



SPOTTING THE ERRORS

ADVERBS

A Self-Help Booklet for AFCAT Aspirants

Workman-like English · Discovery-Based Learning · Self-Assessment

What's inside this booklet

- Step up for Success — your motivation and goals
- How Spotting-Errors Questions on Adverb Look — 10 solved examples
- What Do You Understand by Adverb? — a discovery-based lesson
- Would You Assess Yourself as You Learn? — 30 fresh practice questions
- Check Your Target Learning Performance — answers & explanations



Step up for Success

Dear AFCAT Aspirants,

Welcome to a section that rewards a sharp ear over rote memory: Spotting the Errors on Adverbs. An adverb question hides one small slip — a word out of place, a mixed-up degree word, a disguised adjective posing as an adverb — inside an otherwise ordinary-looking sentence. The trick isn't to hunt for 'hard' grammar; it's to train yourself to notice the moment a sentence simply sounds off, and to know exactly why.

By the end of this booklet, you will spot word-order slips, degree-word confusions, and adjective-adverb traps on sight, and resolve each item calmly and correctly — well inside 30 seconds. Read slowly today, so you can race tomorrow. Let's begin!

Your target learning goals for this booklet

- ✓ Recognise adverb errors on sight, without translating rules in your head.
- ✓ Tell true adverbs apart from -ly adjectives that only look like adverbs.
- ✓ Master word-order (the MPT rule) and degree-word traps (very/much, so/too, enough).
- ✓ Self-check your progress with two full practice sets before test day.



How Do Spotting-Errors Questions on Adverb Look?



Every question in this section gives you one sentence, broken into three underlined parts — (a), (b) and (c). One of these parts may carry an adverb error. If the sentence is completely correct, you choose (d), 'No error'. Here are ten examples to warm up your eye before we go into the concept notes.

Q1. The sentry watched the gate (a)/ careful (b)/ throughout the night. (c)/ No error (d)

Q2. The recruits were given (a)/ a thoroughly briefing (b)/ before the mission. (c)/ No error (d)

Q3. I am (a)/ much happy (b)/ that you cleared the SSB interview. (c)/ No error (d)

Q4. He is too weak (a)/ to complete (b)/ the forty-kilometre route march. (c)/ No error (d)

Q5. The signal was so faint (a)/ the operator could barely (b)/ make out the message. (c)/ No error (d)

Q6. The candidate was enough confident (a)/ to face (b)/ the toughest questions on the board. (c)/ No error (d)

Q7. The soldiers defended (a)/ the hardly earned (b)/ victory with their lives. (c)/ No error (d)

Q8. There is no route else (a)/ than this one (b)/ to reach the base camp before dawn. (c)/ No error (d)

Q9. He could hardly find nothing (a)/ useful in the abandoned bunker (b)/ during the search. (c)/ No error (d)

Q10. Return to the base direct (a)/ after the briefing (b)/ without any detour. (c)/ No error (d)

Answers & Explanations

Q	Ans	Explanation
1	(b)	Correction: "watched the gate carefully". An adverb, not the adjective 'careful', is needed to modify the verb 'watched'.
2	(b)	Correction: "a thorough briefing". 'Briefing' is a noun, so it needs the adjective 'thorough' before it, not the adverb 'thoroughly'.
3	(b)	Correction: "very happy". 'Very' is used in the positive degree; 'much' belongs with the comparative degree or with a past-participle (V3) adjective.
4	(d)	Correct as given. Correct. 'Too + adjective + to + bare infinitive' is the standard structure, and it is used correctly here.
5	(b)	Correction: "that the operator could barely". 'So' must always be completed with its correlative 'that'; it cannot stand alone as an intensifier here.
6	(a)	Correction: "confident enough". As an adverb, 'enough' is always placed after the adjective it modifies, never before it.
7	(b)	Correction: "the hard-earned victory". 'Hardly' means 'scarcely, almost not' — the opposite of what's meant here. 'Hard' (= with great effort) is required.

Q	Ans	Explanation
8	(b)	Correction: "than this one — else but this one". 'Else' is followed by 'but', never by 'than'.
9	(a)	Correction: "hardly find anything". 'Hardly' is already a near-negative; pairing it with the negative 'nothing' creates an incorrect double negative.
10	(d)	Correct as given. Correct. 'Direct' (meaning 'by the straight route') is the right adverb here; 'directly' would mean 'at once' instead.

What Do You Understand by Adverb?

Before we hand you a single rule, we want you to find it yourself. Read each short example, sit with the 'Can You Spot the Pattern?' question for a moment, and only then look at the 'Rule Unlocked' box. Grammar you discover sticks far longer than grammar you're told.

Let's begin with a mystery

Can You Spot the Pattern?

Read these two sentences aloud, and notice which one actually tells you something extra about the action:

"The officer briefed the recruits."

"The officer briefed the recruits thoroughly."

Both sentences are grammatically complete. But the second one answers a question the first one leaves hanging: HOW did the officer brief them? That one added word — 'thoroughly' — is doing a very specific job: it's adding information about the verb. It could just as easily have told you where, when, how often, or to what degree something happened. That flexible, information-adding word is an adverb.

Rule Unlocked

An adverb is a word that adds more information to a verb ('briefed thoroughly'), an adjective ('remarkably calm'), or another adverb ('extremely well'). It usually answers How? When? Where? How often? or To what extent?

Sorting the Adverb Family

Can You Spot the Pattern?

Look at these six sentences and ask yourself: what question is each underlined word answering?

(i) He climbed the ridge fearlessly. (ii) She waited outside. (iii) The convoy departed yesterday. (iv) He always double-checks his kit. (v) The mission was nearly over. (vi) He certainly deserves the medal.

Six different jobs, six different families. 'Fearlessly' tells you HOW he climbed — manner. 'Outside' tells you WHERE she waited — place. 'Yesterday' tells you WHEN the convoy left — time. 'Always' tells you HOW OFTEN he checks his kit — frequency. 'Nearly' tells you TO WHAT EXTENT the mission was over — degree. And 'certainly' isn't describing an action at all — it's telling you how sure the speaker is about the whole idea — affirmation.

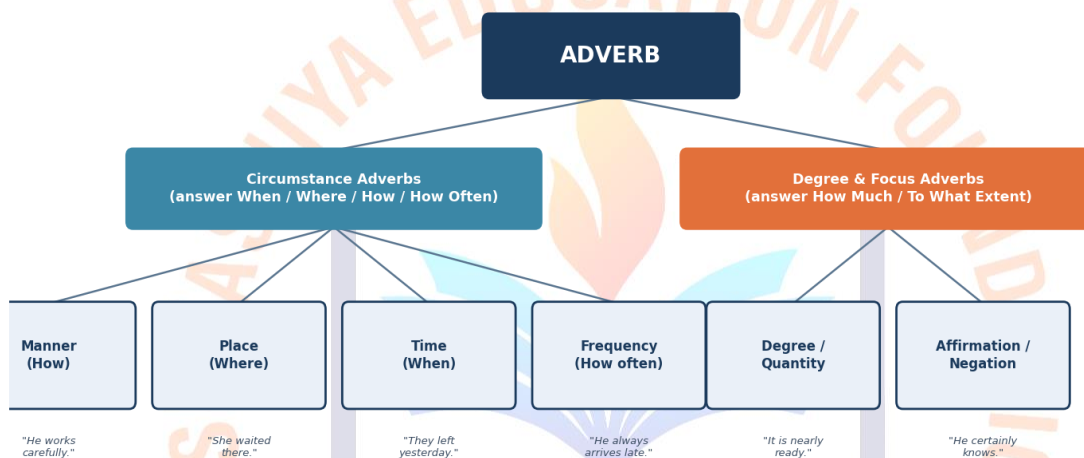


Figure 1: The Adverb family tree

Rule Unlocked

The six working kinds of Adverb:

- Manner — how (carefully, fearlessly, well)
- Place — where (there, outside, nearby)
- Time — when (yesterday, soon, daily)
- Frequency — how often (always, never, seldom)
- Degree / Quantity — how much (nearly, enough, little)
- Affirmation / Negation — how sure (certainly, surely, not)

Same Word, Two Jobs: Forms That Don't Change

Can You Spot the Pattern?

"He is a fast runner" and "He runs fast." — is 'fast' doing the same job in both sentences, or a different one?

Different job, same spelling. In the first sentence, 'fast' describes the noun 'runner' — it's an adjective. In the second, it describes the verb 'runs' — it's an adverb. A small set of English words simply refuse to take '-ly': fast, first, next, back, ill, better, best, hard, early, late, straight, direct. Add an '-ly' to most of these ('fastly', 'nextly') and you've invented a word that doesn't exist.

✗ Notice This	✓ Now This
She arrived lately for the parade.	She arrived late for the parade.
<i>Why: 'Lately' means 'recently' and does not describe timing of arrival; the unchanged form 'late' is the correct adverb here.</i>	
He worked hardly all night.	He worked hard all night.
<i>Why: 'Hardly' means 'scarcely, almost not' — the opposite of the intended meaning. 'Hard' (= with great effort) keeps its adjective form as an adverb.</i>	

For most other adverbs ending in '-ly', the comparative and superlative are formed with 'more' and 'most' — never with '-er' / '-est'.

✗ Notice This	✓ Now This
This report is written more clearly than the last one.	(same — already correct)
<i>Why: Multi-syllable -ly adverbs take 'more' / 'most', not '-er' / '-est' (never 'clearlier').</i>	
Of all the cadets, she performed most beautifullier.	Of all the cadets, she performed most beautifully.
<i>Why: 'Most' and '-er/-ier' cannot combine — that is a double comparison. Use only one marker of degree.</i>	

Where Does the Adverb Stand? — Position Rules

Can You Spot the Pattern?

"Her kit was ready nearly." and "Her kit was nearly ready." — only one of these makes sense before an inspection. Which, and why?

'Nearly ready' is the one that works. When an adverb modifies an adjective or another adverb, it must come immediately before the word it modifies — never after. The same logic governs 'only' and 'even': both must sit immediately before the exact word they are meant to qualify, or the meaning of the whole sentence can quietly shift.

✗ Notice This	✓ Now This
Her kit was ready nearly for the inspection.	Her kit was nearly ready for the inspection.
<i>Why: The degree-adverb 'nearly' must precede the adjective 'ready', which it modifies.</i>	
I worked only two sums in the test.	I only worked two sums in the test.
<i>Why: 'Only' should sit immediately before the word it limits. (Compare: 'I worked only two sums' — emphasising the number instead.)</i>	

Adverbs of frequency — always, ever, never, seldom, often, rarely — follow a different rule: they are placed before the main verb, but after the verb 'to be' or an auxiliary.

✗ Notice This	✓ Now This
He late always arrives at the parade ground.	He always arrives at the parade ground.
<i>Why: Frequency adverbs sit directly before the main verb they modify — 'always' before 'arrives'.</i>	
She always is punctual for the roll call.	She is always punctual for the roll call.
<i>Why: With the verb 'to be', the frequency adverb follows it: 'is always', not 'always is'.</i>	

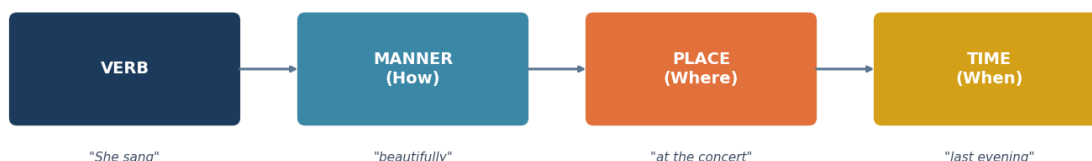
The MPT Rule — When Manner, Place and Time Share a Sentence

Can You Spot the Pattern?

"He marched yesterday briskly towards the camp." — something about the order of these adverbs feels tangled. Can you rearrange it so it reads naturally?

When Manner, Place and Time adverbs all appear in one sentence, formal English follows a fixed sequence: Manner, then Place, then Time — MPT, for short. Reordering them the way we did above, into 'He marched briskly towards the camp yesterday', instantly reads more naturally, and it is the form examiners expect.

THE MPT RULE — word order when Manner, Place and Time appear together



Full sentence: "She sang beautifully at the concert last evening." ✓

Reversing the order — e.g. Time before Place — reads unnaturally in formal English. ✗

Figure 2: The MPT rule — Manner before Place before Time

Rule Unlocked

When Manner, Place and Time adverbs occur together, the standard sequence is Manner → Place → Time (the MPT rule). Adverbs of manner, place and time are also generally placed after the verb, or after the object of the verb, when they appear alone.

Degree Words That Love to Trip You Up: So, Too, Very and Much

Can You Spot the Pattern?

"He is so disciplined." — does this sentence feel finished, or is it waiting for something? Now compare: "He is so disciplined that he never misses a parade."

The first version feels like it's holding its breath — 'so' and 'too' are intensifiers that promise a result, and that promise must be paid off with their correlatives: 'that' (for 'so') and 'to' (for 'too'). Leave the correlative out, and the sentence simply sounds incomplete to a trained ear.

X Notice This	✓ Now This
He is so disciplined.	He is so disciplined that he never misses a parade.
Why: 'So' needs its correlative 'that' to complete the idea it introduces.	
The load is too heavy.	The load is too heavy for one man to carry.
Why: 'Too' needs its correlative 'to' (here, 'for one man to carry') to complete the idea.	

'Very' and 'much' both mean roughly 'to a great extent', but they keep to different territory. 'Very' pairs with the positive degree and with '-ing' (V1+ing) forms; 'much' pairs with the comparative degree and with past-participle (V3) forms.

X Notice This	✓ Now This
He is much intelligent.	He is very intelligent.
Why: 'Very' is used in the positive degree; 'much' is reserved for the comparative ('much more intelligent') and for V3 forms.	
The briefing was much interesting.	The briefing was very interesting.
Why: 'Interesting' is a V1+ing form, which pairs with 'very', not 'much'.	
The crowd was very impressed by the display.	The crowd was much impressed by the display.
Why: 'Impressed' is a V3 (past-participle) form, which pairs with 'much', not 'very'.	

'Enough' — An Adjective in the Morning, an Adverb by Evening

Can You Spot the Pattern?

"He has enough time." and "He is fit enough." — 'enough' sits in a different place in each sentence. Can you tell why?

'Enough' works both jobs, and its position tells you which one it's doing. As an adjective, it comes before the noun it quantifies ('enough time'). As an adverb, it comes after the adjective it modifies ('fit enough') — the reverse order to almost every other adverb of degree.

Rule Unlocked

'Enough' as an adjective precedes the noun ('enough money'). 'Enough' as an adverb follows the adjective it modifies ('kind enough', 'confident enough') — never precedes it.

Rather and Fairly — Cousins, Not Twins

Can You Spot the Pattern?

"She is fairly confident." and "He is rather nervous." — both 'fairly' and 'rather' mean roughly 'moderately'. So why does swapping them here feel slightly wrong?

Because they keep different company. 'Fairly' pairs naturally with favourable adjectives (fairly confident, fairly good), while 'rather' pairs naturally with unfavourable ones (rather nervous, rather weak). 'Rather' has three other lives worth knowing: correcting something just said ('not a delay, but rather a cancellation'), expressing preference with a bare infinitive ('would rather stay than go'), and softening an opinion before verbs of thinking and feeling ('I rather think he's right').

✗ Notice This	✓ Now This
He would rather to wait for backup.	He would rather wait for backup.
<i>Why: 'Would rather', 'had better' and 'rather than' are followed directly by the bare infinitive, without 'to'.</i>	
She is rather brilliant at tactics.	She is fairly brilliant at tactics.
<i>Why: 'Brilliant' is a favourable adjective, which pairs with 'fairly'; 'rather' is reserved for unfavourable adjectives.</i>	

The 'As' Trap and the Verbs That Refuse Extra Adverbs

A small set of verbs — regard, describe, define, treat, view, know — need the linking adverb 'as' before their predicative ('I regard him as a mentor'). A different set — name, elect, think, consider, call, appoint, choose — never take 'as' at all ('They elected him captain', not 'elected him as captain').

✗ Notice This	✓ Now This
The board considered him as the best candidate.	The board considered him the best candidate.

✗ Notice This	✓ Now This
<i>Why: 'Consider' is never followed by 'as' before its predicative.</i>	
They named him as the team leader.	They named him the team leader.
<i>Why: 'Name' (meaning to appoint) does not take 'as' before its predicative.</i>	

Double Negatives and the 'Never' Trap

Can You Spot the Pattern?

"No one scarcely practises drill on Sundays." — read it twice. Does it actually mean what it seems to mean?

It doesn't — and that's the trap. 'Scarcely', 'hardly', 'barely', 'seldom', 'nowhere', 'nothing' and 'neither' are all near-negative words, and English (unlike some other languages) does not stack two negatives in one clause. 'No one scarcely practises' technically cancels itself out; the intended meaning needs just one negative word: 'Scarcely anyone practises'. The same caution applies to 'never', which specifically means 'not ever' — using it as a stand-in for a simple 'not' overstates and distorts the sentence.

✗ Notice This	✓ Now This
No one scarcely practises drill on Sundays.	Scarcely anyone practises drill on Sundays.
<i>Why: Two negative words ('no one' and 'scarcely') cannot combine in one clause.</i>	
I never remember meeting him before.	I do not remember ever meeting him before.
<i>Why: 'Never' means 'not ever'; for a simple negative recollection, use 'do not... ever', not 'never'.</i>	

Rule Unlocked

- Never combine two negative words (scarcely, hardly, barely, nowhere, nothing, neither) in the same clause.
- 'Seldom or never' and 'seldom if ever' are correct; 'seldom or ever' is not.
- 'Little if anything' is correct; 'little or anything' is not.

Adjectives in Disguise: The '-ly' Imposters

Can You Spot the Pattern?

"He behaved friendly towards the new cadets." — 'friendly' ends in '-ly' just like most adverbs. So why is this sentence actually wrong?

Because '-ly' is not a reliable adverb signal here — 'friendly' is an adjective, full stop, and it has no adverb form at all. It joins a whole family of '-ly' words that describe nouns, not verbs: manly, masterly, slovenly, monthly, weekly, sickly, costly, likely, lovely, lonely, elderly, lively. To describe an action with one of these ideas, you need a phrase: 'in a friendly manner', 'on a monthly basis'. A related trap sits in words like 'coward' (a noun: 'he is a coward'), 'cowardly' (an adjective: 'a cowardly act'), and the fact that 'cowardly' still cannot be used as an adverb — 'he fought cowardly' is wrong; 'he fought in a cowardly manner' is right.

X Notice This	✓ Now This
The officer's report was written friendly.	The officer's report was written in a friendly tone.
Why: 'Friendly' is an adjective with no adverb form; a phrase must carry the adverbial meaning instead.	
He fought cowardly when the ambush began.	He fought in a cowardly manner when the ambush began.
Why: 'Cowardly' is an adjective (describing 'manner'), never an adverb modifying a verb directly.	

Two Small Rules Worth Remembering

'Else' is followed by 'but', never by 'than'. And no sentence should open with 'Due to' — 'due to' must follow some form of the verb 'to be' ('It was due to...'); to open a sentence, use 'Owing to' or 'Because of' instead.

X Notice This	✓ Now This
He is nothing else than a fine officer.	He is nothing else but a fine officer.
Why: 'Else' pairs with 'but', not 'than'.	
Due to heavy rain, the parade was cancelled.	Owing to heavy rain, the parade was cancelled.
Why: 'Due to' is an adjective phrase and must follow a form of 'to be'; it should not open a sentence.	

A PROMISE OF TRUST

That's the full toolkit. Notice how every rule you've just discovered comes back to the same instinct: ask what job the word is doing, and where that job needs it to stand. Carry that instinct into the practice sets ahead.

Would You Assess Yourself as You Learn?



Time to test the instincts you've just built. Both sets below are freshly written, proficiency-level items — the kind you'll meet in a genuinely tough paper. Attempt Set 1 in one sitting (aim for 12 minutes), take a short break, then attempt Set 2. Resist the urge to peek at the answer key in the next section until you've marked every question.

Set 1: Spotting Errors of Adverb (15 questions)

Directions: Which part of the given sentence has an error? In case there is no error, choose option (d).

- Q1.** No sooner had the convoy departed (a)/ than the weather turned so severe (b)/ that visibility dropped to near zero. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q2.** The commanding officer spoke (a)/ so persuasively (b)/ the entire battalion volunteered for the expedition. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q3.** Having trained for months, (a)/ the athlete felt (b)/ enough confident to attempt the record. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q4.** The terrain was too rugged (a)/ for the vehicles (b)/ to be crossing safely. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q5.** Much to everyone's surprise, (a)/ the new recruit performed (b)/ very better than the seasoned soldiers. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q6.** Only the quartermaster (a)/ was authorised to issue (b)/ the emergency rations that evening. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q7.** The officer's monthly report (a)/ was written (b)/ friendly and full of encouragement for the new cadets. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q8.** The veteran soldier walked (a)/ slow but steady (b)/ across the parade ground despite his old injury. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q9.** She could hardly believe (a)/ that nobody had not informed her (b)/ about the change in schedule. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q10.** I never remember (a)/ having attended such (b)/ a well-organised passing-out parade before. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q11.** Due to heavy rains, (a)/ the annual training camp (b)/ has been postponed by a week. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q12.** The instructor would rather (a)/ we practise the drill twice (b)/ than to rush through it once. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q13.** I fairly think (a)/ that the panel was (b)/ impressed by his composure during the interview. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q14.** The board members (a)/ elected him as (b)/ the youngest captain in the regiment's history. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q15.** The drill sergeant always (a)/ inspects the barracks (b)/ before the morning parade begins. (c)/ No error (d)

Set 2: Spotting Errors of Adverb (15 questions)

Directions: Which part of the given sentence has an error? In case there is no error, choose option (d).

- Q1.** The match became very interesting (a)/ once the visiting team took (b)/ an early lead in the second half. (c)/ No error (d)
- Q2.** The crowd grew very interested (a)/ as the final over (b)/ of the tournament began. (c)/ No error (d)

- Q3.** This work has been done **(a)**/ more beautiful **(b)**/ than anything we had seen before. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q4.** Of all the performances that evening, **(a)**/ the young cadet's rendition was **(b)**/ most lovelier than the rest. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q5.** She is fairly intelligent **(a)**/ but her younger brother is **(b)**/ rather brilliant at mathematics. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q6.** The process is not a straight line **(a)**/ but rather **(b)**/ a gentle curve. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q7.** The recruit training is tough **(a)**/ but he seldom or ever complains **(b)**/ about the long hours and physical strain. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q8.** He has shown little or anything **(a)**/ of the discipline **(b)**/ expected from a future officer. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q9.** It was, frankly, a sheer coward act **(a)**/ for the sentry to abandon **(b)**/ his post without orders. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q10.** Although he seemed calm throughout the briefing, **(a)**/ he actually fought **(b)**/ cowardly when the ambush began. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q11.** The consignment reached the base camp **(a)**/ directly from the depot **(b)**/ without passing through the transit point. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q12.** Report to my office directly **(a)**/ you finish **(b)**/ the morning parade. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q13.** Her boots were polished nearly **(a)**/ enough to pass **(b)**/ the commanding officer's rigorous inspection. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q14.** There was something fishy **(a)**/ about the way the stores **(b)**/ had suddenly gone missing. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**
- Q15.** The two units communicated closely **(a)**/ throughout the operation **(b)**/ and finished it successful. **(c)**/ No error **(d)**

Check Your Target Learning Performance

Mark your answers honestly before reading further. For every question you got wrong, re-read the explanation twice — once for the rule, and once for the sentence pattern, so you recognise it faster next time.

Score yourself against the table below, then read every explanation — even for the ones you got right. Understanding why the correct answer works is what makes the next unfamiliar sentence solvable too.

Scoring Inference

13–15 correct: Excellent command over adverb errors.

9–12 correct: Good grasp — revisit the rules behind your missed items and retry them tomorrow.

Below 9 correct: Return to the Adverb concept notes, rebuild each rule from its example, then reattempt this set.

Set 1 (Errors of Adverb) — Answers & Explanations

Q	Ans	Explanation
1	(d)	Correct as given. Correct. 'No sooner had... than' is properly used, and 'so severe that' correctly pairs the correlative with 'so'.
2	(c)	Correction: "that the entire battalion volunteered". 'So persuasively' needs its correlative 'that' to complete the idea — it cannot be left out.
3	(c)	Correction: "confident enough to attempt the record". As an adverb, 'enough' follows the adjective it modifies ('confident enough'), not the reverse.
4	(c)	Correction: "to cross safely". 'Too + adjective + for + object' is completed with the bare infinitive 'to cross', not the continuous 'to be crossing'.
5	(c)	Correction: "much better than the seasoned soldiers". 'Much', not 'very', is used with the comparative degree ('much better').
6	(d)	Correct as given. Correct. 'Only' sits immediately before the word it limits — 'the quartermaster'.
7	(c)	Correction: "written in a friendly tone". 'Friendly' is an adjective with no adverb form; a phrase is needed to carry the adverbial meaning.
8	(b)	Correction: "slowly but steadily". 'Slow' is not one of the few words (fast, first, hard...) that keep the same form as adjective and adverb; the true adverb 'slowly' is needed here.
9	(b)	Correction: "that nobody had informed her". 'Nobody' is already negative; adding 'not' creates an incorrect double negative.
10	(a)	Correction: "I do not remember ever". 'Never' means 'not ever'; for a plain negative recollection, 'do not... ever' is required instead of 'never remember'.
11	(a)	Correction: "Owing to heavy rains,". A sentence should not open with 'Due to' — 'due to' must follow a form of the verb 'to be'.
12	(c)	Correction: "than rush through it once". 'Would rather... than' is followed by the bare infinitive, without 'to'.
13	(a)	Correction: "I rather think". 'Rather' (not 'fairly') is used before verbs of thinking and feeling to introduce an opinion politely.
14	(b)	Correction: "elected him". 'Elect' is one of the verbs (with name, appoint, choose, consider) that are never followed by 'as' before their predicative.
15	(d)	Correct as given. Correct. The frequency adverb 'always' is properly placed immediately before the main verb 'inspects'.

Set 2 (Errors of Adverb) — Answers & Explanations

Q	Ans	Explanation
1	(d)	Correct as given. Correct. 'Interesting' is a V1+ing form, which correctly pairs with 'very'.
2	(a)	Correction: "grew much interested". 'Interested' is a V3 (past-participle) form, which pairs with 'much', not 'very'.
3	(b)	Correction: "more beautifully". The adverb 'beautifully' (not the adjective 'beautiful') is needed to describe how the work 'has been done'; its comparative is formed with 'more'.
4	(c)	Correction: "lovelier than the rest". 'Most' (superlative marker) and '-er' (comparative marker) cannot combine — this is a double comparison.
5	(c)	Correction: "fairly brilliant at mathematics". 'Brilliant' is a favourable adjective, which pairs with 'fairly'; 'rather' is reserved for unfavourable adjectives.
6	(d)	Correct as given. Correct. 'Rather' is properly used here to correct/clarify a preceding statement.
7	(b)	Correction: "seldom or never complains / seldom if ever complains". 'Seldom or ever' is incorrect; the accepted forms are 'seldom or never' and 'seldom if ever'.
8	(a)	Correction: "little if anything". 'Little if anything' is the correct idiom; 'little or anything' is not.
9	(a)	Correction: "a sheer cowardly act". 'Coward' is a noun; the adjective 'cowardly' is needed before the noun 'act'.
10	(c)	Correction: "fought in a cowardly manner". 'Cowardly' is an adjective and cannot directly modify the verb 'fought'; a phrase carries the adverbial sense instead.
11	(b)	Correction: "direct from the depot". 'Direct' (= by the straight route) is the intended meaning here, not 'directly' (= at once).
12	(a)	Correction: "as soon as". 'Directly' should not be used as a conjunction meaning 'as soon as' in formal English.
13	(a)	Correction: "nearly polished". The degree adverb 'nearly' must come immediately before the adjective it modifies ('polished'), not after it.
14	(d)	Correct as given. Correct. 'Something' functions here as an adverb of degree modifying the adjective 'fishy' — an accepted idiomatic usage.
15	(c)	Correction: "finished it successfully". The adverb 'successfully' (not the adjective 'successful') is needed to describe how the units 'finished' the operation.

That's a wrap for this booklet — but not for your practice. Come back here whenever a rule feels shaky, and keep timing yourself against fresh questions. Good luck, and see you at the SSB!