

## CONCEPT NOTES - VERBAL ABILITY

### CLOSET TEST

#### CONCEPT NOTES:

A Closet reading test is an exercise where the candidates are provided with a passage which has certain words missing from it. It follows logically that to ace such an assessment, candidates must have a strong command over English language, along with a flair for grammar and a good vocabulary. More importantly, it is important to understand the flow and context of the passage.

Here is a small example:

Disregarding the news about impending bad weather, I decided to go out without a/an \_\_\_\_\_ and ended up getting wet. I resolved thereafter to always take note of the weather \_\_\_\_\_.

The correct answers in the above scenario would be 'an umbrella' or 'a raincoat' for the first blank and 'report' or 'forecast' for the second.

Since many exams now administer the Closet test to assess the level of English proficiency of their candidates, it is imperative that if you are appearing for such an exam, you have a clear sense of how and what to prepare. Here are some tips that could be of help.

#### Important Tips and Tricks

**1. Read Thoroughly**– Read the passage provided very thoroughly to form an idea about the topic. Read slowly and gain an understanding of the text. Once the theme of the text is somewhat clear, your job becomes easier. You can then go on to think of the appropriate words that suit the situation being described and proceed to filling in the blanks.

**2. Link the Sentences Together**- Remember that it is a passage with sentences that are connected to each other. Do not make the mistake of treating each sentence like an individual one and filling in the blanks accordingly. Try to come up with logical connections that link up the sentences together and your job will automatically become easier.

**3. The Type of Word to Fill in**– Now look at the blanks carefully and assess the kind of words you have to fill in. Which part of speech would it be? Would it be a noun, a pronoun, a verb, a preposition, a conjunction or an article? For example-

**A noun**– I forgot to carry my \_\_\_\_ to school. I therefore had to share with my friend.

The logical answer here would be a book or tiffin.

**An article**– He ate \_\_\_\_ papaya and threw \_\_\_\_ seeds away.

Articles are usually the easiest to answer. Fill in 'a' and 'an' where talking about general facts and 'the' when using it before something specific. Here, the answer is 'the' or 'his' in the first case and 'the' or 'its' in the second.

**A verb**– \_\_\_\_ for half an hour left me breathless. The idea of being breathless connotes something strenuous like 'exercising' or 'running'. In this way, think of the appropriate word to fill in.

**4. Eliminate Options**– You will often come across a blank that has more than one correct option. List out all these options and try them one by one. Use the one that seems most fitting. Instead of getting confused, think of words that are appropriate not only to the given sentence but also fit the context of the entire passage.

**5. Go with Frequently Used Words**- Sometimes, you may not be able to decide between two words. In this case, if you see a word in the options that is frequently used with the words around the blank, then pick that option.

**For example –**

- Can I have a \_\_\_\_ word with you?  
A. swift      **B. quick**      C. prompt

You can see that the three options nearly mean the same thing. How do you decide which one fits the blank?

Sometimes in English, some words are used more frequently with some others. Like ‘bad habit’, ‘hardly ever’, ‘happy ending’, ‘take a seat’, ‘make room’ etc. In the same way, the words ‘quick’ and ‘word’ are used together frequently. So ‘quick’ should be your answer in this case.

**6. Check Tone –** The passage is usually written in a certain tone; sometimes narrative, sometimes critical, sometimes humorous. Pick words that fit in with the tone of the passage.

**For example –**

- Jonah \_\_\_\_ down the stairs, bumping along like a quarter in a tumbling dryer.  
**A. tumbled**      B. fell      C. dropped

Clearly, you can use either ‘tumbled’ or ‘fell’ in this blank. But the rest of the sentence is written in a humorous vein. So we try to maintain the tone of the sentence. This is best accomplished by the use of the word ‘tumbled’ as it brings to mind images of people falling funnily.

**7. Build up Your Language Skills–** In terms of the general preparation you can do, read, read and read as much as you can. The more you read, the better sense you will have of what word goes where. It will also help build up your vocabulary. Both these things will go a long way in helping you ace the Closet Test.

**8. Practice makes a man perfect–** In the end, there is no substitute for hard work and practice. Try to complete three to four passages each day while preparing and get an insight into your problem areas. Work on them and go deliver your best.

**Trainer’s Guidelines:**

- There are 7 passages in the hand-out. 2 passages with 5 blanks; 3 with 10 blanks and 2 with 15 blanks.
- You must read all the passages and answer options carefully before the training.
- Please understand the answer choices clearly to explain to the students.
- Also keep the meanings of all the difficult words handy.
- Encourage the students to time up their attempt for every passage.
- Alternatively you can set a timer for every passage and check how many students complete within that time

## ANSWER KEY

**Directions for passages 1-7: In the given passages below, each of the passage has 5, 10 or 15 blank spaces and four answer choices for each blank are given after the passage. Out of these four options, select the word which you consider the most appropriate for the blank space.**

1. Today, doing business is not easy for businessmen, as they are not used to competition. In the past they were selling whatever .....(1).....produced and at their desired price. But, ...2... the competition has increased over the years, customers started to ....3.....and choose. Imports have become.....4....available and that too at cheaper .....5.....

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|-------------------|--------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. A. he          | B. them      | C. it            | <b>D. they</b>   |
| 2. A. with        | <b>B. as</b> | C. when          | D. only          |
| 3. <b>A. pick</b> | B. select    | C. want          | D. take          |
| 4. A. costly      | B. not       | <b>C. easily</b> | D. hardly        |
| 5. A. inputs      | B. costs     | C. profits       | <b>D. prices</b> |

2. If we have so many young people with good qualifications ...(1)... for a job, how come there is such a ...(2)... of good talent in the market? Millions of students graduate every year in India and enter the job market, but in reality, they are ...(3)... . The bulk of our diploma, vocational, engineering and management graduates come from institutions that ...(4)... them poorly and are unable to assist them with good job opportunities. On the other hand, organizations have a short-term focus on talent where buying existing talent seems easier than ...(5)... in-house.

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|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------|
| 1. A. wanting         | B. trying              | <b>C. waiting</b>      | D. applying    |
| 2. <b>A. scarcity</b> | B. dread               | C. requirement         | D. less supply |
| 3. A. uninterested    | <b>B. unemployable</b> | C. not of good quality | D. dumb        |
| 4. A. teach           | B. prepare             | <b>C. train</b>        | D. lecture     |
| 5. <b>A. building</b> | B. teaching            | C. preparing           | D. studying    |

3. Each species has its special place or habitat. An ...(1)... bird-watcher can look at ...(2)... forest, meadow, lake, swamp or field and ...(3)... almost exactly what birds he ...(4)... find there. ...(5)...birds are found all over the world; others ...(6)... themselves to certain areas. Still ...(7)... migrate from one country to another in ...(8)... , in search of warmth and ...(9)... and then return in spring, ...(10)... the season is more favorable.

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|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. <b>A. expert</b>  | B. experienced   | C. advanced       | D. active      |
| 2. A. the            | B. some          | <b>C. a</b>       | D. certain     |
| 3. <b>A. predict</b> | B. suggest       | C. prophecy       | D. calculate   |
| 4. A. should         | B. must          | <b>C. might</b>   | D. will        |
| 5. A. more           | <b>B. some</b>   | C. most           | D. all         |
| 6. A. keep           | B. entrust       | <b>C. confine</b> | D. involve     |
| 7. A. some           | <b>B. others</b> | C. few            | D. all         |
| 8. <b>A. winter</b>  | B. summer        | C. spring         | D. autumn      |
| 9. A. seeds          | B. crops         | C. fruit          | <b>D. food</b> |
| 10. A. while         | B. until         | C. after          | <b>D. when</b> |

4. Do women ...(1)... leadership differently than men do? And if so, will feminine leadership ...(2)... where ...(3)... leadership does not? A recent study suggests somewhat paradoxically that female managers ...(4)... their male ...(5)... even when the personal characteristics of both are very ...(6)... .Of the two schools of thought, the structuralist theory argues that men and women do not receive the same treatment in workplace and that stamping out ...(7)... bias would stamp out the observed ...(8)... .In contrast, the socialisation theory contends that men and women experience work differently because men see work as more ...(9)... to their lives. These ...(10)... explanations apart, today business appears to be undergoing feminization of leadership.

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|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1. A. Exercise    | <b>B. undertake</b> | C. authorise        | D. empower    |
| 2. A. Affect      | <b>B. succeed</b>   | C. compete          | D. progress   |
| 3. A. Traditional | B. charismatic      | <b>C. masculine</b> | D. benevolent |

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|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| 4. A. out-live              | B. out-cast               | C. out-work       | <b>D. out-do</b>       |
| 5. A. employees             | B. subordinates           | C. Superiors      | <b>D. counterparts</b> |
| 6. A. minimal               | B. distinct               | C. unique         | <b>D. similar</b>      |
| 7. A. employment            | B. culture                | <b>C. gender</b>  | D. class               |
| 8. A. variations            | <b>B. discriminations</b> | C. resemblances   | D. distortions         |
| 9. A. needy                 | B. desperate              | <b>C. Central</b> | D. trivial             |
| 10. <b>A. contradictory</b> | B. corresponding          | C. discriminating | D. identical           |
5. Each year Middle class Indian children ...(1)... lakhs of rupees in pocket money and ...(2)... a heavy burden on parental ...(3)... .Like adults, these kids have ...(4)... connected with budgeting and saving money. Unfortunately, basic money ...(5)... is ...(6)... taught in schools. At home, very few parents ...(7)... money matters with their children. Kids who ...(8)... about money ...(9)..., have been found to be way ahead of their peers. Indeed, learning to ...(10)... with money properly, fosters discipline, good work habits and self- respect.
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|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. <b>A. spend</b>   | B. steal         | C. save              | D. give           |
| 2. A. move           | B. lift          | C. risk              | <b>D. put</b>     |
| 3. A. promises       | B. payments      | C. demands           | <b>D. incomes</b> |
| 4. A. expenses       | B. experience    | <b>C. problems</b>   | D. guidance       |
| 5. A. availability   | B. inflation     | <b>C. management</b> | D. problem        |
| 6. A. carefully      | <b>B. rarely</b> | C. generally         | D. always         |
| 7. <b>A. discuss</b> | B. understand    | C. teach             | D. reveal         |
| 8. A. quarrel        | B. ask           | <b>C. learn</b>      | D. spend          |
| 9. A. slowly         | B. regularly     | <b>C. timely</b>     | D. lately         |
| 10. A. decide        | B. earn          | C. control           | <b>D. deal</b>    |
6. I noticed George Ramsay at the restaurant. He was staring into space. He looked as though the burden of the whole world sat on his shoulders. I ...(1)... at once that his unfortunate brother ...(2)... trouble again. I suppose every family has a black ...(3)... Tom has been a ...(4)... trail to his family ...(5)... twenty years. He had begun life decently enough; he went ...(6)... business, married and had two children. The Ramsays were ...(7)... respectable people, and there was every ...(8)... to suppose that Tom Ramsay would have a bright and ...(9)... career. But one day without warning, he ...(10)... that he did not like to work, and that he was not suited ...(11)... marriage. He wanted to enjoy ...(12)... .He would listen ...(13)... no advice. He left his wife and his ...(14)... .He had ...(15)... money and he spent two happy years in the various capitals of Europe.
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|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1. A. believed                | <b>B. suspected</b> | C. agreed     | D. remembered |
| 2. <b>A. has been causing</b> | B. caused           | C. will cause | D. can cause  |
| 3. A. goat                    | <b>B. sheep</b>     | C. wolf       | D. secret     |
| 4. A. sore                    | <b>B. bitter</b>    | C. sweet      | D. bad        |
| 5. A. since                   | <b>B. for</b>       | C. in         | D. before     |
| 6. <b>A. into</b>             | B. for              | C. to         | D. on         |
| 7. A. utterly                 | <b>B. perfectly</b> | C. wholly     | D. Completely |
| 8. <b>A. reason</b>           | B. cause            | C. point      | D. fact       |
| 9. <b>A. profitable</b>       | B. bad              | C. honourable | D. perfect    |
| 10. A. said                   | <b>B. announced</b> | C. wrote      | D. Told       |
| 11. A. to                     | <b>B. for</b>       | C. with       | D. in         |
| 12. <b>A. himself</b>         | B. idleness         | C. others     | D. alone      |
| 13. <b>A. to</b>              | B. in               | C. with       | D. for        |
| 14. <b>A. job</b>             | B. house            | C. relatives  | D. town       |
| 15. A. a little               | B. few              | C. no         | D. a lot of   |
7. India will find herself again when freedom opens out new horizons. Future will then fascinate her far more and help her come out of the immediate frustration and humiliation. She will go ...(1)... with confidence, rooted in herself, eager to learn from others and cooperate with them. Today she swings ...(2)... a blind adherence to her old customs

and a slavish imitation of foreign ways. In ...(3)... of these can she find relief or life or growth. It is obvious that she has to come out of her ...(4)... and take full part ...(5)... the life and activities of the modern age. It is ...(6)... that there can be no real cultural or spiritual growth based on imitation. Such imitations can only be ...(7)... to a small number of groups which cut themselves ...(8)... from the masses and the ...(9)... of national life. Though true culture derives its ...(10)... from every corner of the world, it is ...(11)... and has to be ...(12)... on the lives of its citizens. Art and literature remain ...(13)... and cannot ...(14)... imitate the foreign models. The days of ...(15)... culture confined to a small fastidious group is past. We have to think in terms of people in general and their culture must be continuous development of past trends and also represent their new urges and creative tendencies.

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|--------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| 1. A. up                 | <b>B. forward</b> | C. in                 | D. on         |
| 2. <b>A. between</b>     | B. among          | C. amidst             | D. in         |
| 3. A. either             | <b>B. neither</b> | C. both               | D. nothing    |
| 4. A. cell               | B. groove         | <b>C. shell</b>       | D. prison     |
| 5. <b>A. in</b>          | B. between        | C. of                 | D. through    |
| 6. A. Important          | <b>B. obvious</b> | C. patent             | D. Assumed    |
| 7. A. ascribed           | <b>B. limited</b> | C. linked             | D. restricted |
| 8. <b>A. off</b>         | B. out            | C. down               | D. from       |
| 9. A. Controls           | B. Parts          | <b>C. Aspects</b>     | D. roots      |
| 10. A. force             | B. ideal          | <b>C. inspiration</b> | D. Success    |
| 11. <b>A. home-grown</b> | B. indigenous     | C. original           | D. Home-town  |
| 12. A. dependent         | <b>B. based</b>   | C. identified         | D. Related    |
| 13. A. lifeless          | <b>B. static</b>  | C. inert              | D. Similar    |
| 14. A. rapidly           | <b>B. blindly</b> | C. continually        | D. Completely |
| 15. <b>A. narrow</b>     | B. tribal         | C. communal           | D. Small      |

**Explanation:** The main idea of this passage is that, culture should be evolving and not be blindly imitated. Also it should be home based and evolve with changing trends of the society and lives of people. Culture shouldn't be based on narrow set of beliefs but be inspired by the world. Hence all the answer choices are based on this theme of the passage.