

PRACTICE EXAM 9: RED SEAL HAIRSTYLIST SIMULATION (120 QUESTIONS)

1. A client requests a permanent color two shades lighter than her current Level 4 natural hair, which has no previous color. Which product is correct for a single-process application to achieve this?

- A. A deposit-only toner applied over the natural base
- B. A permanent color mixed with the appropriate volume developer to lift and deposit
- C. A semi-permanent gloss that coats only the cuticle layer
- D. A demi-permanent color that deposits without any lifting action

2. Which layer of the hair shaft contains the melanin responsible for natural hair color?

- A. The cuticle, formed of overlapping translucent scales
- B. The medulla, the innermost hollow core of the strand
- C. The cement that bonds the cuticle scales together
- D. The cortex, the thick middle layer of the hair shaft

3. During a scalp analysis you observe small, silvery-white scales that flake off easily with no inflammation. This is most consistent with:

- A. Tinea capitis, a contagious fungal infection of the scalp
- B. Pityriasis capitis simplex, or classic dry dandruff
- C. Seborrheic dermatitis with greasy yellow crusting

D. Psoriasis presenting with thick silvery plaque buildup

4. What is the primary purpose of performing a strand test before a chemical service?

A. To preview the result and confirm timing, color, and condition before full application

B. To check the client's scalp for any signs of active disease

C. To measure the porosity of the hair at the scalp area

D. To determine whether the client has a sensitivity allergy

5. A barber is tapering the back of a client's neck. The taper is created by:

A. Gradually shortening the hair from longer on top to shorter at the nape

B. Cutting all the hair to one uniform length around the head

C. Removing weight only from the interior of the cut

D. Leaving a sharp, blunt line at the perimeter hairline

6. Which of the following best describes the action of a thinning shear?

A. It removes a solid section of hair in a single straight cut

B. It removes bulk by cutting only some strands within a section

C. It is used exclusively for creating sharp outline edges

D. It cuts hair more slowly than a standard cutting shear

7. Hydrogen peroxide in a hair lightener primarily serves to:

- A. Lower the pH of the mixture to protect the cuticle
- B. Add artificial pigment molecules into the cortex
- C. Oxidize and diffuse the natural melanin in the hair
- D. Close the cuticle layer to lock in the lightened tone

8. A client with a square face shape and strong jawline wants a flattering cut. The stylist should generally aim to:

- A. Add width and fullness at the jawline to emphasize the shape
- B. Soften the angles with rounded layers and texture around the face
- C. Create a severe blunt line directly across the jaw
- D. Keep all volume at the very top to lengthen the chin

9. What does the term "elasticity" describe in a hair analysis?

- A. The ability of hair to stretch and return to its original length
- B. The number of hairs present per square inch of scalp
- C. The diameter or thickness of an individual strand
- D. The amount of natural oil produced by the scalp

10. Before applying a chemical relaxer, a protective base cream is applied to the scalp to:

- A. Speed up the chemical processing of the relaxer
- B. Add moisture to the hair before smoothing
- C. Increase the relaxer's ability to straighten curl
- D. Shield the skin and scalp from chemical irritation and burns

11. Which sanitation method is required for implements that have come into contact with blood or body fluids?

- A. Rinsing the implement under warm running tap water
- B. Cleaning then using an appropriate disinfection or sterilization process
- C. Wiping the implement with a dry paper towel
- D. Storing the implement in a closed drawer overnight

12. A "weight line" in a haircut refers to:

- A. The area where the hair hangs heaviest and forms a visible line
- B. The lightest, most wispy ends of a layered cut
- C. The center parting drawn down the back of the head
- D. The amount of product needed to hold a style

13. The pH scale ranges from 0 to 14. Most healthy hair and skin sit naturally at a pH of approximately:

- A. 8.5 to 9.5, the alkaline range
- B. 4.5 to 5.5, the slightly acidic range

C. 7.0 exactly, perfectly neutral

D. 1.0 to 2.0, the strongly acidic range

14. When mixing color, why must the manufacturer's instructions be followed precisely?

A. Because all colors from every brand mix in exactly the same ratio

B. Because incorrect ratios alter the result, processing, and safety of the service

C. Because instructions are only legal suggestions, not requirements

D. Because the color will always work regardless of how it is mixed

15. A client's hair feels rough, looks dull, and absorbs liquid very quickly. This hair is best described as:

A. Low in porosity with a tightly closed cuticle

B. Resistant and difficult for moisture to enter

C. Average in porosity and perfectly balanced

D. Highly porous with a raised, damaged cuticle

16. In nail care offered in some salon settings, the half-moon shaped area at the base of the nail is the:

A. Free edge that extends past the fingertip

B. Nail bed beneath the visible plate

C. Lunula, the whitish area at the nail base

D. Eponychium folding over the cuticle area

17. What is the main reason for draping a client with a cape and neck strip during a haircut?

- A. To make the client feel more relaxed in the chair
- B. To keep the stylist's tools within easy reach
- C. To display the salon's branded equipment
- D. To protect the client's skin and clothing from hair and products

18. A double-process blonde service typically involves:

- A. First lightening the hair, then toning it to the desired shade
- B. Applying a single permanent color in one step
- C. Two applications of the identical permanent color
- D. A relaxer followed immediately by a perm

19. Which factor most directly determines how long a permanent wave solution should process?

- A. The brand name printed on the rod packaging
- B. The color of the perm rods being used
- C. The width of the styling station mirror
- D. The hair's strength, porosity, and the product strength used

20. Cross-contamination in a salon is best prevented by:

- A. Using the same towel for several clients in a row
- B. Sharing combs between stations to save time
- C. Reusing single-use items on multiple clients
- D. Cleaning and disinfecting tools and surfaces between every client

21. The technical term for the study of hair and its diseases is:

- A. Trichology, the scientific study of hair
- B. Dermatology, focused only on skin conditions
- C. Cosmetology, the general study of beauty services
- D. Histology, the study of all body tissues

22. A client books a consultation for a drastic restyle. The most important first step is to:

- A. Begin cutting immediately to save appointment time
- B. Recommend the most expensive service available
- C. Mix the color formula before discussing anything
- D. Listen to the client's wishes and analyze the hair and lifestyle

23. Over-directing hair when cutting is a technique used primarily to:

- A. Remove all the weight evenly across the whole head
- B. Create a blunt one-length perimeter with no graduation

- C. Build length or weight in a specific area of the cut
- D. Shorten the processing time of a chemical service

24. Which statement about the hair growth cycle is correct?

- A. All hairs on the head are always in the same growth phase
- B. The anagen phase is the active growing stage of the hair
- C. Hair never enters a resting phase once it begins to grow
- D. The telogen phase is when hair grows most rapidly

25. A relaxer that uses sodium hydroxide is classified as a:

- A. Thio-based relaxer requiring a separate neutralizer
- B. Lye relaxer with a high pH and strong straightening action
- C. Mild acidic relaxer safe for all hair types
- D. No-base ammonium thioglycolate formula

26. When performing a scalp massage during a shampoo, the manipulations should be:

- A. Done with the fingernails to stimulate the scalp
- B. As fast and forceful as the client can tolerate
- C. Skipped entirely to avoid disturbing the hair
- D. Firm but gentle, using the cushions of the fingertips

27. A level system in hair coloring measures:

- A. The lightness or darkness of a hair color from dark to light
- B. The warmth or coolness of the underlying tone only
- C. The number of grey hairs present on the head
- D. The amount of developer needed for the formula

28. Why should metal implements never be left soaking in disinfectant longer than the manufacturer recommends?

- A. The disinfectant becomes more effective over longer times
- B. Prolonged soaking can corrode, pit, or damage the metal
- C. The implements will become permanently sterile and unusable
- D. Long soaking changes the color of the metal for the better

29. A client with very fine, limp hair wants more apparent volume. A suitable approach is to:

- A. Add heavy layers that remove most of the bulk and weight
- B. Cut the hair into one very long blunt length
- C. Use a layered cut and root-lifting products to build body
- D. Apply a heavy oil treatment to weigh the hair down

30. The cuticle of the hair is best described as:

- A. The outermost layer of overlapping protective scales
- B. The innermost soft core running through the strand
- C. The pigment-containing middle layer of the shaft
- D. The muscle attached to the base of the follicle

31. Galvanic current in advanced salon treatments may be used to:

- A. Aid product penetration or have other facial/scalp effects
- B. Cut the hair faster than ordinary shears
- C. Permanently bond split ends back together
- D. Replace the need for any disinfection of tools

32. A "blunt cut" is characterized by:

- A. Heavily textured ends that taper to wispy points
- B. Strong internal layering removing most of the weight
- C. Random notching cut throughout the interior sections
- D. All hair cut to one length with a solid, even perimeter

33. When a color result is too warm (too orange or red), the stylist can neutralize it using a toner that is:

- A. On the opposite side of the color wheel, such as blue or green based
- B. The same warm tone applied a second time

- C. A higher-volume developer with no pigment
- D. A clarifying shampoo with no toning effect

34. The primary function of the sebaceous gland is to:

- A. Produce the pigment that gives hair its color
- B. Contract to make the hair stand upright
- C. Secrete sebum, the natural oil that lubricates hair and skin
- D. Generate new hair cells at the base of the follicle

35. A client discloses she is pregnant before a chemical service. The professional response is to:

- A. Refuse all salon services for the duration of the pregnancy
- B. Follow salon policy and product guidance, and advise consulting her doctor if unsure
- C. Double the strength of all chemicals to finish faster
- D. Proceed exactly as normal without any consideration

36. Which describes "graduation" in haircutting?

- A. Cutting every strand to a single identical length
- B. Removing only interior bulk while keeping length
- C. Stacking of hair created by cutting at low-to-medium elevation
- D. Cutting hair at a full 180-degree elevation throughout

37. Proper hand and wrist positioning while cutting helps the stylist primarily to:

- A. Prevent strain and repetitive injury over a career
- B. Cut the hair in complete silence
- C. Charge the client a higher service price
- D. Avoid ever needing to clean the implements

38. A patch (predisposition) test for hair color is performed to:

- A. Detect a possible allergic reaction to the product before use
- B. Measure the exact level of the natural hair color
- C. Determine the porosity of the ends versus the roots
- D. Preview the final color result on a test strand

39. Which of the following is a communicable condition that would prevent service?

- A. Mild, flaky dry scalp with no other symptoms
- B. A small amount of natural product buildup
- C. A few strands of split ends near the tips
- D. Head lice (pediculosis capitis), an active infestation

40. When neutralizing a permanent wave, the neutralizer's job is to:

- A. Break the disulfide bonds so the hair can be reshaped
- B. Soften the hair further before rinsing it out
- C. Re-harden the bonds into the hair's new curled shape
- D. Strip all the artificial color from the hair shaft

41. A texturizing service that loosens tight curl into a looser wave pattern relies on:

- A. Permanent oxidation color to change the curl
- B. Partial breaking and reforming of the hair's bonds
- C. A simple wet set with rollers and no chemicals
- D. Cutting the curl out with thinning shears alone

42. The angle at which hair is held away from the head while cutting is called:

- A. Elevation, also referred to as projection or lifting
- B. Tension applied through the comb only
- C. The natural fall of the hair when wet
- D. The density of the hair across the scalp

43. A client's color came out darker than intended. The most likely cause is:

- A. Hair more porous than expected, grabbing extra pigment
- B. The developer volume being far too low to deposit

- C. Insufficient processing time on the scalp
- D. Using a toner instead of a permanent color

44. Which is the correct order for a basic shampoo service?

- A. Condition first, then shampoo, then rinse the hair
- B. Apply product to dry hair and leave it without rinsing
- C. Wet the hair, shampoo and massage, rinse, then condition
- D. Rinse the hair only, with no shampoo at any stage

45. Material Safety Data Sheets (SDS) in a salon are kept to:

- A. Advertise the salon's product line to clients
- B. List the retail prices of each product sold
- C. Provide handling, hazard, and first-aid information for products
- D. Track how many services each stylist performs daily

46. Why is it important to section hair before a chemical service?

- A. To make the appointment appear longer to the client
- B. To ensure even, thorough, and controlled product application
- C. To use up more product than is actually required
- D. To avoid having to analyze the hair beforehand

47. A "razor cut" tends to produce ends that are:

- A. Heavy, blunt, and solid along the perimeter
- B. Softer and more tapered than scissor-cut ends
- C. Identical in every way to thinning-shear results
- D. Impossible to blend into the rest of the cut

48. The hair follicle is best defined as:

- A. The visible portion of hair above the scalp surface
- B. The oil gland attached to the side of the root
- C. The pigment cells located in the cortex
- D. The tube-like pocket in the skin from which hair grows

49. When a client has a cowlick at the front hairline, the stylist should:

- A. Cut directly against the cowlick to force it flat
- B. Ignore it entirely and cut as if it were not there
- C. Account for the growth direction and leave enough length to manage it
- D. Apply a relaxer to that section only to remove it

50. Color depositing without any lifting of the natural pigment describes:

- A. Demi- and semi-permanent deposit-only color
- B. A high-lift permanent blonde formula
- C. A bleach-and-tone double process
- D. A sodium hydroxide relaxer service

51. A client wants to maintain a vivid fashion color at home. The best professional advice is to:

- A. Wash daily with a strong clarifying shampoo
- B. Use color-safe products and wash less often in cooler water
- C. Expose the hair to as much direct sunlight as possible
- D. Avoid all conditioner to keep the color from fading

52. In the color wheel, the three primary colors are:

- A. Orange, green, and violet
- B. Red, yellow, and blue
- C. Black, white, and grey
- D. Brown, gold, and copper

53. The arrector pili muscle is responsible for:

- A. Producing the natural oil that coats the hair
- B. Forming the pigment within the cortex layer

- C. Growing new cells at the base of the follicle
- D. Causing the hair to stand up, creating "goosebumps"

54. Before any service, checking the client's scalp and hair condition is essential because it:

- A. Lets the stylist skip the consultation step
- B. Guarantees the client will book another appointment
- C. Allows charging the maximum possible service fee
- D. Identifies contraindications and guides product and technique choices

55. A "one-length" or "0-degree" haircut is created by:

- A. Holding the hair at 90 degrees from the head
- B. Over-directing every section to the front
- C. Cutting hair at no elevation so all ends fall to one perimeter line
- D. Cutting at 180 degrees for maximum layering

56. Which statement about developer volume is accurate?

- A. Higher volume developer provides more lifting potential
- B. All developers lift exactly the same amount regardless of volume
- C. Lower volume developer always lifts more than higher volume
- D. Developer volume has no effect on the color result

57. A client with a known sensitivity reports tingling and itching shortly after color application. The stylist should:

- A. Add more color on top to overpower the reaction
- B. Tell the client the feeling is normal and to wait
- C. Increase the developer volume to finish faster
- D. Rinse the product immediately and assess the reaction

58. The purpose of a "weight removal" or layering technique is to:

- A. Add a heavier, more solid line to the perimeter
- B. Make all the hair exactly one blunt length
- C. Reduce bulk and create movement or shape in the hair
- D. Permanently change the natural curl pattern

59. Bacteria that can cause disease are classified as:

- A. Non-pathogenic and generally harmless
- B. Saprophytes that live only on dead matter
- C. Beneficial flora that aid normal body function
- D. Pathogenic, meaning disease-producing

60. When recommending retail products at the end of a service, the ethical approach is to:

- A. Sell the most expensive item regardless of need
- B. Never mention any products to the client
- C. Recommend products the client does not need to boost sales
- D. Suggest products that genuinely suit the client's hair and goals

61. Tension in haircutting refers to:

- A. The emotional stress felt by the client in the chair
- B. The sharpness of the shears being used
- C. The amount of pull applied to the hair while cutting
- D. The temperature of the styling tools

62. A "virgin" application of permanent color means the hair:

- A. Has been colored many times previously
- B. Is currently chemically relaxed and straightened
- C. Has a heavy buildup of styling product
- D. Has never been chemically colored before

63. The recommended way to handle a client's allergy disclosed during consultation is to:

- A. Document it, avoid the allergen, and adjust products accordingly
- B. Disregard it because allergies rarely matter in salons

- C. Use the allergen anyway in a smaller amount
- D. End the consultation and refuse to speak further

64. Which best explains why warm water opens the cuticle during shampooing?

- A. It permanently dissolves the cuticle scales
- B. It changes the hair's natural color level
- C. It raises the cuticle, helping cleansing and product action
- D. It bonds the cuticle scales tightly shut

65. A "guide" or "guideline" in haircutting is:

- A. The salon's written price list for services
- B. The mirror used to check the back of the cut
- C. The first section cut, used as the length reference for the rest
- D. The brand of shears the stylist prefers

66. Eumelanin and pheomelanin are the two types of:

- A. Bonds that hold the hair's shape
- B. Bacteria found on the human scalp
- C. Glands attached to the hair follicle
- D. Melanin pigment that determines natural hair color

67. A client requests highlights using foils. The foil's main purpose is to:

- A. Cut the highlighted sections to a shorter length
- B. Add permanent curl to the highlighted strands
- C. Measure the porosity of each highlighted piece
- D. Isolate and hold the lightener on selected strands while it processes

68. Proper posture and an adjusted chair height during services primarily protect:

- A. The salon's electricity bill each month
- B. The client from seeing the back of their hair
- C. The stylist's back, neck, and overall musculoskeletal health
- D. The sharpness of the cutting shears over time

69. Which is true of demi-permanent color?

- A. It permanently lifts several levels of natural pigment
- B. It contains the strongest possible alkaline lifting agents
- C. It is identical in every way to a bleach service
- D. It deposits tone, blends grey, and gradually fades over time

70. A finger wave is a styling technique that:

- A. Permanently alters the hair's internal bond structure
- B. Removes bulk from the interior of the cut
- C. Lightens the hair several levels at once
- D. Shapes wet hair into S-shaped waves using combs and fingers

71. The main reason to rinse all chemical product thoroughly from the hair is to:

- A. Make the client's appointment last longer
- B. Add extra shine that the product cannot provide
- C. Stop continued processing and prevent damage or irritation
- D. Remove the need to condition the hair afterward

72. Hair density refers to:

- A. The thickness or diameter of a single hair strand
- B. The number of individual hairs per square inch of scalp
- C. The amount of curl present in the hair pattern
- D. The hair's ability to absorb moisture and chemicals

73. When a client's previous color has faded unevenly, the corrective step often begins with:

- A. Applying a relaxer to even out the texture first
- B. Cutting off all of the previously colored hair

- C. Analyzing the hair and possibly filling or pre-pigmenting porous areas
- D. Ignoring the unevenness and applying one flat color

74. A "balanced" haircut means the cut is:

- A. Even and symmetrical, with weight distributed as intended on both sides
- B. Always cut to one single blunt length only
- C. Heavier on one side than the other by design
- D. Free of any layering or texture whatsoever

75. Which is a correct infection-control practice for a shared shampoo bowl?

- A. Wiping it only at the end of the working day
- B. Leaving hair and product residue between clients
- C. Cleaning and disinfecting it between each client
- D. Using it without any cleaning since water rinses it

76. The "base" or "scalp" color in a highlighting service refers to:

- A. The lightest highlighted pieces in the foils
- B. The client's overall background or natural color level
- C. The toner applied at the very end of the service
- D. The developer chosen for the lightener

77. A client with a receding front hairline wants a flattering men's cut. A good strategy is to:

- A. Cut everything extremely short to expose the whole scalp
- B. Choose a style that works with the hairline rather than fighting it
- C. Comb all the hair forward into a low, heavy fringe regardless
- D. Apply a permanent wave to the thinning front area

78. Cosmetic dermatitis from repeated chemical exposure on the hands is best prevented by:

- A. Wearing gloves and protecting the skin during chemical services
- B. Washing hands less often during the day
- C. Skipping the use of any protective barrier creams
- D. Applying chemicals with bare hands for better control

79. The medulla of the hair is:

- A. The outer scale layer protecting the strand
- B. The pigment-rich middle layer of the cortex
- C. The oil gland feeding the hair root
- D. The innermost layer, sometimes absent in fine hair

80. A client books for a "trim" but the ends are badly split and damaged. The stylist should:

- A. Refuse to do anything until a full chemical treatment is purchased
- B. Cut only a tiny amount and ignore the damaged ends
- C. Explain the condition and recommend removing enough to restore healthy ends
- D. Cut off all the hair to the scalp without discussion

81. Underlying pigment (contributing pigment) exposed during lifting moves through the hair in a sequence ending at:

- A. Blue, then green, as the darkest stage
- B. Solid black at the very lightest level
- C. Pale yellow at the lightest stages of lift
- D. Deep red as the final lifted result

82. A "blowout" or thermal styling with a round brush primarily:

- A. Permanently changes the hair's bond structure
- B. Temporarily smooths and shapes the hair using heat and tension
- C. Lightens the hair through chemical oxidation
- D. Removes interior bulk like a thinning shear

83. Why must electrical styling tools be checked before each use?

- A. To confirm they match the salon's color scheme
- B. To increase the resale value of the equipment

- C. To make the service appear more professional only
- D. To identify frayed cords or faults that pose a shock or fire risk

84. The term "porosity" in hair refers to:

- A. The natural curl pattern of the hair strand
- B. The number of hairs growing per square inch
- C. The hair's ability to absorb moisture and chemicals
- D. The thickness of one individual strand

85. A client asks for a color that is one level lighter and cooler. The stylist should select:

- A. A cool-toned shade one level up with the appropriate developer
- B. A warm golden shade two levels darker
- C. A deposit-only toner with no lifting ability
- D. A relaxer to change the texture instead

86. Proper ventilation in a salon is especially important when:

- A. Working with chemical products that release fumes or vapors
- B. Only cutting hair with no chemicals involved
- C. The salon is completely empty of clients
- D. Counting the day's retail product sales

87. A consultation card or client record is valuable because it:

- A. Replaces the need to ever speak with the client
- B. Documents formulas, history, and preferences for future visits
- C. Is required to be posted publicly in the salon window
- D. Determines the price of every future service automatically

88. When sectioning for a perm wrap, the size of each section should:

- A. Be no larger than the rod can hold for an even, smooth wrap
- B. Be as large as possible to save processing time
- C. Always equal the full width of the entire head
- D. Be irrelevant to the final curl result

89. Hair that is resistant to chemical services usually has:

- A. A highly raised, open, and damaged cuticle layer
- B. Extremely high porosity throughout the strand
- C. No cuticle layer present on the hair shaft
- D. A tightly compact, smooth, low-porosity cuticle

90. The best response when a client is unhappy with a finished service is to:

- A. Listen calmly, acknowledge the concern, and offer a fair solution
- B. Argue that the client is simply mistaken about the result
- C. Ignore the complaint and move to the next appointment
- D. Immediately blame the client's home hair care routine

91. A neutralizing shampoo after a hydroxide relaxer is used to:

- A. Restore the hair to a normal pH and stop the relaxing action
- B. Add more lifting power to straighten the curl further
- C. Re-curl the hair into its original pattern
- D. Strip all artificial color from the strand

92. Which describes "elevation" of 90 degrees?

- A. Hair held flat against the head with no lift
- B. Hair over-directed completely toward the front
- C. Hair pulled straight down to the floor
- D. Hair held straight out, perpendicular to the head

93. A client with naturally curly hair wants a wash-and-go style. The most useful advice involves:

- A. Brushing the dry curls out thoroughly before leaving
- B. Using high heat daily to loosen the curl pattern

- C. Applying curl-defining product to wet hair and minimizing disruption while drying
- D. Avoiding all leave-in products to keep curls light

94. The purpose of a "test curl" during a permanent wave is to:

- A. Check the client's allergy to the waving solution
- B. Measure the hair's natural density at the crown
- C. Determine the client's natural color level
- D. Check whether a satisfactory curl (S-shape) has formed

95. Capes, towels, and linens used on clients should be:

- A. Reused across several clients to reduce laundry
- B. Clean and fresh for each individual client
- C. Stored damp in a closed bin between uses
- D. Shared between stylists without laundering

96. Which is a true statement about grey hair?

- A. Grey hair always processes faster than pigmented hair
- B. Grey hair can be more resistant and may need adjusted formulation
- C. Grey hair cannot be colored under any circumstances
- D. Grey hair has more melanin than younger pigmented hair

97. A "stationary" or "fixed" guideline is one where:

- A. All hair is brought to a single non-moving guide and cut to it
- B. The guide moves with each new section cut
- C. There is no guideline used at all in the cut
- D. The guide changes length on every pass

98. The first action if a client faints or shows signs of a medical emergency in the salon is to:

- A. Continue the service and hope they recover quickly
- B. Move them outside the salon immediately on your own
- C. Give them a chemical product to revive them
- D. Ensure their safety and call for emergency help as needed

99. A "single-process" color service is one in which:

- A. Lifting and depositing happen together in one application
- B. The hair is lightened first, then toned separately
- C. Two different permanent colors are layered in sequence
- D. A relaxer and a color are applied at the same time

100. The skin condition characterized by inflamed, red, itchy patches that may result from an irritant is:

- A. A simple flaking of dry dead scalp cells
- B. A harmless freckle on the surface of the skin
- C. Contact dermatitis from an irritant or allergen
- D. The normal healthy condition of intact skin

101. A "weight line" can be softened or removed by:

- A. Adding a heavier blunt edge at the perimeter
- B. Layering or texturizing the hair to reduce the buildup of weight
- C. Applying a permanent color over the area
- D. Increasing tension only on that single section

102. When mixing a lightener, the consistency should generally be:

- A. As watery and thin as plain water for easy spreading
- B. Smooth and creamy so it stays on the strands without dripping
- C. Completely dry powder with no liquid added
- D. Thick like solid clay that cannot be spread at all

103. The professional reason for keeping client information confidential is to:

- A. Make the consultation process take longer
- B. Allow other clients to read the records freely

- C. Respect privacy and maintain professional trust
- D. Increase the price charged for each service

104. A "blunt bob" worn at one length to the jaw is built primarily on:

- A. Steep graduation stacked at the nape
- B. Heavy interior layering throughout the head
- C. A zero-elevation, one-length cutting approach
- D. Maximum 180-degree over-direction

105. Why is it important to perform a thorough rinse before applying a neutralizer in a perm?

- A. To add curl-boosting solution to the hair
- B. To remove the waving lotion so it does not over-process
- C. To darken the natural color of the hair
- D. To skip the neutralizing step entirely

106. The protein that hair is primarily composed of is:

- A. Keratin, a fibrous structural protein
- B. Collagen, found mainly in connective tissue
- C. Melanin, which is a pigment, not a protein
- D. Sebum, the oil secreted by the scalp

107. A client with thick, coarse, very dense hair wants a sleek, close style. The stylist may:

- A. Refuse the service because coarse hair cannot be styled
- B. Add maximum bulk and volume against the client's wishes
- C. Leave all weight in to make the hair appear even thicker
- D. Remove bulk with texturizing and use smoothing products and technique

108. "Decontamination" of a tool that touched broken skin requires:

- A. A quick wipe with a dry cloth only
- B. Simply rinsing under cold tap water
- C. Storing it away unwashed until later
- D. Cleaning followed by an appropriate disinfection process

109. A complementary (opposite) color pairing on the color wheel is used to:

- A. Intensify and brighten a tone to make it more vivid
- B. Neutralize or cancel an unwanted tone
- C. Permanently lift several levels of pigment
- D. Relax the curl pattern of the hair

110. The recommended angle to hold the shears in relation to the section being cut depends mainly on:

- A. The desired line, shape, and effect of the haircut
- B. The brand of shears the stylist owns
- C. The color of the client's hair
- D. The time of day the service is performed

111. A client returns saying their perm "didn't take." A likely cause is:

- A. The hair being far too short to perm at all
- B. The client having naturally straight eyebrows
- C. Under-processing, weak solution, or rods too large for the curl wanted
- D. The salon mirror being too small to see the curl

112. Why should you avoid applying excessive tension on fine or fragile hair while cutting?

- A. Tension makes fine hair grow back thicker
- B. Excess tension can stretch and snap fragile strands and distort the line
- C. Tension permanently changes the hair color
- D. Tension is required at maximum on all hair types

113. The "free edge" in nail care refers to:

- A. The skin folded over the base of the nail
- B. The pinkish nail bed under the plate

- C. The part of the nail extending past the fingertip
- D. The half-moon shape at the nail's base

114. A toner is best described as a product that:

- A. Adjusts or refines the tone of pre-lightened hair
- B. Lifts the natural pigment several levels at once
- C. Permanently straightens the hair's curl pattern
- D. Removes all artificial pigment from the strand

115. Choosing the correct shampoo for a client depends most on:

- A. The retail price the salon wants to charge
- B. The fragrance the stylist personally prefers
- C. The client's hair and scalp condition and any treatments done
- D. The brand the salon advertises most heavily

116. A "low elevation" or "graduated" cut creates:

- A. A completely one-length blunt line with no stacking
- B. Maximum layering with no weight anywhere
- C. A stacked, beveled effect with weight building toward the perimeter
- D. A uniform layer of equal length all over the head

117. The most accurate way to determine a client's natural level is to:

- A. Analyze the hair at the scalp in good, natural light
- B. Guess from the color of the previously dyed ends
- C. Ask the client what level they believe it is
- D. Assume it matches the most popular salon shade

118. Disinfectants used on non-porous salon surfaces and tools must be:

- A. Any household cleaner found in the kitchen
- B. Plain warm water with a little dish soap
- C. Approved for salon use and used per label directions
- D. Mixed at random strengths for stronger results

119. A client wants long layers that keep length but add movement. The stylist should:

- A. Cut a blunt one-length perimeter with no layering at all
- B. Use higher elevation to layer while preserving the perimeter length
- C. Remove all the length to achieve short uniform layers
- D. Apply a chemical relaxer to create the movement

120. The final and most important step before a client leaves the salon is to:

- A. Immediately book the most expensive future service
- B. Confirm the client is satisfied and give home-care guidance
- C. Remove the client record from the file system
- D. Clean the station before speaking to the client

Practice Exam 9: Answer Key and Explanations

1. B — Going two shades lighter on uncolored hair requires lift, which only permanent color paired with a developer can achieve. Deposit-only and demi products cannot lighten natural pigment. The developer opens the cuticle, lifts melanin, and deposits the new tone in one step.
2. D — The cortex is the thick middle layer and holds the melanin granules that give hair its natural color, along with the bonds responsible for strength and elasticity. The cuticle is protective and the medulla is the soft core, neither of which carries the working pigment.
3. B — Dry, silvery flaking without inflammation is classic pityriasis capitis simplex (common dandruff). The absence of redness, crusting, or contagion rules out fungal, seborrheic, and psoriatic conditions, all of which present with additional signs.
4. A — A strand test previews the actual outcome — color result, processing time, and how the hair responds — before committing to a full-head service. This protects against unwanted results and lets the stylist adjust formula or timing in advance.
5. A — A taper progressively shortens the hair from longer to shorter, typically toward the nape, blending the length cleanly into the skin. This gradual reduction is what distinguishes a taper from a blunt, one-length perimeter.
6. B — Thinning shears have teeth that cut only some strands within a section, removing bulk while leaving length intact. This creates blended texture rather than the solid line a standard shear produces.
7. C — Hydrogen peroxide is the oxidizing agent that diffuses and lightens the natural melanin in the cortex. It does not add pigment or close the cuticle; its lifting action is the foundation of all oxidative lightening.

8. B — A square face has strong angles, so softening with rounded layers and face-framing texture balances the jawline. Adding width or a blunt jaw-level line would only emphasize the squareness the client wants softened.

9. A — Elasticity is the hair's ability to stretch and return to its original length without breaking, a direct indicator of internal bond and cortex health. Poor elasticity signals weakened hair that may not withstand chemical services.

10. D — A base cream protects the scalp and skin from the caustic relaxer, preventing chemical burns and irritation. It is a barrier, not a processing aid, and does not increase or speed the straightening action.

11. B — Implements exposed to blood or body fluids must be cleaned and then disinfected or sterilized to destroy pathogens. Rinsing, wiping, or storing does nothing to kill bloodborne organisms and poses an infection risk.

12. A — The weight line is the level where the hair hangs heaviest and forms a visible band of density. Recognizing it lets the stylist build or remove weight deliberately to shape the cut.

13. B — Healthy hair and skin sit in a slightly acidic range of about 4.5 to 5.5, the "acid mantle" that protects against bacteria and keeps the cuticle compact. Alkaline products raise this pH and swell the hair.

14. B — Following the manufacturer's mixing ratios precisely ensures correct color result, proper processing, and safe use of the chemicals. Off-ratio mixing alters lift, deposit, and can damage hair or cause reactions.

15. D — Rough texture, dull appearance, and rapid absorption indicate high porosity from a raised, damaged cuticle. Such hair grabs moisture and chemicals quickly and unevenly, which affects color and processing.

16. C — The lunula is the visible whitish half-moon at the base of the nail, the part of the matrix seen through the plate. The free edge, nail bed, and eponychium are distinct structures.

17. D — Draping with a cape and neck strip protects the client's skin and clothing from cut hair, water, and chemicals. The neck strip also prevents the cape from touching the skin directly, an important sanitation measure.

18. A — A double process first lightens the hair to the needed underlying level, then applies a toner to refine it to the target shade. The two distinct chemical steps are what define the service.

19. D — Processing time for a perm depends on the hair's strength and porosity combined with the strength of the solution used. Porous or fine hair processes faster, while resistant hair needs longer; the stylist monitors with test curls.

20. D — Cross-contamination is prevented by cleaning and disinfecting tools and surfaces between every client. Reusing towels, sharing combs, or reusing single-use items transfers pathogens directly between clients.

21. A — Trichology is the scientific study of the hair and scalp and their diseases. Dermatology centers on skin broadly, while cosmetology and histology have different, wider scopes.

22. D — The first step in any restyle consultation is to listen to the client and analyze the hair, scalp, and lifestyle before any product or cutting. This ensures the service suits both the client's wishes and what the hair can realistically achieve.

23. C — Over-direction means combing hair away from its natural fall to a held position, which builds length or weight in a targeted area. It is a deliberate technique for shaping, not for uniform weight removal.

24. B — Anagen is the active growing phase of the hair cycle, during which the strand lengthens. Different hairs are in different phases at any time, and telogen is the resting, not growing, stage.

25. B — Sodium hydroxide relaxers are "lye" relaxers with a high pH and strong straightening power. They differ from milder thio or ammonium-based formulas and require careful handling and a base for scalp protection.

26. D — Scalp massage during shampooing should use firm but gentle pressure with the fingertip cushions, never the nails, to stimulate circulation without scratching. Forceful or fingernail manipulation can damage the scalp.

27. A — The level system measures the depth of color from darkest to lightest, independent of tone. It tells the stylist how light or dark hair is, which guides lift and formulation decisions.

28. B — Leaving metal tools in disinfectant beyond the recommended time can corrode and pit the metal, ruining the implements. Longer soaking does not improve disinfection and damages the tool's surface.

29. C — Fine, limp hair gains apparent volume from a layered cut that removes weight plus root-lifting products that lift at the base. Heavy oils or blunt one-length cutting would weigh the hair down further.

30. A — The cuticle is the outermost layer of overlapping, translucent scales that protect the inner hair. When it lies flat, hair appears smooth and shiny; when raised, hair feels rough and porous.

31. A — Galvanic current is a constant direct current used in some salon treatments to aid product penetration and produce other facial or scalp effects. It has no cutting, bonding, or disinfecting function.

32. D — A blunt cut leaves all hair at one length with a solid, even perimeter and no internal layering or texture. This produces maximum weight and a clean, strong line.

33. A — Unwanted warmth (orange/red) is neutralized with a toner from the opposite side of the color wheel, such as blue or green based. The complementary tone cancels the excess warmth to balance the result.

34. C — The sebaceous gland secretes sebum, the natural oil that lubricates and protects the hair and skin. It does not produce pigment, move the hair, or generate new hair cells.

35. B — With a pregnant client, the professional approach is to follow salon policy and product guidance and advise her to check with her physician if there is any doubt. Blanket refusal or proceeding carelessly are both inappropriate.

36. C — Graduation is created by cutting at low to medium elevation, producing a stacked or beveled buildup of weight. It sits between a zero-elevation blunt cut and high-elevation uniform layering.
37. A — Correct hand and wrist positioning protects the stylist from strain and repetitive-motion injury over a long career. Ergonomics is a genuine occupational-health concern in this physically repetitive trade.
38. A — A patch or predisposition test detects a possible allergic reaction to color before it is applied to the whole head. It is a safety test for sensitivity, distinct from a strand test that previews the result.
39. D — Pediculosis capitis (head lice) is an active, contagious infestation that contraindicates service and requires referral. Mild dryness, product buildup, or split ends are not communicable conditions.
40. C — The neutralizer in a perm re-hardens (reforms) the disulfide bonds into the hair's new curled shape, fixing the result. The waving lotion broke the bonds first; the neutralizer locks the new form.
41. B — A curl-loosening texturizer works by partially breaking and then reforming the hair's bonds into a looser pattern. It is a chemical process, not a wet set or a cutting technique.
42. A — Elevation, also called projection or lifting, is the angle at which hair is held away from the head while cutting. It directly controls layering and graduation in the finished shape.
43. A — Color coming out darker than intended is most often caused by hair more porous than expected, which grabs extra pigment. Low developer or short processing would tend to under-deposit, not over-darken.
44. C — The correct shampoo sequence is to wet the hair, shampoo and massage, rinse thoroughly, then condition. Conditioning before shampooing or skipping the rinse defeats the purpose of cleansing.
45. C — Safety Data Sheets provide handling, hazard, storage, and first-aid information for the products used in the salon. They exist for safety and emergency reference, not pricing or advertising.

46. B — Sectioning ensures even, controlled, and thorough application of product across the head. Working in organized sections prevents missed spots and uneven processing in chemical services.
47. B — A razor produces softer, more tapered ends than scissors because it cuts the hair on an angle rather than straight across. This creates wispy texture and movement instead of a blunt line.
48. D — The follicle is the tube-like pocket in the skin from which the hair grows. The visible strand, the oil gland, and the pigment cells are separate structures associated with but distinct from the follicle.
49. C — A cowlick must be accounted for by respecting its growth direction and leaving enough length to control it. Cutting against it or ignoring it leaves the hair sticking up and unmanageable.
50. A — Demi- and semi-permanent colors deposit tone without lifting natural pigment. They coat or lightly penetrate the cuticle to add color but cannot make hair lighter.
51. B — Vivid fashion colors last longer with color-safe products, less frequent washing, and cooler water, all of which slow fading. Daily clarifying, sun exposure, and skipping conditioner accelerate color loss.
52. B — The three primary colors are red, yellow, and blue, from which all other colors are mixed. Orange, green, and violet are secondary colors created by combining primaries.
53. D — The arrector pili muscle contracts to make the hair stand upright, producing "goosebumps." It does not produce oil, pigment, or new hair cells.
54. D — Pre-service analysis of the scalp and hair identifies contraindications and guides product and technique selection. Skipping it risks chemical reactions, damage, or an unsuitable service.
55. C — A one-length or zero-degree cut is made with no elevation so all the ends fall to a single perimeter line. Any lift would introduce layering or graduation instead.

56. A — Higher-volume developer provides greater lifting potential because it contains more available oxygen to break down melanin. Lower volumes deposit or lift less; volume directly affects the result.

57. D — Tingling and itching during color in a sensitive client signal a possible reaction, so the product must be rinsed immediately and the client assessed. Adding product or waiting it out risks a serious reaction.

58. C — Layering removes weight to reduce bulk and create movement or shape. It is the opposite of building a solid blunt perimeter and does not alter curl pattern.

59. D — Disease-producing bacteria are classified as pathogenic. Non-pathogenic, saprophytic, and beneficial organisms do not cause disease in the host.

60. D — Ethical retailing means recommending only products that genuinely suit the client's hair and goals. Pushing unneeded or overpriced items, or staying silent when a product would help, both fail the client.

61. C — Tension is the amount of pull applied to the hair while cutting, which affects how cleanly and evenly the line is cut. Too much tension on fragile hair can distort the line or break strands.

62. D — A virgin application means the hair has never been chemically colored before, so it is in its untouched natural state. This affects how the formula lifts and deposits compared with previously treated hair.

63. A — A disclosed allergy should be documented, the allergen avoided, and products adjusted accordingly. Ignoring or testing the allergen would endanger the client and breach professional duty.

64. C — Warm water raises the cuticle, helping cleansing agents and products work on the hair during shampooing. It does not dissolve scales, change color, or seal the cuticle shut.

65. C — The guideline is the first section cut, used as the reference length for cutting the rest of the hair. Following it consistently keeps the cut even and intentional.

66. D — Eumelanin and pheomelanin are the two melanin pigments that determine natural hair color, eumelanin giving brown/black and pheomelanin red/yellow tones. They are pigments, not bonds, bacteria, or glands.
67. D — Foils isolate and hold the lightener on selected strands while it processes, keeping product off the surrounding hair. This control is what makes precise highlighting possible.
68. C — Proper posture and chair height protect the stylist's back, neck, and overall musculoskeletal health during long days of repetitive work. Ergonomic setup is essential to a sustainable career.
69. D — Demi-permanent color deposits tone, blends grey, and fades gradually over time without lifting natural pigment. It is gentler than permanent color and contains no strong lifting agents.
70. D — A finger wave shapes wet hair into S-shaped waves using combs and the fingers, a styling technique with no chemical action. It does not alter bonds, remove bulk, or lighten hair.
71. C — Thorough rinsing stops continued chemical processing and prevents over-processing, damage, or scalp irritation. Residual chemicals keep acting on the hair if not removed.
72. B — Density is the number of individual hairs per square inch of scalp, a measure of how thick or sparse the hair is overall. It is distinct from the diameter of a single strand.
73. C — Correcting uneven faded color begins with analyzing the hair and often filling or pre-pigmenting the porous areas so color takes evenly. Skipping analysis or applying flat color over uneven porosity worsens the result.
74. A — A balanced cut is even and symmetrical, with weight distributed as intended on both sides of the head. Balance does not mean one length only; it means the design is consistent and deliberate.
75. C — A shared shampoo bowl must be cleaned and disinfected between each client to prevent the spread of pathogens. End-of-day cleaning or relying on water rinsing leaves contamination between clients.

76. B — The base or scalp color refers to the client's overall background or natural level, which the highlights are placed against. It is the reference for choosing how light the highlights should go.

77. B — A receding hairline is handled by choosing a style that works with the hairline rather than fighting it. Forcing coverage or unsuitable techniques draws more attention to the area.

78. A — Cosmetic dermatitis from chemical exposure is prevented by wearing gloves and protecting the skin during services. Removing barriers or reducing handwashing increases, not decreases, the risk.

79. D — The medulla is the innermost layer of the hair and is often absent in fine or naturally light hair. It is the central core, distinct from the cuticle, cortex, and the follicle's oil gland.

80. C — With badly split ends, the stylist should explain the condition and recommend removing enough length to restore healthy ends. Cutting too little leaves damage, while shaving to the scalp ignores the client's wishes.

81. C — As natural pigment lifts, it passes through warm underlying tones and reaches pale yellow at the lightest stages. Black, red, and blue/green do not represent the lightest end of the lifting sequence.

82. B — A blowout with a round brush temporarily smooths and shapes the hair using heat and tension. The change is physical and lasts until the next wash; no bonds are permanently altered.

83. D — Electrical tools must be checked before use to spot frayed cords or faults that pose a shock or fire hazard. This is a safety inspection, not a cosmetic or marketing step.

84. C — Porosity is the hair's ability to absorb moisture and chemicals, governed by the condition of the cuticle. It is distinct from curl pattern, density, and strand diameter.

85. A — A result one level lighter and cooler calls for a cool-toned shade one level up with the appropriate developer for that small amount of lift. A darker, warmer, or deposit-only choice would miss the goal.

86. A — Good ventilation matters most when working with chemical products that release fumes or vapors, protecting both stylist and client from inhalation. Dry cutting or an empty salon poses far less inhalation risk.

87. B — Client records document formulas, history, and preferences for reliable, consistent future service. They support, rather than replace, ongoing consultation and are kept confidential.

88. A — Each perm section must be no larger than the rod can hold so the hair wraps smoothly and evenly for an even curl. Oversized sections wrap poorly and process unevenly.

89. D — Resistant hair has a tightly compact, smooth, low-porosity cuticle that slows the entry of chemicals. Such hair often needs longer processing or stronger formulation to take a service.

90. A — An unhappy client should be met by listening calmly, acknowledging the concern, and offering a fair solution. Arguing, ignoring, or blaming the client damages trust and the salon's reputation.

91. A — A neutralizing shampoo after a hydroxide relaxer restores the hair to a normal pH and stops the relaxing action. Leaving the hair alkaline would continue processing and damage the strand.

92. D — Ninety-degree elevation means the hair is held straight out, perpendicular to the head, which produces uniform layering. Flat against the head is zero degrees and straight down is the natural fall.

93. C — A wash-and-go curly style is best supported by applying curl-defining product to wet hair and minimizing disruption while it dries. Brushing dry curls or skipping product breaks up the pattern and causes frizz.

94. D — A test curl checks whether a satisfactory S-shaped curl has formed during perm processing. It monitors the result, unlike allergy, density, or color tests that measure different things.

95. B — Capes, towels, and linens must be clean and fresh for each client to prevent the transfer of bacteria and debris. Reusing or sharing soiled linens is a sanitation violation.

96. B — Grey hair can be more resistant and may require adjusted formulation or longer processing to take color evenly. It does not process faster, contain more melanin, or refuse color entirely.

97. A — A stationary or fixed guideline brings all the hair to a single non-moving guide, producing increasing length away from that point. A traveling guide moves with each section instead.

98. D — In a medical emergency the first priority is to ensure the client's safety and call for emergency help as needed. Continuing the service, moving the client improperly, or applying products would all be unsafe.

99. A — A single-process color performs lifting and depositing together in one application. Lightening then toning separately, or layering two colors, would be multi-step double-process services.

100. C — Red, itchy, inflamed patches from an irritant or allergen describe contact dermatitis. Simple flaking, a freckle, or healthy skin do not involve this inflammatory reaction.

101. B — A weight line is softened or removed by layering or texturizing to reduce the buildup of density. Adding a blunt edge or color, or increasing tension, would not redistribute the weight.

102. B — Lightener should be mixed to a smooth, creamy consistency so it clings to the strands without dripping or drying out. Watery, powder-dry, or clay-thick mixtures apply unevenly and process poorly.

103. C — Keeping client information confidential respects privacy and maintains professional trust. Confidentiality is an ethical obligation, not a matter of pricing or convenience.

104. C — A blunt jaw-length bob is built on a zero-elevation, one-length cutting approach so all the ends fall to a single line. Graduation, layering, or over-direction would change it into a different shape.

105. B — A thorough rinse before neutralizing removes the waving lotion so it does not continue to over-process the hair. Residual lotion left under the neutralizer would keep breaking bonds and damage the curl.

106. A — Hair is primarily composed of keratin, a fibrous structural protein. Collagen is in connective tissue, melanin is a pigment, and sebum is an oil, none of which form the hair's main structure.

107. D — Thick, coarse, dense hair can be made sleeker by removing bulk with texturizing and using smoothing products and technique. Adding volume or leaving all the weight in works against the client's goal.

108. D — A tool that touched broken skin requires cleaning followed by an appropriate disinfection process to destroy pathogens. Wiping, cold rinsing, or storing it unwashed leaves infectious risk.

109. B — Complementary colors opposite on the wheel are used to neutralize or cancel an unwanted tone. Placed together in formulation they offset each other rather than intensify the color.

110. A — The angle at which the shears are held depends on the desired line, shape, and effect of the haircut. Tool brand, hair color, and time of day have no bearing on the cutting angle.

111. C — A perm that "didn't take" is commonly due to under-processing, weak solution, or rods too large to form the wanted curl. These factors leave the hair under-curled despite the service.

112. B — Excess tension on fine or fragile hair can stretch and snap the strands and distort the cutting line. Reduced tension protects fragile hair and keeps the line accurate.

113. C — The free edge is the part of the nail that extends past the fingertip. The skin fold, nail bed, and lunula at the base are separate structures.

114. A — A toner adjusts or refines the tone of pre-lightened hair, neutralizing or enhancing the underlying color. It deposits tone only and does not lift, straighten, or strip pigment.

115. C — Shampoo choice depends most on the client's hair and scalp condition and any chemical treatments performed. Price, fragrance, and advertising are secondary to matching the product to the hair's needs.

116. C — A low-elevation graduated cut produces a stacked, beveled effect with weight building toward the perimeter. This differs from a one-length blunt line or high-elevation uniform layers.

117. A — A client's natural level is most accurately determined by analyzing the hair at the scalp in good natural light. Dyed ends, the client's guess, or popular shades are unreliable references.

118. C — Salon disinfectants must be approved for professional use and applied exactly per label directions to be effective. Household cleaners, plain soapy water, or random strengths do not ensure proper disinfection.

119. B — Long layers that keep length while adding movement are achieved with higher elevation that layers the interior while preserving the perimeter length. A blunt cut, full removal, or a relaxer would not give that effect.

120. B — The final and most important step is to confirm the client is satisfied and provide home-care guidance. This secures the result, supports retention, and reflects professional care before the client leaves.