

Cloze Test

India today stands at a demographic crossroads, with nearly two-thirds of its population below the age of 35 and a growing elderly population that is living longer due to better healthcare. This unique demographic shift offers both opportunities and challenges, especially in terms of inter-generational relations. Traditionally, Indian families functioned as joint units where knowledge, culture, and values were seamlessly transferred from elders to the younger members. However, urbanisation, migration, and changing lifestyles have gradually widened the (1) between generations, creating differences in communication styles, career aspirations, and value systems. Younger Indians are often driven by technology, global exposure, and individual ambitions, whereas older generations prioritise stability, collective responsibility, and cultural traditions. The result is not merely a difference of opinion but sometimes a deeper (2) that can affect family harmony, workplace dynamics, and even policy approaches. Bridging this gap is essential for building a society that respects tradition while embracing innovation. For instance, workplaces today often have four generations working together - from baby boomers to Gen Z - each bringing distinct strengths. If effectively managed, this diversity can create (3) solutions and resilient organisations. But if neglected, it can lead to friction, miscommunication, and underutilisation of talent. In the Indian context, bridging the generation gap requires conscious effort. First, there is a need to promote digital literacy among elders so they can meaningfully participate in today's tech-driven conversations. Similarly, youth must cultivate patience and empathy, recognising the wisdom and lived experiences of their seniors. Educational curricula and community programs should therefore foster inter-generational dialogue, encouraging (4) rather than conflict. Moreover, policy interventions are equally important. With rising life expectancy, India must rethink retirement policies, healthcare systems, and social security frameworks that integrate rather than isolate the elderly. Simultaneously, younger populations need platforms to voice their aspirations in governance and innovation. Only by creating spaces for both groups can India unlock its demographic dividend. Strengthening inter-generational bonds also has cultural significance. Festivals, local traditions, and family rituals act as bridges of shared identity, preventing the risk of cultural (5) in an increasingly globalised world. Technology can play a transformative role here. From online platforms connecting grandparents with grandchildren to workplace mentoring apps pairing young professionals with senior experts,

digital tools can reduce emotional and professional distances. But this requires addressing issues of accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity so that technology does not become yet another (6) but a true enabler. Equally vital is the recognition that generational diversity is not a liability but an asset. Younger people bring agility, risktaking, and digital skills, while older generations provide stability, ethics, and longterm vision. If India can synergise these attributes, it can build not just stronger families and organisations but also a more cohesive nation. Reinventing the intergenerational connect is thus not a matter of choice but a (7) in a society undergoing rapid demographic transformation. Leadership at every level - from families to corporations to governments - must adopt inclusive strategies. Workplaces should design training and HR policies that integrate multiple age groups. Civil society should champion awareness campaigns, while policymakers should focus on long-term demographic planning. Most importantly, individuals must be willing to listen across generations, acknowledging differences but celebrating commonalities. Only then can India create a future where demographic strength becomes a driver of unity rather than division, ensuring that the generation gap is transformed into a generation (8) The future of India lies in making inter-generational relations dynamic, flexible, and adaptive. As India becomes both a young nation and an ageing society, the ability to reinvent intergenerational bonds will determine whether the demographic shift becomes a dividend or a (9) The stakes are high: ignoring this challenge could mean social alienation, wasted potential, and policy paralysis. Conversely, addressing it creatively could mean a model where India showcases how tradition and modernity, youth and experience, can together build a harmonious path. In essence, bridging the generation gap is not only about family ties but about nationbuilding itself - a (10) task for India's future.

Directions (Qs. 1 - 10): In the following passage, there are blanks each of which have been numbered from 1 to 10. Against each number, five words are suggested and only one word fits the blank appropriately. Find out the appropriate word in all the cases.

1. A) harmony B) bridge
C) union D) gap
E) inclusion
2. A) enrichment B) partnership
C) illusion D) continuity
E) divide
3. A) rigid B) innovative
C) monotonous D) stagnant

E) superficial

4. A) rivalry B) conflict

C) collaboration D) tension

E) secrecy

5. A) erosion B) strengthening

C) expansion D) support

E) revival

6. A) barrier B) tool

C) bridge D) opportunity

E) milestone

7. A) luxury B) option

C) necessity D) advantage

E) experiment

8. A) silence B) conflict

C) divide D) neglect

E) partnership

9. A) dividend B) burden

C) celebration D) surplus

E) triumph

10. A) trivial B) private

C) personal D) national

E) optional

KEY

1-D, 2-E, 3-B, 4-C, 5-A, 6-A, 7-C, 8-E, 9-B, 10-D.