannot influence the outcome. Its antidote is "I'm not helpless; I can make a difference." Resignation surrenders control that the pilot actually has.

7. A — A non-instrument-rated commercial pilot may not carry passengers for hire at night or beyond 50 NM, so the 80-NM night flight must be declined. A second-class medical does not remove the limitation. The certificate limitation governs.

8. A — Applying the Four Cs, the pilot should climb first to improve reception, range, and visibility. Continuing or descending narrows the options. Climbing extends the airplane's reach for navaids and landmarks.

9. C — With fuel reading low and the reserve at risk, the prudent action is to divert to a nearer airport to ensure an adequate reserve. Hoping the gauges are wrong or increasing power gambles with fuel exhaustion. Protecting the reserve is non-negotiable.

10. C — Yanking the controls while thinking "Do something now!" reflects impulsivity. Its antidote is "Not so fast; think first." Impulsive reactions often worsen the situation.

11. B — In PAVE, the "E" for External pressures covers schedules, waiting customers, and similar pressures to complete a flight. The "P" is Pilot and the "A" is Aircraft. External pressures are a recognized risk category.

12. A — The correct decision is to remain at least 20 NM from a severe thunderstorm and reroute. Flying beneath or through it exposes the airplane to severe turbulence, hail, and wind shear. Avoidance by distance is the rule.

13. A — The best practice is to hold to established personal minimums and decline if they are exceeded, regardless of business pressure. Accepting for the relationship or departing to reassess invites an unsafe outcome. Personal minimums protect the pilot from pressure.

14. B — An uncoordinated, skidding turn from base to final at low altitude risks an inadvertent stall-spin, with no altitude to recover. It is not related to gear or vacuum failures. Coordinated flight and angle-of-attack respect are the defenses.

15. C — The pilot should refuse to fly the airplane overweight, because exceeding maximum gross weight is unsafe and illegal. A friend's experience and added power do not make it safe. Being within CG is not the same as being within weight.

16. C — A required position light inoperative for a night flight must be resolved before departure, since the light is required for night operation. Departing to fix it later or covering it does not make the flight legal. Required-equipment logic governs.

17. B — "Accidents happen to other people" reflects invulnerability, countered by "It could happen to me." The other options are antidotes to different attitudes. Recognizing personal vulnerability counters the attitude.

18. A — An alternator failure (continuous discharge) calls for shedding electrical loads and landing to address the failure before the battery depletes. Increasing RPM does not restore a failed alternator, and continuing normally risks losing all electrical systems. Load-shedding preserves remaining power.

19. B — The best decision in lowering ceilings and visibility is to turn around or divert before conditions deteriorate further. Pressing on at low altitude or climbing into clouds invites controlled flight into terrain or inadvertent IMC. Early reversal preserves options.

20. C — The guiding principle against get-there-itis is that a canceled or diverted flight is recoverable, while an accident is not. A completed flight is not always better, and the schedule does not outweigh the reserve. This principle anchors conservative decisions.

21. B — In the 5 P's, the "P" for Plan covers the route, weather, and overall plan for in-flight reassessment. Pilot and Passengers are separate elements. The Plan element prompts ongoing evaluation of the flight.

22. A — Suspected hypoxia at altitude requires immediate use of supplemental oxygen and a descent. Euphoria is a symptom, not a sign of well-being, and raising cabin temperature does nothing. Hypoxia impairs judgment before recognition.

23. A — Recovery from an impending skidding-turn stall emphasizes reducing the angle of attack and coordinating with rudder. Adding aft elevator or holding the bank deepens the stall. Reducing AOA and coordinating prevents the spin.

24. C — Flying members of the public point-to-point for a fee without an air carrier certificate is illegal common carriage, so the pilot must decline. A commercial certificate does not authorize operating an air carrier, and there is no under-50-NM exemption. Holding out triggers the certificate requirement.

25. C — When forecast gusty crosswinds exceed the airplane's demonstrated crosswind component, the prudent decision is to delay until they are within capability. Extra aileron or hoping the gusts subside does not change the airplane's limits. Respecting the demonstrated component is sound judgment.

26. A — In DECIDE, the first "D" stands for Detect the change. "Do" is the fifth step and deciding to continue is not part of the acronym. DECIDE structures the decision process from detection onward.

27. B — Hyperventilation, once hypoxia is ruled out at low altitude, is corrected by slowing the breathing rate to restore carbon dioxide balance. Breathing faster worsens it, and climbing is irrelevant. Slowing the breathing restores normal CO2.

28. B — The pilot should complete the full preflight inspection regardless of time pressure, because a prior flight does not guarantee current airworthiness. Skipping or partially performing it risks missing a defect. The preflight is non-negotiable.

29. C — Unexpected wind shear with a rapid airspeed loss on final calls for adding power and executing a go-around. Continuing with aft elevator or reducing power can lead to a stall or hard landing. A go-around escapes the shear.

30. A — Lost two-way communication near a towered airport calls for squawking 7600 and watching for light gun signals. Squawking 7700 or 1200 is not the lost-comm procedure. The light gun signals guide a radio-out arrival.

31. C — A developing line of thunderstorms across the route calls for delaying, rerouting, or canceling. Overflying or threading between cells at low altitude exposes the airplane to severe hazards. Convective lines must be avoided.

32. B — Good cockpit management means briefing an anxious passenger to remain quiet during critical phases of flight. A long conversation or handing over the controls increases the distraction and risk. A sterile-cockpit briefing manages the situation.

33. C — IMSAFE-based judgment recognizes that fatigue degrades performance, so the pilot should rest before continuing. Pushing through or relying on coffee does not restore alertness. Fatigue is a legitimate no-go factor.

34. A — A mountain ridge with strong winds should be crossed at about a 45° angle with generous altitude, expecting lee-side downdrafts, so a turn away requires only a small heading change. Crossing perpendicular at low altitude or downwind is dangerous. The 45° technique preserves an escape.

35. A — Banner towing requires a Certificate of Waiver or Authorization and specialized training, so a pilot lacking them should decline until obtaining them. A commercial certificate alone is insufficient, and learning during the first flight is unsafe. The waiver and training are prerequisites.

36. B — Spatial disorientation in clouds is overcome by trusting and flying the flight instruments rather than bodily sensations, which are unreliable without a visible horizon. Closing the eyes worsens control. Instrument trust is the defense.

37. B — Under §91.7, the pilot in command must personally determine the aircraft is in condition for safe flight, even after maintenance. The mechanic's release and the operator do not transfer this duty. The PIC owns the airworthiness decision.

38. C — Over a congested area, the pilot must maintain at least 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within 2,000 feet unless the operation legally allows lower. A paying client does not justify descending below the minimum safe altitude. Section 91.119 governs.

39. A — Converging temperature and dewpoint on a cool evening signals possible fog that could lower visibility below minimums, so the pilot should anticipate and plan for it. It does not indicate improving visibility or strong winds. A narrowing spread favors fog.

40. C — A known inoperative instrument required for the flight must be resolved before departure. Departing and addressing it later, or placarding a required item and departing, is not permitted. Required-equipment logic governs.

41. B — The urge to "beat the weather home" illustrates get-there-itis pressuring an unsafe decision. It is not sound risk management or proper use of minimums. Recognizing the bias is the first defense.

42. C — With tall trees off the departure end, VX (best angle of climb) is correct because it gives the most altitude over the shortest distance to clear the obstacle. VY climbs fastest in time but covers more ground. VX is the obstacle-clearance speed.

43. A — The safer approach is to make the go/no-go decision on the ground using all available information, rather than launching to "take a look." Deciding after airborne invites pressure to continue. The ground is where the conservative decision is best made.

44. A — Carburetor icing with a gradual RPM loss on a humid day is corrected by applying carburetor heat, which melts the ice. Leaning the mixture or reducing RPM does not address the ice. Carburetor heat is the remedy.

45. B — Recognizing that a flight would exceed duty and rest limits, the pilot should decline or arrange rest to avoid operating fatigued. Feeling fine or planning to nap en route does not satisfy rest requirements. Fatigue management is a safety obligation.

46. A — Prudent ADM favors diverting early while alternatives and fuel remain, rather than continuing until the destination is in sight or holding overhead. Early diversion preserves options. Waiting narrows them.

47. C — When a passenger questions a weather cancellation, the pilot should hold firm on the safety decision and explain it calmly. Reversing the decision or departing to reassess undermines the safety call. The pilot's authority and judgment govern.

48. A — A rough engine at altitude with the mixture full rich is most likely caused by an over-rich mixture in the thinner air; the action is to lean appropriately. Failed magnetos or a governor problem would present differently. Leaning corrects the over-rich condition.

49. B — An active TFR for a presidential movement must be avoided entirely by rerouting. Entering quickly or requesting a pop-up clearance to transit a security TFR is not appropriate and risks interception. Security TFRs are avoided, not negotiated.

50. B — Relying solely on the airspeed indicator is dangerous because the wing can stall at any airspeed if the critical angle of attack is exceeded. The indicator is not always inaccurate, and stall speed does change with load. Angle of attack, not airspeed, determines the stall.

51. C — A planned night cross-country exceeding personal minimums for currency and recency calls for declining or gaining recency before the flight. Flying anyway or gaining experience during the flight is unsafe. Personal minimums protect against marginal readiness.

52. B — A vacuum failure in IMC requires cross-checking with other instruments and using partial-panel technique, since the attitude indicator becomes unreliable. Continuing to trust it or covering all instruments is dangerous. Cross-checking maintains control.

53. A — An active restricted area requires obtaining permission from the controlling agency or rerouting. VFR aircraft are not exempt, and descending beneath is not permitted. Prohibited and active restricted areas can deny entry.

54. A — A high-elevation, hot-afternoon takeoff near performance limits requires carefully computing density-altitude performance and adding margins before deciding. Assessing during the roll or cutting into the fuel reserve is unsafe. Density altitude demands deliberate planning.

55. C — A continuous discharge on the ammeter indicates an alternator failure, requiring the pilot to shed loads and plan to land. It is not a healthy battery or a magneto failure. Load-shedding preserves battery power.

56. C — Scud-running beneath a low overcast risks controlled flight into terrain, so the safest decision is to divert or land. Continuing at low altitude or climbing into the overcast is dangerous. Avoiding the trap is the right call.

57. B — A load placing the CG aft of the limit must be refused or rearranged, because an aft CG beyond the limit is dangerous for stall and spin recovery. Acceptable total weight does not make an out-of-limits CG safe. Being within weight is not being within balance.

58. B — When a passenger pressures for a lower, scenic flight near terrain, the pilot should maintain safe altitudes and explain the reason. Descending or handing over the controls compromises safety. The pilot's judgment governs altitude.

59. C — "I'm not helpless; I can make a difference" counters the resignation attitude. It is not the antidote to macho or impulsivity. Resignation surrenders influence the pilot actually holds.

60. A — An unexpected cloud layer in marginal VFR calls for descending to remain clear of clouds and reassessing, diverting if needed. Climbing into or entering the layer is unsafe. Remaining VMC and reassessing preserves options.

61. C — A 40-NM daytime passenger-for-hire flight is permissible for a non-instrument-rated commercial pilot, because the §61.133 limitation restricts only night operations and cross-countries of more than 50 NM. At 40 NM in daylight, the flight falls within the allowed envelope. The limitation does not bar all passenger-for-hire flights or all daytime operations.

62. B — A gear warning horn sounding as the throttle is retarded on approach indicates the gear is not down and locked, requiring the pilot to verify and extend the gear. It is not a flap or mixture warning. The horn guards against gear-up landings.

63. C — A microburst alert near the field calls for avoiding the area and delaying or diverting until the hazard passes. Landing quickly or continuing the approach exposes the airplane to deadly low-level wind shear. Avoidance is the only defense.

64. A — Skipping NOTAMs overlooks active TFRs, closed runways, and navaid outages. NOTAMs do not contain weight-and-balance limits or medical currency. NOTAMs carry perishable operational information.

65. A — A flight that would burn into the fuel reserve calls for landing or diverting to refuel. Leaning aggressively or increasing power gambles with fuel exhaustion. The reserve is a floor, not a buffer to consume.

66. B — After entering a cloud and feeling a bank, the pilot should trust the flight instruments and disregard the false sensation. The inner ear is unreliable without a visible horizon. Instrument trust prevents loss of control.

67. A — Suspected carbon monoxide while using cabin heat calls for shutting off the heat, opening fresh-air vents, and landing as soon as practical. Increasing the heat or continuing worsens the exposure. Removing the source is the priority.

68. C — When multiple PAVE risk factors accumulate, good risk management calls for reassessing and considering declining. Minor factors can combine into significant risk. Accumulating risks warrant a conservative decision.

69. C — The immediate priority after an engine failure on takeoff is to fly the airplane and establish best glide speed. An immediate turn back or troubleshooting first risks loss of control. Aviate first, then manage the emergency.

70. B — Showing off a steep, low maneuver reflects the macho attitude, countered by "Taking chances is foolish." It is not resignation or anti-authority. Recognizing the attitude prevents the unsafe display.

71. A — An area forecast for moderate icing must be avoided by an airplane without anti-ice equipment. Descending after ice accumulates or increasing airspeed does not reliably shed structural ice. Avoiding the conditions is the safe choice.

72. B — With departure seven hours away, an outlook briefing is appropriate, since it suits a departure six or more hours out. A standard or abbreviated briefing does not fit this timing. The six-hour threshold defines the outlook briefing.

73. C — A skidding base-to-final turn is flown safely by keeping the turn coordinated and respecting the angle of attack. Increasing bank with inside rudder or adding aft elevator invites a stall-spin. Coordination and AOA awareness are the defenses.

74. B — Recent stress and emotional strain on the IMSAFE check call for honestly assessing fitness and declining if impaired. Flying anyway or medicating to depart does not restore fitness. Emotional state is a legitimate no-go factor.

75. A — The mature stage is the most dangerous because it has both updrafts and downdrafts with the greatest turbulence, heavy precipitation, and hail. The cumulus stage is building, and the dissipating stage is weakening. The mature stage carries the greatest hazards.

76. A — When a controller's instruction seems unsafe, the pilot should advise "unable" and request an alternative. Complying silently or ignoring the instruction is wrong. The pilot in command retains final authority for safety.

77. B — A glider-towing job requires meeting the §61.69 endorsement and experience requirements, so a pilot lacking them should decline until qualified. Not every commercial pilot is automatically qualified, and obtaining the endorsement afterward is too late. The endorsement is a prerequisite.

78. C — On a missed approach, the correct action is to execute the missed approach and divert if needed, not to descend below minimums to find the runway. Continuing down or circling below minimums risks terrain contact. The missed approach is the safe response.

79. B — An active SIGMET for severe turbulence calls for avoiding or rerouting, since it warns all aircraft of severe hazards. A sturdy airplane or slowing to maneuvering speed does not make severe turbulence safe. SIGMET hazards are avoided.

80. A — Difficulty flaring with the nose barely rising indicates a forward CG near the limit; the lesson is to verify loading is within the envelope before flight. It is not an aft CG, and a centered CG would flare normally. Forward CG reduces pitch authority in the flare.

81. A — When pressured to exceed personal minimums, the pilot should maintain them and decline if exceeded. Lowering minimums "just this once" or departing to reassess defeats their purpose. Personal minimums resist social pressure.

82. C — A rapidly narrowing temperature/dewpoint spread at dusk calls for planning for possible fog and having an alternate ready. It does not indicate clearing skies or strong winds. A narrowing spread favors fog formation.

83. B — "Not so fast; think first" is the antidote to impulsivity. It does not counter anti-authority or invulnerability. The antidote slows the impulsive reaction.

84. C — Flying an aircraft that does not currently meet airworthiness requirements but is safe for the flight, to a maintenance base, requires a special flight permit (ferry permit). A flight review or medical does not authorize the flight. The ferry permit addresses this situation.

85. A — Visibility dropping toward 1 mile in haze calls for landing or diverting before conditions deteriorate into IMC. Continuing beneath the haze or climbing into clouds is unsafe. Early action avoids inadvertent IMC.

86. C — A passenger who removed a seatbelt during turbulence should be instructed to refasten it immediately. Allowing it or ignoring it endangers the passenger. The pilot enforces seatbelt use.

87. B — No RPM drop at all on one magneto indicates a grounding problem in the ignition system requiring maintenance, meaning the magneto is not being switched off. A small drop is normal. A no-drop condition is a discrepancy, not a healthy sign.

88. C — Operation above 14,000 feet cabin altitude requires the crew to use supplemental oxygen the entire time, so a flight without it must be declined. Brief exposure or staying below 15,000 feet does not exempt the crew. The §91.211 thresholds govern.

89. A — A forecast microburst-producing thunderstorm over the field at arrival calls for delaying arrival or diverting until the hazard passes. Landing between cells or flying beneath the storm exposes the airplane to deadly wind shear. Avoidance is the only defense.

90. C — A flight that would exceed maximum gross weight requires reducing the load to remain within limits. Adding power or relying on an in-limits CG does not make an overweight airplane safe. Being within CG is not being within weight.

91. B — Recognizing get-there-itis in one's own thinking is healthiest met by acknowledging the bias and making a conservative, fact-based decision. Suppressing the feeling or speeding up lets the bias drive the outcome. Self-awareness is the defense.

92. B — A crosswind gust on landing that exceeds comfortable control calls for executing a go-around and reassessing. Forcing the airplane down or reducing power abruptly risks a loss of control. A go-around is the safe option.

93. A — A flight constituting holding out to the public for hire without an air carrier certificate is illegal common carriage, so the pilot must decline. A commercial certificate is not enough, and there is no under-50-NM exemption. Holding out triggers the certificate requirement.

94. A — Training for disorientation in clouds emphasizes trusting and interpreting the flight instruments. Following bodily sensations or making large inputs leads to loss of control. Instrument interpretation is the trained response.

95. B — A known fuel leak discovered during preflight must be resolved before flight, since it affects airworthiness. Departing to monitor it or carrying extra fuel does not address the hazard. The leak is a no-go item.

96. C — Schedule pressure does not excuse skipping weight and balance for a heavily loaded flight; the pilot must compute it before flight. Estimating mentally or judging by appearance is unreliable. The computation is required for safety.

97. B — Section 91.17 requires at least 8 hours from bottle to throttle, a BAC below 0.04%, and not being under the influence. A 4-hour wait with a higher BAC, or a blanket 12-hour rule, does not match the regulation. The 8-hour/0.04% standard governs.

98. A — A severe thunderstorm cell 15 NM from the route calls for widening the route to maintain at least 20 NM from it. Continuing at 15 NM or flying toward the cell exposes the airplane to its hazards. The 20-NM rule applies.

99. B — After flying the airplane, the next priority following an engine failure is to establish best glide speed and select a landing site. Opening the door or attempting a restart before establishing glide is premature. Best glide maximizes the reachable landing sites.

100. C — A vacuum pump failure in clear VMC reasonably allows continuing using pitot-static and backup references and planning a normal landing. An immediate off-airport landing or declaring an emergency is unnecessary in good visual conditions. The visual horizon substitutes for the failed instruments.

101. C — An approach below personal minimums because the runway is "almost in sight" calls for respecting the minimums and executing a missed approach or diverting. Continuing or descending to confirm the runway invites terrain contact. Personal minimums are a hard floor.

102. A — A passenger's connection creating pressure to launch into bad weather should be met by making the decision based on safety, not the schedule. Launching or lowering minimums to accommodate the connection is unsafe. Safety drives the go/no-go.

103. B — A VFR pilot may transit an active MOA but should exercise extreme caution because of military training activity. A MOA does not legally bar VFR flight or require a Class B clearance. Vigilance is the requirement.

104. A — Weather, fuel, and daylight degrading together illustrate accumulating risk factors that warrant a conservative decision to land or divert. They are not normal conditions or a reason to press on. Accumulating risk demands a conservative response.

105. C — The principle that the safest decision is sometimes not to fly is supported by the truth that a canceled flight is always recoverable, while an accident is not. A completed flight does not always outweigh a cancellation, and schedule pressure should not drive the decision. This principle anchors the no-go decision.