

Reading Comprehension - 04



Topics Covered

- Identifying Option Traps

VARC

CEX-V-0206/25

Number of Questions : **14**

- Read the following passage and choose the option that best captures its main idea.

In today's sporting landscape, the obsession with winning has overshadowed ethics. The "win at all costs" philosophy encourages cheating, aggression, and a disregard for sportsmanship, undermining the principles of fair play. This decline is evident in the rise of violent fan behaviour, performance-enhancing drug use among athletes, and even the pressure placed on children in youth sports.

How often do we hear the statement, "Everybody cheats on his income tax, so why shouldn't I?" Sociologists have written about the alienation felt by many Americans and one of the several kinds of alienation is 'normlessness.' Society's rules are vague and hard to discern, and besides, few people follow them. In fact, only a fool would adhere strictly to rules that everyone else ignores. A recent article in Newsweek was entitled "Are you a tax CHUMP or a tax CHEAT?" Its thesis is that big companies often use tax dodges and pay little or no taxes while the average person coughs up an inordinate percentage of his or her income yearly. Newsweek says that corporate America has a gift for finding loopholes that are legal. But that doesn't make them right. Is it any

wonder that in a capitalistic society which worships competition, finding tax loopholes is considered creative, especially if such manipulations give a company or an individual an edge on their competitors? Why should sports be any different? There is one compelling difference. Sports are supposed to appeal to the ethic of fair play. Sports, both professional and amateur, are supposed to teach children sportsmanship (not gamesmanship). Sports are supposed to teach the value of honest competition, win or lose.

In our morally relativistic society, however, the so-called virtues of sports have gotten lost and seem to have been replaced with the win-at-all-cost ethic. Instead of preparing young men and women for a life that focuses on fairness, we have focused on success and getting away with whatever we can.

Option Traps - B.E.A.S.T.

- In today's morally flexible society, sports' virtues are overshadowed by a win-at-all-costs mentality.
- The win-at-all-cost philosophy has had no major significant impact in the arena of sportsmanship.
- The pursuit of success has overshadowed traditional values, leading to a decline in ethical standards.

4. In professional sports, the win-at-all-costs mentality has undermined the integrity of competition.
5. In today's world, the relentless pursuit of victory at any cost has eradicated the virtue of sportsmanship.
6. In a morally rational society where winning is everything, the true purpose of sports has tragically been lost.
7. Sports aim to instill fair play, sportsmanship, and the value of honest competition at all levels.
8. It is shameful that today's morally lax society prioritises winning at all costs over sportsmanship spirit.

Directions for questions 2 to 6: The passage below is accompanied by five questions. Based on the passage, choose the best answer for each question.

British colonial policy . . . went through two policy phases, or at least there were two strategies between which its policies actually oscillated, sometimes to its great advantage. At first, the new colonial apparatus exercised caution, and occupied India by a mix of military power and subtle diplomacy, the high ground in the middle of the circle of circles. This, however, pushed them into contradictions. For, whatever their sense of the strangeness of the country and the thinness of colonial presence, the British colonial state represented the great conquering discourse of Enlightenment rationalism, entering India precisely at the moment of its greatest unchecked arrogance. As inheritors and representatives of this discourse, which carried everything before it, this colonial state could hardly adopt for long such a self-denying attitude. It had restructured everything in Europe—the productive system, the political regimes, the moral and cognitive orders—and would do the same in India, particularly as some empirically inclined theorists of that generation considered the colonies a massive laboratory of utilitarian or other theoretical experiments. Consequently, the colonial state could not settle simply for eminence at the cost of its marginality; it began to take initiatives to introduce

the logic of modernity into Indian society. But this modernity did not enter a passive society. Sometimes, its initiatives were resisted by pre-existing structural forms. At times, there was a more direct form of collective resistance. Therefore the map of continuity and discontinuity that this state left behind at the time of independence was rather complex and has to be traced with care.

Most significantly, of course, initiatives for . . . modernity came to assume an external character. The acceptance of modernity came to be connected, ineradicably, with subjection. This again points to two different problems, one theoretical, the other political. Theoretically, because modernity was externally introduced, it is explanatorily unhelpful to apply the logical format of the 'transition process' to this pattern of change. Such a logical format would be wrong on two counts. First, however subtly, it would imply that what was proposed to be built was something like European capitalism. (And, in any case, historians have forcefully argued that what it was to replace was not like feudalism, with or without modificatory adjectives.) But, more fundamentally, the logical structure of endogenous change does not apply here. Here transformation agendas attack as an external force. This externality is not something that can be casually mentioned and forgotten. It is inscribed on every move, every object, every proposal, every legislative act, each line of causality. It comes to be marked on the epoch itself. This repetitive emphasis on externality should not be seen as a nationalist initiative that is so well rehearsed in Indian social science. . . .

Quite apart from the externality of the entire historical proposal of modernity, some of its contents were remarkable. . . . Economic reforms, or rather alterations . . . did not foreshadow the construction of a classical capitalist economy, with its necessary emphasis on extractive and transport sectors. What happened was the creation of a degenerate version of capitalism—what early dependency theorists called the 'development of underdevelopment'.

Be the B.E.A.S.T.

2. All of the following statements about British colonialism can be inferred from the first paragraph, EXCEPT that it:
- was at least partly an outcome of Enlightenment rationalism.
 - faced resistance from existing structural forms of Indian modernity.
 - was at least partly shaped by the project of European modernity.
 - allowed the treatment of colonies as experimental sites.
3. All of the following statements, if true, could be seen as supporting the arguments in the passage, EXCEPT:
- the introduction of capitalism in India was not through the transformation of feudalism, as happened in Europe.
 - modernity was imposed upon India by the British and, therefore, led to underdevelopment.
 - throughout the history of colonial conquest, natives have often been experimented on by the colonisers.
 - the change in British colonial policy was induced by resistance to modernity in Indian society.
4. "Consequently, the colonial state could not settle simply for eminence at the cost of its marginality; it began to take initiatives to introduce the logic of modernity into Indian society." Which of the following best captures the sense of this statement?
- The colonial state's eminence was unsettled by its marginal position; therefore, it developed Indian society by modernising it.
 - The colonial enterprise was a costly one; so to justify the cost it began to take initiatives to introduce the logic of modernity into Indian society.
5. Which one of the following 5-word sequences best captures the flow of the arguments in the passage?
- Military power-arrogance-laboratory-modernity-capitalism.
 - Colonial policy-Enlightenment-external modernity-subjection-underdevelopment.
 - Colonial policy-arrogant rationality-resistance-independence-development.
 - Military power-colonialism-restructuring-feudalism-capitalism.
6. Which of the following observations is a valid conclusion to draw from the author's statement that "the logical structure of endogenous change does not apply here. Here transformation agendas attack as an external force"?
- The endogenous logic of colonialism can only bring change if it attacks and transforms external forces.
 - Indian society is not endogamous; it is more accurately characterised as aggressively exogamous.
 - Colonised societies cannot be changed through logic; they need to be transformed with external force.
 - The transformation of Indian society did not happen organically, but was forced by colonial agendas.

Directions for questions 7 to 10: The passage below is accompanied by four questions. Based on the passage, choose the best answer for each question.

Understanding romantic aesthetics is not a simple undertaking for reasons that are internal to the nature of the subject. Distinguished scholars, such as Arthur Lovejoy, Northrop Frye and Isaiah Berlin, have remarked on the notorious challenges facing any attempt to define romanticism. Lovejoy, for example, claimed that romanticism is "the scandal of literary history and criticism" . . . The main difficulty in studying the romantics, according to him, is the lack of any "single real entity, or type of entity" that the concept "romanticism" designates. Lovejoy concluded, "the word 'romantic' has come to mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing" . . .

The more specific task of characterizing romantic aesthetics adds to these difficulties an air of paradox. Conventionally, "aesthetics" refers to a theory concerning beauty and art or the branch of philosophy that studies these topics. However, many of the romantics rejected the identification of aesthetics with a circumscribed domain of human life that is separated from the practical and theoretical domains of life. The most characteristic romantic commitment is to the idea that the character of art and beauty and of our engagement with them should shape all aspects of human life. Being fundamental to human existence, beauty and art should be a central ingredient not only in a philosophical or artistic life, but also in the lives of ordinary men and women. Another challenge for any attempt to characterize romantic aesthetics lies in the fact that most of the romantics were poets and artists whose views of art and beauty are, for the most part, to be found not in developed theoretical accounts, but in fragments, aphorisms and poems, which are often more elusive and suggestive than conclusive.

Nevertheless, in spite of these challenges the task of characterizing romantic aesthetics is neither

impossible nor undesirable, as numerous thinkers responding to Lovejoy's radical skepticism have noted. While warning against a reductive definition of romanticism, Berlin, for example, still heralded the need for a general characterization: "[Although] one does have a certain sympathy with Lovejoy's despair...[he is] in this instance mistaken. There was a romantic movement...and it is important to discover what it is" . . .

Recent attempts to characterize romanticism and to stress its contemporary relevance follow this path. Instead of overlooking the undeniable differences between the variety of romanticisms of different nations that Lovejoy had stressed, such studies attempt to characterize romanticism, not in terms of a single definition, a specific time, or a specific place, but in terms of "particular philosophical questions and concerns" . . .

While the German, British and French romantics are all considered, the central protagonists in the following are the German romantics. Two reasons explain this focus: first, because it has paved the way for the other romanticisms, German romanticism has a pride of place among the different national romanticisms . . . Second, the aesthetic outlook that was developed in Germany roughly between 1796 and 1801-02 - the period that corresponds to the heyday of what is known as "Early Romanticism" . . . - offers the most philosophical expression of romanticism since it is grounded primarily in the epistemological, metaphysical, ethical, and political concerns that the German romantics discerned in the aftermath of Kant's philosophy.

7. According to the romantics, aesthetics:
- (1) is widely considered to be irrelevant to human existence.
 - (2) permeates all aspects of human life, philosophical and mundane.
 - (3) should be confined to a specific domain separate from the practical and theoretical aspects of life.
 - (4) is primarily the concern of philosophers and artists, rather than of ordinary people.

8. Which one of the following statements is NOT supported by the passage?
- Recent studies on romanticism seek to refute the differences between national romanticisms.
 - Romantic aesthetics are primarily expressed through fragments, aphorisms, and poems.
 - Many romantics rejected the idea of aesthetics as a domain separate from other aspects of life.
 - Characterising romantic aesthetics is both possible and desirable, despite the challenges involved.
9. The main difficulty in studying romanticism is the:
- absence of written accounts by romantic poets and artists.
 - elusive and suggestive nature of romantic aesthetics.
 - controversial and scandalous history of romantic literature.
 - lack of clear conceptual contours of the domain.
10. According to the passage, recent studies on romanticism avoid "a single definition, a specific time, or a specific place" because they:
- prefer to highlight the paradox of romantic aesthetics as a concept.
 - seek to discredit Lovejoy's scepticism regarding romanticism.
 - understand that the variety of romanticisms renders a general analysis impossible.
 - prefer to focus on the fundamental concerns of the romantics.

Directions for questions 11 to 14: The passage below is accompanied by four questions. Based on the passage, choose the best answer for each question.

Sociologists working in the Chicago School tradition have focused on how rapid or dramatic social change

causes increases in crime. Just as Durkheim, Marx, Toennies, and other European sociologists thought that the rapid changes produced by industrialization and urbanization produced crime and disorder, so too did the Chicago School theorists. The location of the University of Chicago provided an excellent opportunity for Park, Burgess, and McKenzie to study the social ecology of the city. Shaw and McKay found . . . that areas of the city characterized by high levels of social disorganization had higher rates of crime and delinquency.

In the 1920s and 1930s Chicago, like many American cities, experienced considerable immigration. Rapid population growth is a disorganizing influence, but growth resulting from in-migration of very different people is particularly disruptive. Chicago's in-migrants were both native-born whites and blacks from rural areas and small towns, and foreign immigrants. The heavy industry of cities like Chicago, Detroit, and Pittsburgh drew those seeking opportunities and new lives. Farmers and villagers from America's hinterland, like their European cousins of whom Durkheim wrote, moved in large numbers into cities. At the start of the twentieth century, Americans were predominately a rural population, but by the century's mid-point most lived in urban areas. The social lives of these migrants, as well as those already living in the cities they moved to, were disrupted by the differences between urban and rural life. According to social disorganization theory, until the social ecology of the "new place" can adapt, this rapid change is a criminogenic influence. But most rural migrants, and even many of the foreign immigrants to the city, looked like and eventually spoke the same language as the natives of the cities into which they moved. These similarities allowed for more rapid social integration for these migrants than was the case for African Americans and most foreign immigrants.

In these same decades America experienced what has been called "the great migration": the massive movement of African Americans out of the rural South and into northern (and some southern) cities.

The scale of this migration is one of the most dramatic in human history. These migrants, unlike their white counterparts, were not integrated into the cities they now called home. In fact, most American cities at the end of the twentieth century were characterized by high levels of racial residential segregation . . . Failure to integrate these migrants, coupled with other forces of social disorganization such as crowding, poverty, and illness, caused crime rates to climb in the cities, particularly in the segregated wards and neighborhoods where the migrants were forced to live.

Foreign immigrants during this period did not look as dramatically different from the rest of the population as blacks did, but the migrants from eastern and southern Europe who came to American cities did not speak English, and were frequently Catholic, while the native born were mostly Protestant. The combination of rapid population growth with the diversity of those moving into the cities created what the Chicago School sociologists called social disorganization.

11. A fundamental conclusion by the author is that:
 - (1) the best circumstances for crime to flourish are when there are severe racial disparities.
 - (2) to prevent crime, it is important to maintain social order through maintaining social segregation.
 - (3) according to European sociologists, crime in America is mainly in Chicago.
 - (4) rapid population growth and demographic diversity give rise to social disorganisation that can feed the growth of crime.
12. The author notes that, "At the start of the twentieth century, Americans were predominately a rural population, but by the century's mid-point most lived in urban areas." Which one of the following statements, if true, does not contradict this statement?

- (1) Demographic transition in America in the twentieth century is strongly marked by an out-migration from rural areas.
- (2) A population census conducted in 1952 showed that more Americans lived in rural areas than in urban ones.
- (3) The estimation of per capita income in America in the mid-twentieth century primarily required data from rural areas.
- (4) Economists have found that throughout the twentieth century, the size of the labour force in America has always been largest in rural areas

13. Which one of the following is not a valid inference from the passage?
 - (1) The failure to integrate in-migrants, along with social problems like poverty, was a significant reason for the rise in crime in American cities.
 - (2) According to social disorganisation theory, fast-paced social change provides fertile ground for the rapid growth of crime.
 - (3) The differences between urban and rural lifestyles were crucial factors in the disruption experienced by migrants to American cities.
 - (4) According to social disorganisation theory, the social integration of African American migrants into Chicago was slower because they were less organised.
14. Which one of the following sets of words/phrases best encapsulates the issues discussed in the passage?
 - (1) Durkheim; Marx; Toennies; Shaw
 - (2) Chicago School; Native-born Whites; European immigrants; Poverty
 - (3) Chicago School; Social organisation; Migration; Crime
 - (4) Rapid population growth; Heavy industry; Segregation; Crime

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