

Reading Comprehension - 01



Topics Covered

- Vocabulary for CAT

VARC

CEX-V-0203/25

Number of Questions : **115**

Diagnostic Exercise - 1

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Directions for questions 1 to 50: These are words seen in recent CAT papers RC and VA questions. For each of the following words, choose the option that best matches its meaning.

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|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Esoteric: | (1) Common | (2) Arcane | 7. Pernicious: | (1) Harmless | (2) Beneficial |
| | (3) Superficial | | (3) Harmful | | |
| 2. Ebullient: | (1) Depressed | (2) Joyful | 8. Insouciant: | (1) Anxious | (2) Nonchalant |
| | (3) Indifferent | | (3) Concerned | | |
| 3. Ineffable: | (1) Expressible | (2) Unspeakable | 9. Profligate: | (1) Frugal | (2) Wasteful |
| | (3) Ordinary | | (3) Thrifty | | |
| 4. Obscure: | (1) Clarify | (2) Confuse | 10. Perspicacious: | (1) Unobservant | (2) Insightful |
| | (3) Simplify | | (3) Dull | | |
| 5. Sycophant: | (1) Critic | (2) Follower | 11. Perfunctory: | (1) Diligent | (2) Superficial |
| | (3) Flatterer | | (3) Thorough | | |
| 6. Recalcitrant: | (1) Obedient | (2) Defiant | 12. Obstreperous: | (1) Quiet | (2) Noisy |
| | (3) Agreeable | | (3) Calm | | |
| | | | 13. Abstruse: | (1) Clear | (2) Complex |
| | | | (3) Simple | | |
| | | | 14. Lugubrious: | (1) Cheerful | (2) Mournful |
| | | | (3) Indifferent | | |

15.	Soporific: (1) Stimulating (3) Exciting	(2) Sleep-inducing	27.	Inchoate: (1) Developed (3) Finished	(2) Rudimentary
16.	Munificent: (1) Stingy (3) Selfish	(2) Generous	28.	Jejune: (1) Mature (3) Exciting	(2) Naive
17.	Pusillanimous: (1) Brave (3) Bold	(2) Cowardly	29.	Knavery: (1) Honesty (3) Integrity	(2) Trickery
18.	Truculent: (1) Gentle (3) Peaceful	(2) Aggressive	30.	Lachrymose: (1) Cheerful (3) Happy	(2) Tearful
19.	Ubiquitous: (1) Rare (3) Nowhere	(2) Everywhere	31.	Mendacious: (1) Truthful (3) Honest	(2) Deceitful
20.	Vindictive: (1) Forgiving (3) Sympathetic	(2) Revengeful	32.	Nefarious: (1) Wicked (3) Good	(2) Virtuous
21.	Vociferous: (1) Quiet (3) Silent	(2) Loud	33.	Obdurate: (1) Yielding (3) Flexible	(2) Stubborn
22.	Cacophony: (1) Harmony (3) Silence	(2) Discord	34.	Phlegmatic: (1) Excitable (3) Energetic	(2) Calm
23.	Ebullience: (1) Lethargy (3) Indifference	(2) Enthusiasm	35.	Quixotic: (1) Realistic (3) Practical	(2) Idealistic
24.	Fatuous: (1) Intelligent (3) Serious	(2) Silly	36.	Recondite: (1) Simple (3) Easy	(2) Abstruse
25.	Garrulous: (1) Taciturn (3) Silent	(2) Talkative	37.	Salubrious: (1) Unhealthy (3) Harmful	(2) Healthful
26.	Halcyon: (1) Stormy (3) Turbulent	(2) Calm	38.	Torpid: (1) Active (3) Energetic	(2) Sluggish

39. Urbane:
 (1) Uncouth (2) Sophisticated
 (3) Crude
40. Venerable:
 (1) Disreputable (2) Respected
 (3) Ignoble
41. Winsome:
 (1) Unattractive (2) Charming
 (3) Repulsive
42. Xenophobic:
 (1) Open-minded (2) Fearful of foreigners
 (3) Welcoming
43. Yen:
 (1) Dislike (2) Desire
 (3) Aversion
44. Zephyr:
 (1) Gale (2) Breeze
 (3) Storm
45. Antediluvian:
 (1) Modern (2) Ancient
 (3) Recent
46. Blithe:
 (1) Depressed (2) Carefree
 (3) Worried
47. Coterie:
 (1) Individual (2) Group
 (3) Solo
48. Diffident:
 (1) Confident (2) Shy
 (3) Bold
49. Egregious:
 (1) Minor (2) Outrageous
 (3) Trivial

50. Fatology:
 (1) Wisdom (2) Foolishness
 (3) Intelligence

Your Score _____

Diagnostic Exercise - 2

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Directions for questions 1 to 50: These terms are specific to genres often seen in articles from recent CAT papers. For each of the following terms, choose the option that best matches its meaning.

Art and Literature

1. Modernism:
 (1) A historical period
 (2) An art movement
 (3) A scientific theory
2. Post-structuralism:
 (1) Architectural design
 (2) Literary theory
 (3) Economic model
3. Narratology:
 (1) Study of storytelling
 (2) Study of animal behaviour
 (3) Study of numerical data
4. Hermeneutics:
 (1) Interpretation of texts
 (2) Engineering principles
 (3) Medical diagnostics
5. Semiotics:
 (1) Study of signs and symbols
 (2) Study of ancient ruins
 (3) Study of weather patterns
6. Structuralism:
 (1) Analysis of cultural systems
 (2) Study of buildings
 (3) Study of geology

<p>7. Surrealism: (1) Political ideology (2) Art movement (3) Economic theory</p>	<p>16. Cultural Relativism: (1) Belief in cultural superiority (2) Understanding cultures in their own context (3) Rejection of all cultures</p>
<p>8. Expressionism: (1) Mathematical method (2) Literary movement (3) Artistic style</p>	<p>17. Social Constructivism: (1) Construction techniques (2) Social theory (3) Economic policy</p>
<p>9. Symbolism: (1) Use of symbols in art and literature (2) Economic principle (3) Scientific methodology</p>	<p>18. Rational Choice Theory: (1) Economic model (2) Psychological theory (3) Political theory</p>
<p>10. Romanticism: (1) Modern movement (2) Industrial process (3) 19th-century artistic movement</p>	<p>19. Functionalism: (1) Theory in sociology (2) Style of architecture (3) Biological function</p>
<h3>Social Sciences</h3>	
<p>11. Ethnographic Studies: (1) Statistical analysis (2) Cultural research (3) Biological experiments</p>	<p>20. Symbolic Interactionism: (1) Interaction using symbols (2) Economic theory (3) Psychological disorder</p>
<p>12. Anthropocentrism: (1) Human-centered perspective (2) Animal behaviour study (3) Space exploration</p>	<h3>Philosophy</h3>
<p>13. Discourse Analysis: (1) Analysis of spoken or written communication (2) Analysis of financial trends (3) Analysis of geological formations</p>	<p>21. Epistemology: (1) Study of knowledge (2) Study of diseases (3) Study of behaviour</p>
<p>14. Hegemony: (1) Dominant influence or authority (2) Military strategy (3) Economic downturn</p>	<p>22. Phenomenology: (1) Study of phenomena (2) Study of plants (3) Study of language</p>
<p>15. Feminism: (1) Political movement (2) Art style (3) Economic policy</p>	<p>23. Ontology: (1) Study of being (2) Study of the mind (3) Study of society</p> <p>24. Axiology: (1) Study of values (2) Study of mind (3) Study of plants</p>

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| <p>25. Metaphysics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Study of physical laws (2) Study of fundamental nature of reality (3) Study of technology <p>26. Ethics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Study of morality (2) Study of economy (3) Study of mathematics <p>27. Logic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Study of reasoning (2) Study of emotions (3) Study of cultures <p>28. Existentialism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Philosophical theory (2) Medical term (3) Mathematical concept <p>29. Pragmatism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Political strategy (2) Philosophical tradition (3) Artistic method <p>30. Determinism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Belief in predetermined events (2) Study of geography (3) Artistic movement <p style="text-align: center;">Psychology</p> <p>31. Cognitive Dissonance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Musical term (2) Psychological theory (3) Economic model <p>32. Behaviorism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Theory in psychology (2) Study of animals (3) Medical field <p>33. Psychoanalysis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Artistic technique (2) Method of therapy (3) Political strategy | <p>34. Humanism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Philosophical stance (2) Scientific method (3) Art style <p>35. Gestalt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Type of therapy (2) Artistic style (3) Scientific experiment <p>36. Maslow's Hierarchy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Economic theory (2) Psychological theory (3) Military strategy <p>37. Conditioning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Physical training (2) Behavioral training (3) Economic policy <p>38. Archetype:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Economic model (2) Universal symbol in psychology (3) Political strategy <p>39. Introspection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Economic analysis (2) Self-examination in psychology (3) Historical study <p>40. Personality Theory:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Study of individual differences (2) Study of climate (3) Mathematical model <p style="text-align: center;">Miscellaneous Academic Terms</p> <p>41. Dialectic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Logical argumentation (2) Language learning (3) Economic planning |
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42. Empiricism:
 (1) Artistic method
 (2) Scientific approach
 (3) Political theory
43. Reductionism:
 (1) Simplifying complex systems
 (2) Architectural style
 (3) Economic policy
44. Holism:
 (1) Viewing systems as wholes
 (2) Study of holes
 (3) Mathematical method
45. Syncretism:
 (1) Blending of different beliefs
 (2) Medical term
 (3) Musical term
46. Eclecticism:
 (1) Deriving ideas from multiple sources
 (2) Economic policy
 (3) Literary genre
47. Nominalism:
 (1) Theory in metaphysics
 (2) Economic model
 (3) Medical practice
48. Utilitarianism:
 (1) Ethical theory
 (2) Study of tools
 (3) Historical period
49. Altruism:
 (1) Selfless concern for others
 (2) Economic policy
 (3) Artistic method
50. Egalitarianism:
 (1) Belief in equality
 (2) Economic strategy
 (3) Political term

Contextual Understanding

Exercise – 1

The passage below is accompanied by a set of five questions. Based on the passage, choose the best answer for each question.

In our own time, though, the word "folk" . . . has achieved the rare distinction of occupying fashionable and unfashionable status simultaneously. Just as the effusive floral prints of the radical William Morris now cover genteel sofas, so the revolutionary intentions of many folk historians and revivalists have led to music that is commonly regarded as parochial and conservative. And yet - as newspaper columns periodically rejoice - folk is hip again, influencing artists, clothing and furniture designers, celebrated at music festivals, awards ceremonies and on TV, reissued on countless record labels. Folk is a sonic "shabby chic", containing elements of the uncanny and eerie, as well as an antique veneer, a whiff of Britain's heathen dark ages. The very obscurity and anonymity of folk music's origins open up space for rampant imaginative fancies. . . .

[Source: Extracted from CAT 2019 passage on folk music]

- What is meant by the sentence "Just as the effusive floral prints of the radical William Morris now cover genteel sofas"?
 - William Morris's bold floral designs are now used on refined furniture.
 - William Morris's restrained floral designs are now found on plain furniture.
 - William Morris's modern floral designs are now used on sleek sofas.
 - William Morris's simple floral designs are now found on utilitarian furniture.

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| <p>2. What is meant by the sentence "the revolutionary intentions of many folk historians and revivalists have led to music that is commonly regarded as parochial and conservative"?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Folk historians and revivalists aimed to change music, but it became seen as narrow and old-fashioned. Folk historians and revivalists intended to preserve music, making it seen as universal and progressive. Folk historians and revivalists tried to simplify music, making it seen as intricate and modern. Folk historians and revivalists wanted to obscure music, making it seen as clear and contemporary. <p>3. What is meant by the sentence "Folk is a sonic 'shabby chic', containing elements of the uncanny and eerie, as well as an antique veneer"?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Folk music combines modern sounds with clear, contemporary elements. Folk music combines worn-out sounds with strange, old-fashioned elements. Folk music blends futuristic sounds with sleek, modern elements. Folk music mixes polished sounds with familiar, antique elements. <p>4. What is meant by the sentence "The very obscurity and anonymity of folk music's origins open up space for rampant imaginative fancies"?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The clear and well-known origins of folk music limit creative ideas. The hidden and unknown origins of folk music inspire wild, creative ideas. The simple and familiar origins of folk music prevent imaginative ideas. The mysterious and familiar origins of folk music restrict creative ideas. | <p>5. What is meant by the sentence "And yet - as newspaper columns periodically rejoice - folk is hip again, influencing artists, clothing and furniture designers, celebrated at music festivals, awards ceremonies and on TV, reissued on countless record labels"?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Folk music is outdated and rarely influences modern trends and media. Folk music is forgotten but sometimes influences modern trends and media. Folk music is trendy again, impacting various artists and is celebrated widely. Folk music is unpopular, never influencing modern trends and media. |
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Exercise – 2

The passage below is accompanied by a set of two questions. Based on the passage, choose the best answer for each question.

The most merciful thing in the world, I think, is the inability of the human mind to correlate all its contents. We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far. The sciences, each straining in its own direction, have hitherto harmed us little; but some day the piecing together of dissociated knowledge will open up such terrifying vistas of reality, and of our frightful position therein, that we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age.

[Source: Extracted from "The Call of Cthulhu", by H.P. Lovecraft]

6. The "placid island of ignorance" signifies:
- the human condition as seemingly serene due to our limited awareness.
 - the arrogance of human behaviour coupled with the ignorance of reality.
 - the mercy bestowed on humans due to the lack of understanding of consequences.
 - the vastness of ignorance that hinders the progress of human civilisation.

7. Which one of the following is the best interpretation of "we shall either go mad from the revelation or flee from the deadly light into the peace and safety of a new dark age"?
- We'll get mad because we cannot run away from the knowledge of darkness.
 - We'll pursue those truths that can lead us to the darkness of peace and safety.
 - We'll either go crazy from knowing too much or hide in ignorance to stay sane.
 - We'll likely lose our minds while confronting the truth that is so terrible.
9. "The poignancy lies in their chosen art form, one born of that most injurious of implements - a small, piercing tool." Which one of the following best explains the paradox highlighted in this sentence?
- The delicate beauty created from a tool designed to inflict harm
 - The therapeutic nature of art in stark contrast to the harsh environment
 - The symbolism of using an instrument of control to reclaim agency
 - The inherent danger of allowing sharp objects in a prison setting

Exercise – 3

The passage below is accompanied by a set of two questions. Based on the passage, choose the best answer for each question.

Violence permeates with an unrelenting pervasiveness - its existence a foregone conclusion. Though narratives of imprisonment and the atrocities inflicted upon individuals are commonplace, a fascinating subversion emerges when we examine the violence these same individuals enacted upon fabrics. In this act, I surmise, they discovered a means to wrest back a modicum of the agency wrenched from them: a grasp of control, perhaps simply a way to mark the relentless passage of time. The poignancy lies in their chosen art form, one born of that most injurious of implements - a small, piercing tool.

[Adapted from the article "Prisoners' Pastimes" from JSTOR Daily]

8. Which one of the following best describes the main point of the passage?
- The underlying violence that is present in the prison system reaches all the way to the artistic pursuits that inmates carry out.
 - For persons who are jailed, taking part in the process of creating fabric art may be both healing and uplifting.

- The fact that violence is a fundamental component of society is that it affects both individuals and the acts that they take.
- Incarcerated individuals regain a sense of control and cope with their reality through the artful use of dangerous tools.

Exercise – 4

The passage below is accompanied by a set of two questions. Based on the passage, choose the best answer for each question.

There is no such thing as freedom, but everything in the world happens solely according to the laws of nature. Granted, that there does exist freedom in the transcendental sense, as a peculiar kind of causality, operating to produce events in the world - a faculty, that is to say, of originating a state, and consequently a series of consequences from that state. In this case, not only the series originated by this spontaneity, but the determination of this spontaneity itself to the production of the series, that is to say, the causality itself must have an absolute commencement, such that nothing can precede to determine this action according to unvarying laws. But every beginning of action presupposes in the acting cause a state of inaction; and a dynamically primal beginning of action presupposes a state, which has no connection - as regards causality - with the preceding state of the cause - which does not, that is, in any wise result

from it. Transcendental freedom is therefore opposed to the natural law of cause and effect, and such a conjunction of successive states in effective causes is destructive of the possibility of unity in experience and for that reason not to be found in experience - is consequently a mere fiction of thought.

[Extracted from "Critique of Pure Reason", by Immanuel Kant]

10. The phrase "transcendental sense", as used in the passage, most likely refers to:
 - (1) a form of experience deeply rooted in spiritual experience
 - (2) a form of awareness that goes beyond physical experience
 - (3) a form of emotional state that creates the reality of existence
 - (4) a form of casual experience that affects real-life consequences

11. "But every beginning of action presupposes in the acting cause a state of inaction; and a dynamically primal beginning of action presupposes a state, which has no connection - as regards causality - with the preceding state of the cause - which does not, that is, in any wise result from it." Which of the following is the most accurate interpretation of this sentence?
 - (1) Actions can only arise from a state of rest and must always be unpredictable.
 - (2) The very idea of a spontaneous action defies the logical concept of cause and effect.
 - (3) True freedom exists only when our actions are disconnected from past influences.
 - (4) Before dynamic activities can be started, there must first be a period of rest prior to their execution.

Exercise – 5

The passage below is accompanied by a set of four questions. Based on the passage, choose the best answer for each question.

Metaphors, which juxtapose two ostensibly disparate entities, serve to enrich linguistic expression and enhance comprehension. They possess the ability to elucidate complex notions with striking clarity, such as depicting gravity as a massive object distorting the fabric of a trampoline, thus facilitating the understanding of intricate theories. However, metaphors also harbour the potential for misinterpretation, as evidenced by the oversimplified comparison of atomic structures to solar systems, an analogy that inadequately captures the nuances of electron dynamics. The seductive power of metaphorical language becomes particularly pronounced in discussions of artificial intelligence (AI). The capacity of AI to emulate human characteristics, notably in linguistic tasks, gives rise to misleading comparisons that anthropomorphise AI as sentient, autonomous entities. This personification grossly distorts AI's true nature; these systems, in essence, manipulate data devoid of consciousness or intent, executing operations without comprehension.

The use of "hallucinations" within AI discourse typifies such metaphorical misguidance, insinuating a transient break from reality instead of recognising AI's intrinsic constraints in producing veracious data. When critics describe these inaccuracies as "lies," they inadvertently ascribe human-like mendacity to AI, overlooking the fact that deceit presupposes a capacity for intentionality that AI lacks. This anthropomorphic language mirrors an archaic human predisposition to endow inanimate objects with life and volition, a proclivity possibly rooted in ancestral survival strategies. Nevertheless, this inclination fosters technological misunderstandings, underlining the need for a clear demarcation between human cognitive functions and AI mechanisms.

AI entities, at their core, act as data processors that convert inputs into outputs through algorithmic formulas, lacking any form of consciousness or deliberate intention. The analogy between AI and human cognition, a subject of considerable debate in philosophical and cognitive sciences, brings forth the notion of "pseudo-cognition." Although AI's

performances may, at times, be indistinguishable from human actions, they are devoid of the inherent self-awareness and purpose that define authentic cognitive processes. Recognising this distinction is vital for accurately appraising AI's abilities and constraints, ensuring that discourse surrounding AI remains anchored in factual representation rather than anthropomorphic fantasy.

The prevalent invocation of metaphors in technology-related discussions, exemplified by phrases like a watch "telling time" or a computer "thinking," accentuates the challenge of articulating technological concepts without resorting to anthropomorphism. Such expressions, though ostensibly innocuous, can skew perceptions of AI's capabilities and essence. Therefore, individuals engaging in discourse about AI must exercise discernment in their linguistic choices, opting for precise terminology that accurately reflects AI's operational essence. Articulating that AI systems process data based on acquired patterns, without implying any consciousness or intent, is crucial for preserving conceptual clarity and averting false impressions.

12. "The capacity of AI to emulate human characteristics, notably in linguistic tasks, gives rise to misleading comparisons that anthropomorphise AI as sentient, autonomous entities." Each of the following is a valid interpretation of this statement EXCEPT:
- (1) AI's ability to perform tasks well can make people think AI is capable of feeling and thinking like a human.
 - (2) Because AI can sometimes seem very intelligent, people may forget it's just a complex set of algorithms and not a conscious being.
 - (3) AI can seem so advanced in some areas that we might wrongly believe it has its own goals and motivations.
 - (4) AI has the potential to reach human-like consciousness, leading to a nuanced understanding of its cognitive abilities.

13. Which one of the following best describes the main point of the second paragraph?
- (1) Criticising AI for "lying" is inaccurate because AI doesn't have the capacity for intentional deception.
 - (2) The use of inaccurate metaphors in AI discussions hinders a clear understanding of the technology's potential.
 - (3) Humanising language obscures the true nature of AI and how it differs from human thinking.
 - (4) Our tendency to attribute human-like qualities to AI stems from deep-rooted psychological predispositions.
14. Which of the following is the most appropriate meaning of "pseudo-cognition" as used in the passage?
- (1) A stage in AI development that precedes the emergence of genuine consciousness
 - (2) A deliberate strategy by AI developers to conceal the true limitations of their systems
 - (3) A process that mimics the output of human thought without true understanding
 - (4) A form of artificial intelligence based on manipulating human emotions
15. "Such expressions, though ostensibly innocuous, can skew perceptions of AI's capabilities and essence." Which one of the following is the most accurate interpretation of this sentence?
- (1) Symbolic language used to describe AI can accidentally make it seem more advanced than it really is.
 - (2) Descriptions of AI that make it sound like it has sentience are, despite being erroneous, inherently benign.
 - (3) People need to be more careful about the words they choose when discussing AI to avoid creating unrealistic expectations.
 - (4) Using metaphors and analogies can be helpful in explaining AI, but it's important to be aware of their limitations.