**PART 2**

**Read the text below and answer questions 14–26.**

**THE ETHICS OF KEEPING ANIMALS IN CAPTIVITY**

Keeping wild animals in captivity has historically been defended on several grounds, including public entertainment, education, conservation, and scientific research. In recent decades, however, the debate has become less about whether captivity is acceptable in principle and more about whether any set of conditions can make it ethically defensible. Proponents emphasise that well-run zoos and aquariums can protect animals from hunger, predation, and untreated disease, while also generating funding and public support for wildlife projects. Critics respond that such justifications often shift the discussion away from the central moral question: what captivity does to the animal's welfare and agency, and whether comparable benefits could be achieved by less restrictive means.

A core argument focuses on welfare in a broad scientific sense, not merely the absence of injury. Captive environments can certainly reduce some risks found in the wild, yet they may also generate chronic stress. Welfare scientists commonly measure physiological stress through indicators such as cortisol levels, alongside behavioural evidence. One frequently discussed sign is stereotypy: repetitive pacing, rocking, or self-directed grooming that appears purposeless. Such behaviours are often interpreted as evidence of frustration or compromised welfare, though their causes can vary and may include past trauma as well as current conditions. Importantly, species differ in vulnerability. Wide-ranging carnivores and large-bodied animals that evolved to travel long distances can be particularly difficult to accommodate. Polar bears, for example, may roam vast areas in the wild, so even large enclosures can represent a dramatic reduction in space and stimulation, raising questions about whether their needs can be met consistently in captivity.

Beyond welfare lies autonomy, sometimes described as agency: the ability to make meaningful choices that affect one's daily experience. Even if an animal is physically healthy, critics argue that captivity can reduce control over social partners, movement, and exposure to visitors. Modern welfare frameworks therefore treat choice and control as central, not optional. In response, many institutions have invested in enrichment programmes that provide puzzles, variable feeding routines, hidden food, or more complex habitats to encourage exploration and problem-solving. Proponents argue that enrichment can reduce stress and give animals opportunities to express natural behaviour, partly restoring agency within confinement. Conversely, critics maintain that enrichment is an

imperfect substitute for the open-ended choices available in the wild, and that the ethical issue is not merely boredom but the underlying restriction of freedom.

Conservation is often presented as the strongest justification, particularly when captivity is framed as ex-situ conservation: protecting species outside their natural habitat. Captive breeding programmes can, in principle, prevent extinction, maintain a genetic reservoir, and supply individuals for reintroduction. Yet the record is uneven. Some species breed poorly in captivity, while others adapt so strongly to controlled conditions that they lack survival skills when released. Moreover, conserving genes in an artificial setting does not necessarily address the in-situ threats—habitat loss, hunting, conflict with humans, and climate change—that caused decline in the first place. For critics, this creates a moral risk: captivity may be defended as “conservation” even when it functions mainly as display, while the decisive ecological problems remain unresolved.

Education is another widely cited benefit, but its educational efficacy is contested. Zoos and aquariums claim they foster curiosity and concern for wildlife by enabling close observation. Critics counter that visitors may learn little beyond spectacle, and that repeated exposure to animals behind barriers can normalise domination rather than encourage respect. Empirical evidence is mixed. A 2019 study on visitor engagement, for example, reported that learning outcomes vary substantially depending on exhibit design, the presence of interpretive material, and whether institutions connect animal display to concrete conservation actions. Meanwhile, digital media, documentaries, and immersive virtual exhibits have improved rapidly, challenging the assumption that live confinement is necessary for effective learning. Supporters reply that direct encounters can still have unique emotional impact, but opponents argue that emotional impact does not automatically translate into informed action.

Research provides further justification, particularly when close observation improves veterinary care or deepens knowledge of cognition and welfare. Supporters note that studies conducted in zoos can support species management and help refine enrichment and habitat design. Nevertheless, research ethics require clear justification, minimising harm, and careful interpretation. Findings from captive animals may not generalise to wild behaviour, because captivity changes social structure, diet, movement, and exposure to stressors. Critics therefore argue that “science” can become an elastic defence: valuable in some cases, limited in others, and not always sufficient to outweigh the moral costs of confinement.

A practical point often overlooked is that captivity is not a single condition. There is a large difference between under-resourced facilities that prioritise appearance over welfare and well-funded institutions that provide space, social grouping, and veterinary expertise. Even

so, some animals may experience substantial costs regardless of investment, especially those with complex social lives, high cognitive demands, or very large natural ranges. This has led some advocates to propose restricting captivity to rescue, rehabilitation, and carefully defined conservation purposes, rather than routine entertainment. In this view, the ethical acceptability of captivity depends on transparent trade-offs: whether welfare is protected, autonomy is supported as far as possible, and claimed benefits are real, demonstrable, and otherwise unattainable.

**Questions 14–18**

Select the correct answer.

**14** What does the passage suggest is the main focus of the modern debate about captivity?

**A** Whether entertainment should remain the primary purpose of zoos
**B** Whether any conditions can make captivity ethically defensible
**C** Whether captive animals can ever be kept free from disease
**D** Whether captivity is acceptable only for animals with low intelligence

**15** According to the passage, stereotypies are best described as

**A** behaviours that prove animals have adapted well to confinement
**B** actions caused mainly by hunger rather than by restricted behaviour
**C** repetitive behaviours often linked to poor welfare, though they may have multiple causes
**D** rare behaviours found only in species that live alone in the wild

**16** What point is made about enrichment programmes in the passage?

**A** They may reduce stress by increasing opportunities for choice and activity
**B** They fully replace the need for animals to live in natural habitats
**C** They are useful only when animals are kept in isolation
**D** They guarantee that captive animals will retain wild survival abilities

**17** What limitation of captive breeding is mentioned in the passage?

**A** It is effective only when animals are released immediately after birth
**B** It prevents genetic diversity from being preserved over time
**C** It is unnecessary because most endangered species recover without intervention
**D** It does not necessarily address the threats that caused decline in the first place

**18** What does the passage indicate about the educational impact of zoos and aquariums?

**A** It varies, and research findings depend on how exhibits and information are designed
**B** It is consistently strong across studies regardless of visitor behaviour

**C** It is impossible to evaluate because learning cannot be measured
**D** It is effective only when institutions avoid digital media completely

**Questions 19–22**

Choose **TRUE** if the statement agrees with the information given in the text, choose **FALSE** if the statement contradicts the information, or choose **NOT GIVEN** if there is no information on this.

**19** The passage states that polar bears in captivity show cortisol levels that are exactly 30% higher than in the wild.

**20** The passage implies that an animal's physical health on its own is enough to make captivity ethically acceptable.

**21** The passage suggests that digital media has removed the need to display live animals for education in every case.

**22** The passage indicates that research findings from captive animals may not fully reflect how those animals behave in the wild.

**Questions 23–26**

Complete the sentences below. Choose **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** from the text for each answer.

**23** Physiological stress in captive animals can be assessed using indicators such as .....

**24** Animals raised in controlled settings may lack important survival ..... when released.

**25** In some under-resourced institutions, visual ..... may be prioritised over welfare.

**26** Some advocates argue captivity should be restricted to rescue and ..... in addition to certain conservation needs.

Answer Key

14. B
15. C
16. A
17. D

18. A

19. NOT GIVEN

20. FALSE

21. FALSE

22. TRUE

23. cortisol levels

24. skills

25. appearance

26. rehabilitation