CDS & NDA English Spot the Error questions with answer and Explanation

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1. My friend was habitual to drive a car at very high speed.

Error in (b) – “habitual to drive”
Correction: “My friend was **in the habit of driving** a car at very high speed.”
Explanation: The word *habitual* is an adjective, and it should be used as “**in the habit of doing something**” rather than “habitual to drive.”

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2. Being a day of national mourning the offices were closed and the national flag flew half mast.

Error in (c) – “half mast”
Correction: “The national flag flew at **half-mast**.”
Explanation: The correct expression is **“at half-mast”**, which refers to the position of the flag when it is flown midway to show mourning.

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3. If you are wanting to watch the birds nesting you must not let them see you.

Error in (a) – “are wanting”
Correction: “If you **want** to watch the birds nesting, you must not let them see you.”
Explanation: The verb **“want”** is a stative verb, meaning it does not take the continuous form (i.e., “wanting” is incorrect).

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4. He does not listen to what I say, although I am advising him for a long time.

Error in (c) – “I am advising him for a long time”
Correction: “He does not listen to what I say, although **I have been advising him for a long time**.”
Explanation: The present continuous (**“I am advising”**) is incorrect because the action has been happening for a long time. The **present perfect continuous tense** (“have been advising”) should be used.

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5. It is most essential for us to reach the station before noon lest we should miss the train.

No error.
Explanation: The sentence is grammatically correct. The phrase **“lest we should”** is used correctly to indicate a negative possibility.

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6. I asked him what had brought him there.

✅ **No error.**
Explanation: The sentence is in correct **past perfect tense** (had brought) for a past event. No correction is needed.

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7. The guards dare not to harm him.

❌ **Error in (c) – “dare not to harm”**
✅ **Correction:** “The guards **dare not harm** him.”
Explanation: The verb **“dare”** when used in a negative sentence does not take “to” before the following verb. It should be **“dare not harm”**, not **“dare not to harm.”**

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8. The Principal looks very worried because students are on strike for the last fifteen days as a protest against…

❌ **Error in (b) – “are on strike for the last fifteen days”**
✅ **Correction:** “The Principal looks very worried because students **have been on strike for the last fifteen days** as a protest against…”
Explanation: When referring to an action that **started in the past and continues into the present**, we use the **present perfect continuous tense** (**“have been on strike”**), not simple present (**“are on strike”**).

Summary of Corrections:

1. **habitual to drive → in the habit of driving**
2. **half mast → at half-mast**
3. **are wanting → want**
4. **I am advising → I have been advising**
5. ✅ **No error**
6. ✅ **No error**
7. **dare not to harm → dare not harm**
8. **are on strike → have been on strike**

9. The king was embarrassed to find evidences against his own queen.

❌ **Error in (b) – “evidences”**
✅ **Correction:** “The king was embarrassed to find **evidence** against his own queen.”
Explanation: The word **“evidence”** is an **uncountable noun** and does not have a plural form. It should always be used in singular form without “s”. If needed, we can say **“pieces of evidence.”**

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10. As I prefer coffee than tea my friends always take the trouble to get me a cup of coffee whenever I visit them.

❌ **Error in (a) – “prefer coffee than tea”**
✅ **Correction:** “As I prefer coffee **to** tea, my friends always take the trouble to get me a cup of coffee whenever I visit them.”
Explanation: The verb **“prefer”** is always followed by **“to”** (not “than”) when

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comparing two things. The correct structure is **“prefer X to Y.”**

Summary of Corrections:

1. **evidences → evidence**
2. **prefer coffee than tea → prefer coffee to tea**

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