

Read the text and answer the questions that follow.

# David's dilemma

Young David Collins—15 years old, dermatologically challenged and prone to extended periods of introspective behaviour—had reached a crisis point in his young life. Having not reached a crisis point previously, he was totally flummoxed as to his next steps. David gave his latest rash a satisfying scratch, absent-mindedly flicking flakes of skin from his arm to his jeans and then to the floor, while he gazed, unseeing, out of his bedroom window.

For the first time in his life he needed to consider a matter of which he had limited experience: girls, or, more exactly, one girl in particular—Alison Freyburg, with her curly blonde hair, comical freckles and huge round eyes. She had made eye contact with him, via her thick lenses, during yesterday's physics class. It seemed like eye contact. It certainly felt like eye contact: the flushing he felt was most definitely a physiological response, and a clue that his (previously untested) hormones were fully operational. But perhaps it wasn't? Perhaps it was simply a refractive distortion and instead she had sought optical engagement with his neighbouring classmate, Alex Prokowsky? Despite the fact that Alex and David had been close friends since their kindergarten days and on the basis of rather flimsy evidence, David's heart darkened towards his old friend.

'David, for the last time, FEED THE DOG!'

The tone and volume suggested his mother had issued the request some time earlier. He hadn't heard. She normally didn't escalate to 'demand-level' until she'd asked two or three times. David returned to the everyday, finding comfort in familiar routine and eschewing introspection for the time being. The dog, Lucy, lapped up her dinner and came to rest her chin on his knees, in the way that dogs will when they know something's not quite right. He felt comforted, but it didn't last.

After dinner he bolted upstairs to 'finish his physics assignment' and immediately resumed his position on the end of his bed, staring out of the window. He chose to logic his way out of the situation: if Alison Freyburg had been looking directly, and intently, at him, then this may indicate she had an interest in him that extended beyond a purely academic association; therefore he should attempt to return the eye contact to test the hypothesis and advance the relationship. On the other hand: if Alison Freyburg had been gazing directly, and intently, at Alex Prokowsky, then he should confront Alex and demand that he cease eye contact with his 'girlfriend', therefore eradicating competition and securing Alison for himself. He felt emotionally reduced after this exercise, and not overly confident that his logic withstood close scrutiny.

15. The phrase 'crisis point' adds humour to the narrative by
- (A) contrasting David's personality with his actions.
  - (B) suggesting that David's family often find themselves in awkward situations.
  - (C) exaggerating a normal situation for a teenager to the level of a disaster.
  - (D) alluding to the idea that most young people struggle with relationships.
16. The word 'flummoxed' means that David felt
- (A) disappointed.
  - (B) bewildered.
  - (C) determined.
  - (D) betrayed.
17. Why did David feel uncertain about the direction of Alison's gaze?
- (A) He thought his physiological response had impaired his eyesight.
  - (B) Her glasses made it difficult to know where she was looking.
  - (C) The lighting in the classroom made it hard to see clearly.
  - (D) His classmate was partially blocking his view.
18. Which option could replace the phrase 'Despite the fact that'?
- (A) Since
  - (B) Whereas
  - (C) Although
  - (D) Nonetheless
19. What was the flimsy evidence that led David to think negatively of Alex?
- (A) an intuitive feeling that Alex and Alison were not good friends
  - (B) a rumour that Alex secretly admired Alison
  - (C) the assumption that Alison was interested in Alex
  - (D) the possibility that Alison and Alex were playing a practical joke
20. In the final paragraph, the statement 'finish his physics assignment' is placed in quotation marks to show that
- (A) it was not typical of the way that David spoke to his mother.
  - (B) the idea belonged to David's mother.
  - (C) it was an excuse that David used to justify leaving the dinner table.
  - (D) the words were David's thoughts.
21. What particular piece of information did David use to decide his course of action?
- (A) whether or not Alison liked physics
  - (B) how long Alex had known Alison
  - (C) how long Alison had gazed at Alex
  - (D) which direction Alison was gazing
22. The overall tone of this text could be described as
- (A) comical.
  - (B) accusatory.
  - (C) satirical.
  - (D) contemptuous.