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UNSEEN COMPREHENSION

Comprehension means the mind's capability to grasp the meaning of a given passage. In order to be able to comprehend a given passage and to answer the related questions in a clear and effective manner, students are advised to keep in mind the following suggestions :

- (1) Read the given passage slowly and carefully.
- (2) Try to understand the gist of the passage or what it is about.
- (3) Read the passage once again if you have not grasped its meaning fully at the first reading.
- (4) Don't get unduly upset if you don't know the meanings of some difficult words in the passage. By applying a little thought, you can guess the meaning of such words in relation to the sense in which they have been used in a particular sentence or context.
- (5) After you have grasped the passage, read the questions given below it, one by one.
- (6) Underline those parts of the passage which give the key or clue to your answers.
- (7) When the answers to all the given questions are clear to you, pen them down in your answer-book.
- (8) As far as possible, use your own words. Don't copy the language of the passage.
- (9) Your answers should be brief, clear and to the point. Often it is possible to give a good answer using only a single word or phrase, and it is not necessary to write in complete sentences.
- (10) Your language should be simple but correct.
- (11) Revise your answers, and examine them carefully to see that they are *clear* and *complete*. If an answer is too long, you must compress it by omitting unnecessary details.
- (12) Correct all mistakes in *spelling, grammar, punctuation*, etc.
- (13) If you are required to give a heading to the passage, keep in mind that the heading should be very suitable, short and crisp. It should refer to the central character, theme or incident of the passage. If some idiom or proverb sums up the theme of the passage, it can also be used as a heading.

Besides keeping all the above points in mind, it is also essential that the students have a good knowledge of the English language and they can express themselves in grammatically correct sentences. (Grammatically incorrect language, though it may convey the sense, sounds very clumsy and creates a poor impression.) The ability to express oneself correctly and lucidly can't be acquired by learning a few rules; it requires diligent labour and constant practice.

UNSEEN PASSAGES FOR COMPREHENSION

PASSAGE 1

The world is very full of people, appallingly full; it has never been so full before and they are tumbling over each other. Most of these people one does not know — and some of them one does not like; does not like the colour of their skins, say, or the shapes of their noses, or the way they blow them, or the way they talk, or their smell, or their clothes, or their fondness for jazz or their dislike for jazz and so on. Well, what is one to do ? There are two solutions. One of them is the Nazi solution. If you don't like people, kill them, banish them, segregate them and then strut up and down proclaiming that you are the salt of the earth. The other way is much less thrilling, but it is on the whole the way of the democracies. If you don't like the people, put up with them as well as you can. Don't try to love them, you can't. You will only strain yourself. But try to tolerate them. On the basis of that tolerance, a civilized future may be built.

Questions

1. What is the result of the world being full of people ?
2. What are the things one does not like in most people ?
3. What is the Nazi solution to the problem of one's not liking others ?
4. What is the democratic method to solve the problem ?
5. What will happen if we try to love those whom we don't like ?

Answers

1. *The result is that the people are tumbling over each other.* 2. *There are many things one does not like in most people, e.g. the colour of their skins, shapes of their noses, their way of talking, their smell, their clothes, or their fondness or dislike for jazz, etc.* 3. *The Nazi solution is — if you don't like people, kill them.* 4. *The democratic method to solve the problem is that if you don't like people, put up with them as well as you can, and try to tolerate them.* 5. *We will only strain ourselves.*

PASSAGE 2

Broken friendship like China may be repaired, but the break will always show. Friendship is a precious thing — too precious a treasure to be carelessly broken or thrown away. The world handles the word 'friend' lightly; its real, true, deeper meaning is forgotten and the acquaintance of an hour is designated by the term which in itself bears a wealth of meaning. Your friend is the one who appreciates you — your faults as well as your virtues — who understands and sympathises with your defeats and victories, your aims and ideals, your joys and temptations, your hopes and disappointments, as no one else does or can. It is your friend to whom you turn for counsel, for comfort, for praise; he may not be as learned as some or as wise as others, but it suffices that he understands you, and even his quiet listening gives strength and renewed courage. Therefore, avoid the break, keep the friendship unbroken, for when it is broken, it cannot be mended and the jarring note mars the harmony.

Questions

1. How is friendship defined by the writer ?
2. How should friendship be handled ?

3. How does a friend give us courage and strength ?
4. What piece of advice has been given by the writer ?
5. What mars the harmony ?

Answers

1. The writer defines friendship as a precious treasure that cannot be carelessly broken or thrown away. 2. Friendship should be handled seriously. Its real, true and deeper meaning should never be forgotten. 3. A true friend understands us thoroughly. Though he may not be able to help us in trouble, his quiet listening to our grief gives us strength and courage. 4. Friendship is a precious thing. It should never be broken, for a broken friendship can never be mended. 5. The jarring note, the result of a broken friendship, mars the harmony.

PASSAGE 3

He had a working analysis of mankind's troubles; marriage, money and the tangles of human ties. Long practice had sharpened his perception. Within five minutes, he understood what was wrong. He charged three pies per question and never opened his mouth till the other had spoken for at least ten minutes, which provided him enough stuff for a dozen of answers and advice. When he told the person before him, gazing at his palm, 'In many ways, you are not getting the fullest results for your efforts,' nine out of ten were disposed to agree with him. Or he questioned, 'Is there any woman in your family, maybe even a distant relative, who is not well disposed towards you ?' Or he gave an analysis of character : 'Most of your troubles are due to your nature. How can you be otherwise with Saturn where he is ? You have an impetuous nature and a rough exterior.' This endeared him to their hearts immediately, for even the mildest of us loves to think that he has a forbidding exterior.

Questions

1. What are mankind's troubles ?
2. What did he charge to offer answers and advice ?
3. How did he know what was wrong with a person ?
4. What was his vocation ?
5. Did he influence his clients ?

Answers

1. Marriage, money and tangles of human ties are mankind's troubles. 2. He charged three pies per question to offer answers and advice. 3. Before answering or advising his client, he used to let him speak for at least ten minutes. This gave him much knowledge about his client's problem and anxiety. 4. Astrology was his vocation. 5. Yes, he influenced his clients and endeared himself to them.

PASSAGE 4

Nobody likes staying at home on a public holiday — especially if the weather is fine. Last August, we decided to spend the day in the country. The only difficulty was that millions of other people had exactly the same idea. We moved out of the city slowly behind a long line of cars, but at last we came to a quiet country road and, after some time, stopped at a lonely farm. We had brought plenty of food with us and we got it out of the car. Now everything was ready, so we sat down near a path at the foot of a hill. It was very peaceful in

the cool grass — until we heard bells ringing at the top of the hill. What we saw made us pick our things and run back to the car as quickly as possible. There were about two hundred sheep coming towards us down the path !

Questions

1. Where did the writer and his family decide to drive to last August ?
2. Were there a lot of cars on the road, or were there only a few ?
3. What did they get out of the car ?
4. Where did they sit ?
5. Why did they have to run ? What did they hear ?

Answers

1. The writer and his family decided to drive to the country last August. 2. There were a lot of cars on the road. 3. They got the food out of the car. 4. They sat down near a path at the foot of a hill. 5. They heard some bells ringing at the top of the hill. About two hundred sheep were coming towards them down the path. So they had to run back to their car.

PASSAGE 5

In every country, people imagine that they are the best and the cleverest and the others are not as good as they are. The Englishman thinks that he and his country are the best; the Frenchman is very proud of France and everything French. The Germans and Italians think no less of their countries and many Indians imagine that India is in many ways the greatest country in the world. This is wrong. Everybody wants to think well of himself and his country. But really there is no person who has not got some good and bad qualities. In the same way, there is no country which is not partly good and partly bad.

We are, of course, most concerned with our own country, India. Unhappily, it is in a bad way today. Most of our people are poor and unhappy. They have no joy in their lives. We have to find out how we can make them happier. We have to see what is good in our ways and customs, and try to keep it, and whatever is bad we have to throw away. If we find anything good in other countries, we should certainly take it.

Questions

1. What do you think is the writer's nationality ?
2. People from how many countries are mentioned in the passage ?
3. Would you say that the writer is an open-minded person ? How ?
4. Do you generally agree with his views ? Why ?
5. Supply the synonyms for the words 'imagine' and 'certainly'.

Answers

1. The writer's nationality is Indian. 2. People from five countries are mentioned here. 3. Yes, the writer is an open-minded person, because he talks about the people of all nationalities. 4. Yes, because whatever he says applies to the people of the entire world. 5. Imagine—suppose, assume; certainly—surely, definitely.

PASSAGE 6

Socrates was arrested and accused of denying the gods and of corrupting the young men of the city (Athens). This was not true, although it seemed so to the ignorant people. Socrates worshipped the gods of Greece very scrupulously, offering sacrifices and performing

rites as the priests commanded. But he also believed that the gods spoke to him by an inner voice, telling him what to do and what not to do. This claim offended the priests, who wanted the people to believe that the gods would deal with men only through them. Then, too, Socrates had taught that there is no use believing a thing just because older people say it is so. You must test and examine and be able to give a reason for your belief. This the older people regarded as an attack on their traditions and their faiths. So they accused him of corrupting the young. The great reformer was tried by the Athenian law and condemned to death.

Questions

1. Why was Socrates arrested ? What was the charge against him ?
2. What was Socrates' attitude towards the Greek gods ?
3. Which claim of Socrates offended the priests ?
4. What did Socrates teach ?
5. Why did this offend the older people of his time ?

Answers

1. *Socrates was arrested for attacking the old religious traditions and faiths. He was charged with denying the gods and corrupting the youth of the city.* 2. *He worshipped the gods very scrupulously, offered sacrifices and performed rites as commanded by the priests.* 3. *He believed that the gods interacted with him through an inner voice, asking him what to do and what not to do.* 4. *He taught that it is no use believing a thing simply because older people say it is so. One must test and examine and be able to give a reason for one's belief.* 5. *They considered it as an attack on their traditions and faiths.*

PASSAGE 7

Camels are most valuable in a desert country. They can travel long distances, carrying heavy loads, with little food or water. This is because they have special cells in their stomachs which store water and because they can also store fat in their humps. When a camel is in a good condition and well-fed, its hump is large and firm; but when food is scarce and its store of fat is getting used up, the hump becomes flabby and may hang down. On their chests, ankles and knees, camels have pads of hard skin on which they rest when lying down. Their peculiar swaying motion — not very pleasant for anyone riding them — is due to the fact that the two legs of one side move simultaneously, instead of alternately as with most animals. Over a soft, sandy ground where most animals would get stuck, a camel can travel because of the cushion-like nature of the two widely spread toes of each foot, connected by a stout web of skin which prevents its feet from sinking into the sand. Besides using camels as transport animals, the Arabs drink their milk, eat their flesh, weave their hair into cloth and burn their dung as fuel — in fact, the camel supplies them with almost all the necessities of life.

Questions

1. Why is the camel most useful in a desert ?
2. How does the camel survive without food or water for days together ?
3. Does the camel move like most other animals ? If not, what is the obvious difference ?
4. Besides being a transport animal, how is the camel useful to people in a desert ?
5. When does a camel's hump become flabby ?

Answers

1. With little food or water, it can travel long distances carrying heavy loads. So it is the most useful animal in a desert. 2. It has special cells in its stomach which store water. And fat is stored in its hump. In this way, it can survive without food or water for many days. 3. No, the camel doesn't move like most other animals. Its two legs of one side move simultaneously instead of alternately as with most animals. 4. People in the desert drink the milk of the camel, eat its flesh, weave its hair into cloth and burn its dung as fuel. 5. It becomes flabby when food is scarce and its store of fat has been used up.

PASSAGE 8

Happy is the man who acquires the habit of reading when he is young. He has secured a lifelong source of pleasure, instruction and inspiration. So long as he has his beloved books, he need never feel lonely. He always has a pleasant occupation of leisure moments, so that he need never feel bored. He is the possessor of wealth more precious than gold. Ruskin calls books 'King's Treasures'— treasures filled, not with gold and silver and precious stones, but with riches much more valuable than these — knowledge, noble thoughts and high ideals. Poor indeed is the man who does not read and enjoy his life. Provided we choose the right kind of books and read simply for pleasure and amusement, for example, good novels. And novels and books of imagination must find their place in everybody's reading. When we are tired or the brain is weary with serious study, it is a healthy recreation to lose ourselves in some absorbing story written by a mastermind.

Questions

1. Why is the man, who has acquired the habit of reading, described as a happy man ?
2. In what respect is he richer than other people ?
3. What has the writer to say about books which do not provide serious study ?
4. Which books does the writer recommend as the right kind of reading ?
5. Suggest a suitable title for this passage.

Answers

1. It is because such a person has secured a lifelong source of pleasure, instruction and inspiration.
2. He is richer than other people since he is the owner of knowledge, noble thoughts and high ideals. These things are far more valuable than gold, silver or precious stones.
3. According to the author, when we are tired or bored, such books serve us as a healthy recreation and a welcome relief from our otherwise dull routine.
4. The writer recommends novels, stories and books that tickle our imagination.
5. Title : Attainment of Happiness through Good Reading.

PASSAGE 9

Gandhiji does not reject machinery as such. He observes : "How can I be against all machinery, when I know that even this body is a most delicate piece of machinery ? The spinning wheel is a machine, a little toothpick is a machine. What I object to is the craze for machinery, not machinery as such. The craze is for what they call labour-saving machinery. Men go on 'saving labour' till thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation. I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind, but for all. I want the collection of wealth, not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. Today, machinery merely helps a few to ride on the back of millions. The impetus behind it all is not philanthropy to save labour, but greed. It is against this constitution of things that I am

fighting with all my might. The machine should not tend to atrophy the limbs of man. Factories run by power-driven machinery should be nationalized, state-controlled. The supreme consideration is man."

Questions

1. What reason does Gandhiji give for his not being against machinery ?
2. What is it about machinery that Gandhiji really objects to ?
3. What is meant by the phrase 'thrown on the open streets' ?
4. Machines save time and labour, not for the poor worker, but for the rich factory owner. Explain how it happens.
5. Why does Gandhiji want factories run by power-driven machinery to be nationalized ?

Answers

1. *Gandhiji says human body is a machine. Even the spinning wheel and a toothpick are machines. Naturally, he can't be said to be against machinery.* 2. *He objects to the craze for machinery, not machinery itself. He doesn't want to take machinery as a labour-saving device.* 3. *It means unemployed people.* 4. *Machines save the cost of labour for the rich owners. The poor workers remain as poor as they ever were.* 5. *In that case, factories will be run by the government and the workers will be paid justly. There will be no room for exploitation.*

PASSAGE 10

A study of Marx and Lenin produced a powerful effect on my mind and helped me see history and current affairs in a new light. The long chain of history and social developments appeared to have some meaning, some sequence, and the future lost some of its obscurity. The practical achievements of the Soviet Union were also tremendously impressive. Often I disliked or did not understand some development there and it seemed to me to be too closely concerned with the opportunism of the moment or the power politics of the day. But despite all these developments and possible distortions of the original passion for human betterment, I had no doubt that the Soviet Revolution had advanced human society by a great leap and had lit a bright flame which could not be smothered, and that it had laid the foundations of that new civilisation towards which the world could advance. I am too much of an individualist and believer in personal freedom to like much regimentation. Yet it seemed to me obvious that in a complex social structure, individual freedom had to be limited, and perhaps the only way to reap personal freedom was through some such limitation in the social sphere. The lesser liberties may often need limitation in the interest of the larger freedom.

—Dubois, 'Dark Waters'

Questions

1. Who influenced the narrator and how ?
2. How did the narrator's attitude change towards Soviet Union ?
3. How did the narrator view himself ?
4. Sum up the views of the narrator on freedom and liberty.
5. Use the words 'individualistic' and 'foundation' in sentences of your own.

Answers

1. *A study of Marx and Lenin influenced the narrator. It helped him see history and current affairs in a new light.* 2. *The narrator was a believer in personal freedom, but he realised from the Soviet Revolution that the lesser liberties may often need limitation in the interest of the larger freedom.*

3. The narrator viewed himself as an individualist and believer in personal freedom. 4. The narrator is in favour of personal freedom and liberty. But he also realizes that the lesser liberties may often need limitation in the interest of the larger freedom. 5. Individualistic—Your views are highly individualistic and may not appeal to everyone. Foundation—The explosion shook the foundations of the houses nearby.

PASSAGE 11

Instead of standing as a great example of the success of democracy and the possibility of human brotherhood, America has taken her place as an awful example of its pitfalls and failures, so far as black and brown and yellow people are concerned. And this too in spite of the fact that there has been no actual failure; the Indian is not dying, the Japanese and Chinese have not menaced the land, and the experiment of Negro suffrage has resulted in the upliftment of twelve million people at a rate probably unparalleled in history. But what of this? America, Land of Democracy, wanted to believe in the failure of democracy so far as darker people were concerned. Absolutely without excuse, she established a caste system, rushed into preparation for war, and conquered tropical colonies. She stands today shoulder to shoulder with Europe in Europe's worst sin against civilisation. She aspires to sit among the great nations who arbitrate the fate of 'lesser breeds without the law' and she is at times heartily ashamed even of the large number of 'new' white people whom her democracy has admitted to place and power. Against this surging forward of Irish and German, of Russian Jew, Slav and 'dago' her social bars have not availed, but against Negroes she can and does take her unflinching and immovable stand, backed by this new public policy of Europe. She trains her immigrants to this despising of 'niggers' from the day of their landing, and they carry and send the news back to submerged classes in the fatherlands.

Questions

1. What is the attitude of America to democracy?
2. What treatment has been given to the black population?
3. Who is the ally of America and how?
4. What is the result of Negro suffrage?
5. What type of caste system is talked about here?

Answers

1. America realises that democracy has failed there. 2. The black population has to face racial discrimination. 3. Europe is the ally of America. Like America, the European countries also discriminated on the basis of the colour of the person's skin. 4. The experiment of Negro suffrage has resulted in the upliftment of twelve million people. 5. The caste system based on the colour of the person's skin is talked about here.

PASSAGE 12

1. A gentleman was repeatedly picking up starfish along a beach in Mexico. He was throwing them into the sea. When asked why he was doing so, he said, "I am throwing these starfish back into the ocean because they came in with the high tide and now the tide has receded, they will die here, stranded." "But there must be thousands on every beach. You can't possibly make a difference," asked the other man. The man smiled, lifted yet another starfish and as he threw it back into the sea, said, "..... made a difference to that one."

2. The story shows that it is not the big things only that really count in life. In fact, all great people build their character by doing small day-to-day good actions. Gandhiji, once, was standing in the open compartment door of a speeding train. He was lost in his thoughts when one of his chappals slipped from his foot and fell down. The moment he realized it was gone, he dropped the other one too. On being asked why he did so, he replied, "One chappal is of no use to me, nor to him who finds the dropped one. So he might as well have the full pair." This incident shows that nothing was too insignificant for Gandhiji.

Questions

1. What was the gentleman doing with the starfish at the shore ? Why ?
2. Did he make any difference ? What was that ?
3. What did Gandhiji do when he realized that one of his chappals had fallen down from his foot ?
4. What explanation did he offer for his act ?
5. What does it show about Gandhiji's attitude ?

Answers

1. *He was picking up starfish and throwing them into the sea. He was doing so to save their life.*
2. *Yes, he did make a very important difference. He saved the poor creatures from dying.* 3. *He dropped the other one too.* 4. *He said that one chappal was of no use to him, nor to the person who would find the dropped one. Therefore, he dropped the other one also so that the person who found it might have a full pair to use.* 5. *It shows that for Gandhiji, no thing or incident was too insignificant.*

PASSAGE 13

It was believed that malaria was caused by some kind of vapour or 'miasma' which rose from swampy or marshy land. It is now known to be transmitted by a certain kind of mosquito. This conclusion seems simple enough, but it was only proved to be true by slow steps and persistent work. The theory that malaria is transmitted by mosquitoes or flies, was put forward fourteen centuries ago, but a systematic practical study was necessary to establish it. First, Dr. C.L.A. Laveran, a French army surgeon, discovered that the blood of a person suffering from malaria always contains a peculiar parasite or organism. Sir Patrick Manson then suggested that these parasites pass a part of their existence in the bodies of mosquitoes. When in the blood of a human being carrying the parasites, they are in a certain stage of development, but they can only complete their life cycle in the body of their insect host. Sir Ronald Ross traced the various stages of the existence of the parasite in the body of the mosquito until it was ripe for injection into a human being by the bite of the insect. He proved that the only means by which a healthy person can acquire malaria is by the bite of a mosquito which has previously bitten someone whose blood contains the particular organisms associated with the disease. In other words, if there were no mosquitoes of the kind required by the malaria parasites to complete their life cycle, there could be no malarial fever.

Questions

1. What was believed to cause malaria ?
2. When was the theory that mosquitoes cause malaria introduced ?

3. What did Dr. Laveran discover ?
4. What new idea did Sir Manson put forward ?
5. Give the synonyms of 'conclusion', 'ago' and 'human'.

Answers

1. It was believed that malaria was caused by miasma — an unhealthy vapour or smell. 2. The theory was introduced fourteen centuries ago. 3. Dr. Laveran discovered that the blood of a man suffering from malaria contained a peculiar parasite. 4. Sir Manson said that the parasite can only thrive in the body of a suitable host insect. 5. Conclusion = result; ago = back / before; human = manlike / manly.

PASSAGE 14

An old society undergoing massive changes is bound to encounter obstacles and setbacks. The turmoil that India is currently undergoing has some positive aspects : its people are demanding changes and pointing towards the new goals that society should set for itself. The country's achievements in food self-sufficiency, science and technology, and industrialisation cannot be lightly dismissed. It is good that problems of environmental degradation, ecological damage and imbalances, alternative sources of energy are now being debated with a degree of passion the country had not experienced before. This shows a living concern for the future. The most hopeful signals are that the common citizens of the country are no longer willing to be taken for granted, or taken for a ride. This makes India an exciting country to live in and in which to share society's new concerns. Contemporary Indian society is undergoing a trauma of change and is confronting a series of dilemmas and paradoxes. They hurt, but they are unavoidable. It is necessary for society to view the problems of all categories of its people with empathy, find solutions to the problems of economic disparities and injustice, launch a programme of enlarging mass consciousness, promote a true sense of history as against subservience to myth, and initiate processes of participatory decision-making. While some aspects of tradition will survive because of their vitality and usefulness, many of the scaly prejudices of the past will have to be eradicated and structures of exploitation and tyranny demolished. The road ahead is long, the process may be painful, but each one of us — every citizen of India — has a stake in the future.

Questions

1. What are the positive aspects of the present turmoil in India ?
2. Name some of the achievements made by the nation.
3. What are the new problems facing us ?
4. What does the author praise the Indian citizens for ?
5. Use 'willing' and 'exciting' in sentences of your own.

Answers

1. The people of India are demanding changes. They are pointing towards the new goals that society should set for itself. 2. India has made great achievements in the fields of agriculture, science and technology, and industrialisation. 3. Environmental degradation, ecological damage and imbalances are the new problems facing us. 4. The author praises the Indian citizens for their new concerns. They are not willing to be taken for a ride. They wish to make India an exciting country. 5. (a) Willing—I was not willing to work in night shifts. (b) Exciting—The trip to nearby hills proved very exciting.

PASSAGE 15

Philosophers are not expected to be heroic. And the opinion very seldom are. But two became heroes because they were awarded that status by followers admirers and public in the field. The first was Socrates, forced to commit suicide by the state "corrupting youth", then turned into a hero by plato. The second was Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951). These two were egregious not by accident. They had much in common. Most philosophers try to construct systems of thought of a more or less ambitious kind into which almost all aspects of human activity can be fitted. Such were, for instance, Plato himself. Aristotle St. Thomas Aquinas, Kant and Hegel; and close to our own time, Martin Heidegger. But Socrates and Wittgenstein did not aspire to system building. Their object was to teach people how to think, and how not to think, and, having thought, how to articulate their thoughts in accurate words. Where the system builders can be seen as positive constructive and creative, Socrates and Wittgenstein felt obliged not always but often — to be negative, destructive and counter creative. It was these propensities that made them dangerous, but also to initiates heroic.

Questions

1. Which two philosophers, according to the passage, became heroes ?
2. How were Socrates and Wittgenstein different from other philosophers ?
3. Why was Socrates forced to commit suicide ?
4. Give antonyms of the words, 'constructive' and 'accurate'.
5. Use the words 'positive' and 'common' in sentences of your own.

Answers

1. Those two philosophers were Socrates and Ludwig Wittgenstein.
2. They were given the status of heroes by their followers, admirers and public in the field, while other philosophers were not.
3. Socrates was forced to commit suicide by the state for 'Corrupting youth'.
4. constructive → destructive; accurate → inaccurate.
5. Positive—Reeta is very positive about her new job. Common—Jackson is a common English name.

PASSAGE 16

Of all the trees of southern Asia, the banyan is unique, not only for the manner of its growth, but for the area of shade it provides from the burning sun. Its close relationship with man has evolved over the years to make the banyan a popular meeting place, a focal point of worship and a source of practical materials for commerce.

Known as the 'strangler fig' because of its unusual manner of growth, the banyan is an epiphyte or air plant, that has its birth in the branches of a host tree and lives on airborne moisture and nutrients. Banyan seeds are deposited by birds, bats or monkeys in the rich soil collected in the crevices of host-tree branches.

As the banyan grows, it sends aerial roots down the trunk of the supporting tree. In time, the roots that reach the ground choke the host tree by preventing its trunk from enlarging. The two best-known species of banyans are : the Indian (*Ficus benghalensis*), one of the world's largest tropical trees; and the Chinese (*Ficus retusa*), a smaller species with fewer aerial roots.

Questions

1. Why is the banyan called the 'strangler fig' ?
2. In what ways is the banyan tree unique ?
3. How does the banyan tree take birth and grow ?
4. Why is the banyan tree a popular meeting place ?
5. What kind of a tree is the Indian banyan ? How is the Chinese one different from the Indian one ?

Answers

1. Because it chokes the host tree. 2. It is unique in the manner of its growth. It is also unique in terms of the area of shade it provides. 3. It takes birth in the branches of a host tree. It grows with the help of airborne moisture and nutrients. 4. Because it provides a focal point of worship. 5. The Indian banyan is one of the world's largest tropical trees. The Chinese one is a smaller species.

PASSAGE 17

- 1 It was very hot in the court-room. Everybody was feeling sleepy. After a tiring morning, the clerks were anxious to get off to lunch. Even the judge seemed relieved when the last case came up before the court. A short middle-aged man with grey hair and small blue eyes was now standing before him. The man had a foolish expression on his face and he kept looking stupidly as if he was trying hard to understand what was going on. The man was accused of breaking into a house and stealing a cheap watch. The witness who was called did not give a very clear account of what had happened. He claimed to have seen the man outside the house one night, but on being questioned further, he confessed that he was not sure whether this was the man.
- 2 The judge considered the matter for some time and said that as there was no real proof, the man could not be found guilty of any crime. He said that the case was dismissed and then he rose to go. Meanwhile, the accused looked very puzzled and said suddenly, "Excuse me, Sir, but do I have to give the watch back or not ?"

Questions

1. Why did the judge feel relieved when the last case came up ?
2. What did the last person facing the judge look like ?
3. What was the charge against the man ?
4. Did the judge find the man guilty ? Why / Why not ?
5. What was it that puzzled the man ?

Answers

1. Because it had been a hot and tiring day. 2. He had a foolish expression on his face. He kept looking stupidly as if he was trying hard to understand what was going on. 3. He was accused of breaking into a house and stealing a cheap watch. 4. No, the judge did not find the man guilty as there was no real proof against him. 5. The man was puzzled because the judge had made no mention of the watch in his judgement.

PASSAGE 18

- 1 As it came near the corner, the taxi stopped suddenly. The driver got out looking very puzzled. A big lorry which had been following the taxi stopped too. The taxi driver was

now standing at the corner looking up at the sky and the lorry driver went and joined him. A number of cars behind were forced to stop as well and soon a large crowd of people had gathered at the corner.

2 The cause of all this trouble was a very strange noise. It sounded as if thousands and thousands of birds were singing together. The most extraordinary thing was that, apart from one or two pigeons, there was not a bird in sight. No one was able to solve the mystery, until two policemen arrived. They noticed a large advertisement for a film high up on a wall nearby. As the noise seemed to be coming from this direction, they climbed up and found that a tape recorder had been hidden behind the advertisement. The noise made by birds singing was being broadcast over powerful loudspeakers so as to attract the attention of passers-by. The police asked the advertisers to take the recorder away because the advertisement had attracted so much attention that it was impossible for a great many vehicles to move freely in the street.

Questions

1. Where did a large crowd gather after the traffic stopped ?
2. Why did everyone look puzzled ?
3. What did the two policemen see high up on a wall ?
4. What was the cause of the noise ?
5. What did the police ask the advertisers to do ?

Answers

1. After the traffic stopped, a large crowd gathered at the corner of the street. 2. Everyone looked puzzled because of a very strange noise. It sounded as if thousands and thousands of birds were singing together. 3. They saw a large advertisement high up on a wall. 4. It was the noise of singing birds that had been recorded in a tape recorder. And it was being broadcast over powerful loudspeakers so as to attract the attention of passers-by. 5. The police asked the advertisers to take away the tape recorder.

PASSAGE 19

My friend, we have many things to learn from other nations. The man who says he has nothing more to learn is already at his last gasp. The nation that says it knows everything is on the very brink of destruction ! 'As long as I live, so long do I learn.' But one point to note here is that when we take anything from others, we must mould it after our own way. We shall add to our stock what others have to teach, but we must always be careful to keep intact what is essentially our own.

None can teach another. You have to realize truth and work it out for yourself according to your own nature. All must struggle to be individuals — strong, standing on your own feet, thinking your own thoughts, realizing your own Self. No use swallowing doctrines others pass on — standing up together like soldiers in jail, sitting down together, all eating the same food, all nodding their heads at the same time. Variation is the sign of life. Sameness is the sign of death.

Another great lesson we have to remember is : imitation is not civilization. Imitation, cowardly imitation, never makes for progress. It is verily the sign of awful degradation in a

man. We have indeed many things to learn from others, yea, that man who refuses to learn is already dead. Learn everything that is good from others, but bring it in, and in your own way absorb it; do not become others.

Questions

1. Which nation is on the brink of destruction ?
2. What must we do when we take anything from others ?
3. Why does the writer say, 'None can teach another.' ?
4. How does the writer describe an individual ?
5. Use the word 'imitation' in a sentence of your own.

Answers

1. It is the proud nation that thinks that it knows everything and there is nothing more to learn. 2. We must mould it as per our own needs. 3. One must realise the truth oneself and must work it out according to one's own nature. 4. An individual is strong and self-dependent. He / She must think independently and must realise his / her own Self. 5. A child learns to talk by imitation.

PASSAGE 20

The auctioneer struck the hammer on the table and shouted : 'Ladies and gentlemen, the next item in the auction is this old, dusty guitar. Who will start the bidding ?'

With that, he lifted an old, rugged and battered Spanish guitar. Everybody looked at it with disdain. No one was willing to bid a thing. At last, a few voices were heard. 'I bid 50 rupees, sir ! 80 rupees ! 90 rupees, 100 rupees !' Finally, the auctioneer shouted : 'Hundred rupees, once ! Hundred rupees, twice ! Going for 100 rupees !'

Then, from the crowd, a voice was heard : 'Please, sir, will you allow me to try this guitar ?' The unknown man lifted the old, rugged guitar lovingly, dusted it, tensed the strings, then tenderly took it in his hands and began to play it.

The crowd was captivated, enraptured. Melodies, the sweetest and clearest, filled the auction hall. When the unknown musician returned the guitar to the auctioneer, the latter lifted it up again and in a loud voice, he spoke to the crowd : 'Friends, what shall we bid now for this guitar ?'

In a fast succession, voices were heard : 'Two thousand rupees, sir ! Three thousand ! Four thousand !' 'Who will make it five thousand rupees ?' the auctioneer asked. A voice was heard : 'Five thousand rupees, sir !' The auctioneer shouted : 'Five thousand rupees, going once. Five thousand rupees, going twice ! Gone ! Five thousand rupees !'

The crowd applauded. In amazement, someone exclaimed : 'I would like to know what has changed its worth in such a short time ?' Somebody remarked : 'A loving and gentle touch.'

Questions

1. Describe the guitar being auctioned.
2. How did everybody look at the old guitar at first ?
3. What did the unknown man do ?
4. What effect did his actions have on the crowd ?
5. Use 'disdain' and 'succession' in sentences of your own.

Answers

1. It was a Spanish guitar. It was old, dusty and in battered condition.
2. Everybody treated the guitar with contempt. Nobody wanted to even bid for it in the beginning.
3. The unknown man cleaned the guitar, held it lovingly and began to play it.
4. The crowd was delighted and charmed by the melodies, produced by the unknown man on the guitar.
5. (a) Disdain—A terrorist always has a disdain for law.
- (b) Succession—He changed three parties in a quick succession.

PASSAGE 21

It was calm at the polling station. There was a line of women. Another, straighter line of men. The women's queue was somewhat longer. It was full of colours, and looked like a creeper abundant with flowers, while the men's line resembled a long pole. Rukmini was happy, very happy. She just loved it all. Everything her eyes beheld filled her with excitement.

Rukmini had never seen a queue before that day. She found it novel, a fine system. How it had shrunk, though it was long as a train a while ago ! When she entered the room, a pair of dark-skinned, plump hands moved around on a large rectangular table. There were piles of papers, many red and yellow pens and pencils. She was handed a white sheet of paper. Finally, she found herself standing behind a screen. Rukmini had wanted to vote for the Parrot, but her mother-in-law had told her to vote for the Cat. Now she felt that her own hand, which had been opposite the Parrot, was taken and moved by her mother-in-law's hand over to the Cat. Down came the stamp, bright and clear, next to it. The Cat had Rukmini's vote !

Hurriedly, she left the polling booth. Her friends were waiting for her. As soon as they saw her, they asked, 'Ruku, who did you vote for ?' 'For my mother-in-law !' She did not know how it happened, but the words stood up in her mouth and showed themselves. The women gathering around laughed loudly.

Questions

1. How were the two lines of men and women different ?
2. Describe Rukmini's state of mind.
3. How did Rukmini view the queue ?
4. Describe the polling booth.
5. Use 'novel' and queue in sentences of your own.

Answers

1. While the men's line was straight, the women's line was curved and was more colourful because of their dresses.
2. Rukmini was very excited when she came to cast her vote.
3. She considered the queue a novel system. In the beginning, it was long as a train. After some time, it became much smaller.
4. At the polling booth, a plump officer was sitting around a table. There were piles of papers, pens and pencils on the table.
5. (i) Novel—The novel feature of his writings was a light comedy.
- (ii) Queue—The queue system is a feature of modern civilization.

PASSAGE 22

I lose so many things that I could swear they just get up and walk away. Perhaps I have never admitted it — even to myself, but I am extremely jealous of people who are so orderly

that they never lose anything. Most of my friends always seem to have a place for everything and everything is in its place. I hate comparing myself with them. They have special cupboards for tools, hooks to hang things on and drawers to put things in. It is quite impossible for me to compete with them.

Some things have a terrible habit of making themselves scarce the moment I need them. Pencils and ballpoint pens are never anywhere near the telephone when it rings, no matter how much care I take. Screwdrivers and tin-openers always manage to wander out into the garden and, as a result, screws remain loose and the tins remain unopened. Boxes of matches slide under the radio, and needles disappear every time I want to sew a button on a shirt.

The situation was getting so much out of control that I decided to organize myself. I had a large cupboard put into the kitchen. On the shelves, I neatly arranged a number of boxes and tins, the contents of which I clearly printed in ink on the outside. I had one box for pins, another for nails, and a special place for screwdrivers. There was a new address book in one corner so that I could make a note of telephone numbers and addresses. Before this, I had always written addresses on bits of paper — which I promptly lost. Soon, everything was tidily arranged in its place, from pairs of scissors to cakes of soap and spare lamps. Having made such a sincere attempt to prevent things from running away, I felt very proud of myself. But it was not long before the matches disappeared and the hammer decided to hide itself in the waste-paper basket. I soon got my revenge, however. I had a lock fitted to the cupboard and thus made sure that nothing could escape. This was an admirable solution — until I lost the key to the cupboard !

Questions

1. Why does the writer hate comparing himself with others ?
2. When does the writer need pencils and ballpoint pens ?
3. Why does he need needles ?
4. How do screws remain loose and tins unopened ?
5. Use 'decide' and 'control' in sentences of your own.

Answers

1. The writer feels jealous of others because, unlike him, they always keep their things in an orderly manner. So he hates comparing himself with others.
2. He needs pencils and ballpoint pens whenever the telephone rings.
3. He needs needles to sew buttons on his shirts.
4. It is because he can't find the screwdrivers and tin-openers whenever he needs them.
5. Decide—I have decided to withdraw from the contest. Control—The driver lost control of the bus and had an accident.

PASSAGE 23

Newton, perhaps the greatest scientist of all time, was born on Christmas Day 1642 at the little village of Woolsthorpe, near Grantham, in Lincolnshire. His father, a farmer, died before he was born; his mother was a woman of intelligence and character for whom Newton retained a great affection all his life. But on neither side of the family had there been anyone of outstanding brilliance. Between the age of 22 and 24, Newton made his three great discoveries — the discovery of the differential calculus, of the nature of white light, and of

the laws governing the forces of gravitation. These three discoveries have altered the course of human thought and have influenced the course of science from that day until our own. Through his work on gravitation, he discovered the laws governing the movement of planets round the sun; the action of the moon on the tides; how to predict the course of a comet, and many other things. One day, when Newton was an old man, sitting and drinking tea with antiquarian Stukeley in the orchard of his house in Kensington, he told Stukeley how the idea which led to those discoveries first came to him. 'It was occasional,' Stukeley records, 'by the fall of an apple, as he sat in a contemplative mood.' 'Why should that apple always descend perpendicular to the ground?' thought he to himself. 'Why should it not go sideways or upwards, but constantly to the earth's centre? Assuredly, the reason is that the earth draws it' And thus by degrees, he began to apply this property of gravitation to the motion of earth and of the heavenly bodies ... and thus he unfolded the universe. The greatness and originality of Newton's genius lay in his power of seeing beyond the simple happening to its farthest implications. An apple falling was no unusual event, but only Newton drew from this sight the inspiration and practical demonstration which led to a great scientific discovery. Upto Newton's day, explanations of scientific phenomenon were usually mere general speculations. Newton, the first great scientist in the modern sense, sought to establish simple laws which agreed with what actually happened, and his theories to satisfy him, had to be capable of exact mathematical proof.

Questions

1. When was Newton born and where?
2. Who was Newton's mother and how did he treat her?
3. Which were the three great discoveries of Newton?
4. What more was discovered by Newton through his work on gravitation?
5. Use 'intelligence' and 'establish' in sentences of your own.

Answers

1. Newton was born on the day of Christmas in 1642 at the small village of Woolthorpe, near Grantham in Lincolnshire.
2. Newton's mother was an intelligent woman. She had a very good character. Newton had a great affection for her all his life.
3. Newton's three great discoveries were — the discovery of differential calculus, the nature of white light and the laws of gravity.
4. Through his work on gravitation, he discovered the laws governing the movement of planets round the sun, the action of the moon on the tides, how to predict the course of a comet and many other things.
5. Intelligence—My intelligence was put to test in the interview. Establish—A committee has been established to find out the truth of this case.

PASSAGE 24

The idea of roofs and walls with grasses and plants is hardly revolutionary, whether dating back to the Hanging Gardens of Babylon or the sod houses of Scandinavia and the American Midwest that were made with slabs of thick rooted grass in soil. The modern green-roof movement, however, began in Germany in the 1960s before spreading elsewhere in Europe.

Modern green roofs aren't simply roof gardens with potted plants. At a minimum, green roofs incorporate a covering of plants in a special growing medium or soil, a drainage system, and waterproofing and root-resistant membrane. Many newer systems are modular, composed of portable, interlocking units of growing media and plantings.

Green roofs are more costly to install than conventional ones, but they offer a remarkable range of benefits. Among them : improving water quality, decreasing the heat island effect of urban areas, saving energy, reducing both pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and bringing biodiversity to cities through different plant varieties — besides the insects and birds they attract.

Many people overlook one of the chief assets of green roofs : controlling heavy rain water. Urban areas contain vast expanses of impermeable surfaces — roads, parking lots, sidewalks and rooftops — where rainwater rushes into sewage systems and quickly overwhelms them.

An urban green roof slows and absorbs water, dramatically reducing the damage caused by the run-off from heavy rains. The potential savings are huge. Studies confirm that a typical green roof will retain from 60 to more than 70 per cent rainwater, which is later released through evaporation.

Questions

1. What are the early examples of plants and grass on buildings ?
2. List the basic features of a modern green roof.
3. State any two benefits of green roofs.
4. How does a green roof reduce the damage caused by heavy rainfall ?
5. Are green roofs environment friendly ?

Answers

1. Hanging gardens of Babylon, and the sod houses of Scandinavia and the American Midwest that were made with slabs of thick rooted grass in soil are the early examples of plants and grass on buildings. 2. The basic features of a modern green roof are : a special growing medium or soil, a drainage system, a waterproofing and root-resistant membrane. 3. The benefits of green roofs are : (i) decreasing the heat island effect of urban areas and (ii) saving energy. 4. A green roof controls heavy rain water by absorbing it. Thus it reduces the damage caused by heavy rainfall. 5. Yes, green roofs are environment friendly.

PASSAGE 25

The most important thing is that we should have freedom of thought. This is not so easy as it sounds for everyone likes to have this freedom for himself, but is not ready to give it to others when they express different opinions. This is particularly the case when the differences of opinion arise on such important matters as religion or politics. But if we refuse to let the people hold their opinions on those matters and specially if we try to force them to accept our own, progress is impossible. If everyone went on thinking the same things as his ancestors thought, progress would come to an end because, as Buddha said, "What a man thinks he becomes." So if we think exactly what our forefathers thought we shall remain in the condition in which they were. Our thought depends a good deal upon what we read and what we talk

about. Therefore, if we want to think new thoughts, we must try to study all angles of a topic that comes before us and not be content only with what we read in newspaper or what others say.

Questions (Jan. 2022)

1. How do people act when it comes to extending freedom to others ?
2. In which important matters does the difference of opinion arise ?
3. What will happen if we force others to accept our own opinions ?
4. What will happen if we think exactly like our forefathers ?
5. What did Buddha say ?

Answers

1. They are not willing to extend freedom to others.
2. On important matters of religion and politics, the difference of opinion arises.
3. Progress will become impossible if we force others to accept our opinions.
4. If we think like our forefathers we shall remain in the condition in which they were.
5. Buddha said that what a man thinks he becomes.

PASSAGE 26

Of all the amusements which can possibly be imagined for a hard-working man, after his daily toil, there is nothing like reading an entertaining book. It calls for no bodily exertion of which he has had enough. It relieves his mind of its dullness. It transports him to a livelier and more interesting scene and while he enjoys himself, he may forget the evils of the present moment. Nay, it accompanies him to his day's work, and if the book he has been reading be anything the idlest and lightest, it gives him something to think of besides the drudgery of his everyday occupation. If I were to pray for a taste which should stand me in good stead under every variety of circumstances and be a source of happiness and cheerfulness through life, it would be a taste for reading. Give a man this taste and the means of gratifying it and you can hardly fail to make him happy, unless, indeed, you put into his hands the most perverse selection of books.

Questions (Dec. 2022)

1. Which is the best of amusements for a hard-working man ?
2. What are the benefits of reading an entertaining book ?
3. What does any book above the idlest and the lightest give him ?
4. What kind of taste the author wants to develop ?
5. What is the recipe for happiness according to the author ?

Answers

1. Reading an entertaining book.
2. Entertaining book takes the reader to livelier and interesting sites. It makes him forget about the evils of present moment.
3. It gives him something to think about other than the everyday chores.
4. The taste for reading.
5. The taste of reading and giving him perverse books.

PASSAGES FOR PRACTICE**PASSAGE 1**

- 1 The great advantage of early rising is the good start it gives us in our day's work. The early riser has done a large amount of hard work before other men have got out of bed. In the early morning the mind is fresh, and there are few sounds or other distractions, so that the work done at that time is generally well-done. In many cases, the early riser also finds time to take some exercise in fresh morning air, and this exercise supplies him with a fund of energy that will last until the evening.
- 2 By beginning so early, he knows that he has plenty of time to do thoroughly all the work he can be expected to do, and is not tempted to hurry over any part of it. All his work being finished in good time, he has a long interval of rest in the evening before the timely hour when he goes to bed. He gets to sleep several hours before midnight, at the time when sleep is most refreshing and after a sound night's rest, rises early next morning in good health and spirits for the labour of the next day.

Questions

1. How does early rising affect one's day's work ?
2. Why is the work done in the early hours generally well-done ?
3. Why has an early riser no need to hurry over his day's work ?
4. How can one find ample time for rest in the evening ?
5. Early rising is good for health. Is going to bed early also good for health ? How ?

PASSAGE 2

- 1 Trees give shade for the benefit of others, and while they themselves stand in the sun and endure the scorching heat, they produce the fruit by which others profit. The character of a good man is like that of trees. What is the use of this perishable body, if no use of it is made for the benefit of mankind ? Sandalwood — the more it is rubbed, the more scent does it yield. Gold — the more it is burnt, the more brightly does it shine. The men who are noble at heart do not lose these qualities even in losing their lives.
- 2 What matters whether men praise them or not ? What difference does it make whether riches abide with them or not ? What does it signify whether they die at this moment or whether their lives are prolonged ? Happen what may, those who tread the right path will not set foot on any other. Life itself is unprofitable to a man who does not live for others. Those who lay down their lives for others will assuredly dwell forever in a world of bliss.

Questions

1. What do trees do for us ?
2. What is the similarity between trees and good men ?
3. What lesson can we learn from sandalwood and gold ?
4. What does a noble person remain indifferent to ?
5. What kind of life is unprofitable ?

PASSAGE 3

- Freedom is a sweet-sounding word. Nearly all of us love to use it or hear it used. Even if we do not quite understand what it means, we feel it stands for something fine and courageous. And so it does. It stands for something precious too; something for which men and women in every part of the world have struggled and suffered and gone bravely even to their death. If we enjoy any freedom now, it is partly due to them. So it is really worth our while to know clearly what freedom is, and why it has been valued so highly. We shall ourselves thereby come to value it and not lose it by our carelessness.
- At one time it used to be said, "All men are born free.", but we can now see that it is not true at all; for Nature binds us in all sorts of ways. The newborn baby is not free, not even as free as the newborn calf, much less than the newborn mosquito. The young mosquito is soon able to fly away, the calf begins to walk in a few days; but the human baby takes at least a year even to crawl. He slowly wins his freedom by increase of strength and skill. It does not come to him in any other way.

Questions

- How is freedom a sweet-sounding word ?
- How has freedom come to us ?
- "All men are born free." Does the writer agree with this ?
- How does the writer compare a human child with young ones of the other species ?
- How does a child win its freedom ?

PASSAGE 4

- Character is destiny. Character is that on which the destiny of a nation is built. If we want to build a great nation, we must try to train a large number of young men and women who look upon others as the living images of themselves; as our 'Shastras' have so often declared. But whether in public life or in student life, we cannot reach great heights if we are lacking in character. We cannot climb the mountain when the very ground at our feet is crumbling. When the very basis of our structure is shaky, how can we reach great heights which we have set before ourselves ?
- We must all have humility. Our lives should be clean, noble and dedicated to the service of Mother India. For whatever service we take up, we should not care for what we receive. We must know how much we can put into that service. That should be the principle which should animate our young men and women. Ours is a great country. We have had for centuries a great history. The whole of the East reflects our culture. We have to represent what Hindustan has taught right from the time of Mohanjo-Daro and Harappa. Whether in domestic affairs or in international affairs, we must adhere to certain standards.

Questions

- What is meant by saying that 'character is destiny' ?
- What do our 'Shastras' teach us ?
- How is character important in reaching great heights ?
- What advice does the writer give to the young men and women of Mother India ?
- What does the whole of the East reflect ?

PASSAGE 5

- 1 For children too, there is no greater instrument of education than the conversation they hear at home. It is unjust to them when nothing is spoken before them but trifles of dress, the gossips of the neighbourhood, the cares of the household which press too heavily upon the parents, the follies and the vanities of the world, which are hardly apprehended by their innocent minds. They are naturally imitative, and a greater part of their character is derived from their parents.
- 2 If there is no life or mirth in a house, the children of the house will be commonly dull and stupid; and if they never hear subjects rationally discussed, they will not learn to think and reason; if the world in which we live is allowed to pass unheeded by, they will be without interest, listless and unobservant. This home education which they acquire insensibly is as important as the more formal work of the school, and it is as much our duty to provide food for their minds as for their bodies. They do not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth.

Questions

1. Why does the author call conversation an 'instrument of education' ?
2. What sort of conversation does the author think bad for children ?
3. Why does the author think that children may become dull and stupid ?
4. What conversation helps children to think and reason ?
5. What should parents do to prevent children from becoming 'without interest, listless, and unobservant' ?

PASSAGE 6

- 1 That science has become one of the most powerful factors in modern life is a generally accepted and indeed obvious fact. The proper role of the scientist himself is, however, a point on which there is no general agreement. On the one hand are those diehards who ignoring the changed circumstances of the outside world, contend that outside the laboratory, the personal influence of the scientist should be no more than that of any other citizen.
- 2 On the other hand are extremists who advocate a state verging on a technocracy in which scientists would have special privileges and a large measure of control. Those who tend towards the latter view are much more vociferous than their more conservative, and much more numerous colleagues, with the unfortunate result that there is a widespread impression that scientists generally share these views and wish to claim a far larger share in the control of the world affairs than they possess at present. It is, therefore, time to attempt an assessment of the proper status of the scientist in modern society.

Questions

1. What is the present position of science and that of a scientist in society ?
2. Is there any common view about the role of scientists in modern society ?
3. What is the argument advanced by the conservatives ?
4. How do the extremists contradict the conservatives ?
5. What is the need of the hour ?

PASSAGE 7

- 1 Every society depends on energy derived from one source or another to supply its needs. In the past, energy of the beasts and water power for watermills was used to supplement what man could not do alone. Modern society depends, above all, on heat-based energy. This produces electricity, cooks food and propels motor cars, ships and planes. The principal source is oil. Without it, industry would collapse, standards of living would drop. Oil is no longer so cheap and plentiful as it was. Existing supplies will not last indefinitely. Yet world energy demand goes on increasing. This demand almost trebled between 1950 and 1970. By 1985, the energy demand of the major industrial nations had doubled again.
- 2 The natural resources of the world — including food, minerals, oil and raw materials — are limited. It is already recognised that as population continues to grow, everyone's share of the available food will have to be smaller unless more food is produced. Despite improvements in farming techniques, there is a limit to the quantity of grain. This is why many countries are trying to restrict population growth by birth control, and why scientists are looking for new ways of manufacturing food.

Questions

1. How did the primitive energy supplement man's work ?
2. How does the heat-based energy help the civilisation forward ?
3. How many times had the total demand for energy increased till 1985 ?
4. What efforts are being initiated to overcome the shortage of food in the world ?
5. Why is it being tried to restrict the growth of population ?

PASSAGE 8

Blood is made up of three cell types and plasma which together have vital tasks to perform. On the one hand, blood is a means of transport, supplying every part of body with oxygen and nutrients. On the other, it removes carbon dioxide and waste products. In addition to these functions, it serves as a means of communication between different organs by carrying hormones and other chemical messengers from place to place. The constant circulation of blood also helps to keep our body's temperature constant, and blood platelets help to protect us by blocking the flow of blood from wounds. The red corpuscles contain haemoglobin, molecule that transports oxygen around the body, while the various types of white corpuscles play an important role in our body's vital immune defences. They are constantly patrolling the whole body and are able to penetrate into any type of tissue through the blood vessel walls and remove foreign matter, harmful bacteria and diseased cells. Red blood cells contain the protein haemoglobin, which gives it its red colour. The haem group of protein molecules — iron attached to them — is responsible for the colour. Haemoglobin's task is to bind the oxygen in the lungs, transport it to the rest of the body and then release it.

Questions

1. What does the blood supply ?
2. How does blood serve as a means of communication ?
3. How are blood platelets helpful to us ?
4. What penetrates into tissues and what does it remove ?
5. What do red blood corpuscles contain ?

PASSAGE 9

- 1 Lamartine, the French poet and statesman, was never rich. He had a great desire to possess a carriage of his own and for this purpose, he saved money which he put by in a box. He had saved about a thousand francs when one day a humble neighbour, a poor widow with several children, came into his room, threw herself at his knees, and told him with tears that she had no bread to eat, that her furniture had been seized, and that she and her children had been turned out into the street. "How much do you require?" said Lamartine, going quickly to his box.
- 2 "A thousand francs," replied the poor woman. "Come, here they are," said the generous poet, and he emptied his savings into her hands. The next day, a friend asked him what he would do about his carriage. "Oh my friend," said he, "I shall continue to go on foot; it is better for my health."

Questions

1. How much money had Lamartine saved and what for?
2. What was the poor widow's problem?
3. How did Lamartine help the poor widow?
4. "I shall continue to go on foot; it is better for my health." Was Lamartine telling the truth? What was the real fact?
5. What impression do you form of Lamartine after reading this passage?

PASSAGE 10

- 1 It is as important to know what subject to avoid, as what subject to select for good conversation. If you don't want to be set down as a wet blanket or a bore, be careful to avoid certain unpleasant topics. Avoid talking about yourself, unless you are asked to do so. People are interested in their own problems, not in yours.
- 2 Sickness and death bore everybody. The only one who willingly listens to such talk is the doctor, but he gets paid for it. To be a good conversationalist, you must know not only what to say, but also how to say it. Be civil and modest. Don't over-emphasize your own importance. Be mentally quick and witty, but don't hurt others with your wit. Finally, try to avoid mannerism in your conversation. Don't bite your lips, or click your tongue, or roll your eyes, or wave hands excessively as you speak. Don't be like the Frenchman who said, "How can I talk if you hold my hands?"

Questions

1. What kind of subject should be avoided in conversation and why?
2. Who is set down as a wet blanket?
3. What kind of a talk would a doctor willingly listen to, and why?
4. List three do's and three dont's to be a good conversationalist.
5. Bring out the humour in the line: 'How can I talk if you hold my hands?'.

PASSAGE 11

There are many tests by which a gentleman may be known; but there is one that never fails. How does he conduct himself towards women and children? How does the officer treat his men, the employer his servants, the master his pupils, and the man in whatever station those who are weaker than himself? The discretion, forbearance and kindness with

which power in such cases is used, may indeed be regarded as a crucial test of gentlemanly character. He who bullies those who are not in a position to resist may be a snob, but cannot be a gentleman. He who tyrannizes over the helpless, may be a coward, but not a true man. Strength and consciousness of strength in a right-hearted man imparts a nobleness to his character, and he will be most careful how he uses it, for it is excellent to have a giant's strength, but it is tyrannous to use it like a giant. Gentlemanliness is indeed the test of a gentleman. A consideration for the feelings of others, or for his inferiors and dependents as well as his equals and a respect for their self-respect, will always be the signs of a true gentleman's character.

Questions

1. What is the surest test of gentlemanly character ?
2. Why can't a snob be called a gentleman ?
3. What can we say of a person who tyrannizes over the helpless ?
4. How does a true gentleman use his power and strength ?
5. List the chief signs of a true gentleman's character.

PASSAGE 12

English is important not because a number of people know it in India, although it is a factor to be remembered. It is not important because it is the language of Milton and Shakespeare, although that also has to be considered. English is important because it is the major window for us on the modern world. And we dare not close that window. If we close it, we imperil our future. We think of our five-year plans, industrialisation, scientific development and technology. But every door of the modern knowledge will be closed if we do not have one or more foreign languages. We need not have English; we can have French, German, Russian, if you like, but obviously it is infinitely simpler for us to deal with a language which we already know than to shift over to French, German, Russian or Spanish, learning which will be a tremendous job. It is obvious that in the present state of our development, with our five-year plans, industrialisation, scientific progress and research, we cannot progress with all the Indian languages put together. If we want to stick to them only, without foreign languages, we can never march ahead.

Questions

1. What does the author mean when he says that English is '*the major window for us on the modern world*' ?
2. How can the knowledge of English help us in our national development ?
3. How does the writer compare English with other foreign languages ?
4. Why does the writer say that '*we cannot progress with all the Indian languages put together*' ?
5. What will happen if we try to do away with English or other foreign languages ?

PASSAGE 13

- 1 Fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, managers and foremen, politicians, artists and others, all these in one way or another, are teachers. Their methods will vary as widely as their jobs and characters. For this reason, we can point out only a few general principles to make their teaching more effective.

2 The first is clarity. Whatever we are teaching, we must make it clear. Make it as firm as stone and as bright as sunlight. Not to ourselves — that is easy. Make it clear to the people we are teaching — that is difficult. The second is patience. Anything worth learning takes time to learn, and time to teach. It is a mistake often made by many of us to think that our audiences have thought deeply about their problems and are only a few steps behind us in any discussion. Real teaching is not simply handing out information. It is an actual change of the pupil's mind. The third principle is responsibility. People are easily influenced, for good or evil, when their teacher speaks with authority. As teachers, we must see that our ideas are not misunderstood by those whom we are trying to teach.

Questions

1. What does this passage say about the methods of teaching ?
2. What is and what is not real teaching ?
3. What is meant by the principle of responsibility in teaching ?
4. Which two other general principles are considered necessary for effective teaching ?
5. Which sentence in the passage shows a teacher's strong hold on his students ?

PASSAGE 14

Swami Vivekanand wrote : We say, "Newton discovered Gravitation. Was it sitting anywhere in a corner waiting for him ?" It was in his mind. The time came and he found it out. All knowledge that the world has ever received comes from the mind. The infinite library of the universe is in your own mind. The external world is only the suggestion, the occasion which sets you to study your own mind. "No one was ever really taught by anyone. Each of us has to teach himself. The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal teacher to work to understand things. You cannot teach a child any more than you can grow a plant. The plant develops its own nature. The child also teaches itself. But you can help him to go forward in his own way. Parents are constantly taxing their children to read and work, telling them that they will never learn anything and calling them fools and so forth; the latter do actually turn out to be so in many cases. If you speak kind words to them and encourage them, they are bound to improve in time.

Questions

1. What did Swami Vivekananda say about Gravitation ?
2. What did he say about the mind ?
3. What did he say about teaching ?
4. What is the similarity between a child and a plant ?
5. What can we do to help a child ?

PASSAGE 15

Mountaineering is now looked upon as a kind of sport. But men have lived amongst the mountains since prehistoric times and in some parts of the world, as in the Andes and Himalayas, difficult mountain journeys have inevitably been part of their everyday life. However, some of the peaks were easily accessible from most of the cities of Europe. It is quite interesting that while modern mountaineers prefer difficult routes for the greater enjoyment of sport, the early climbers looked for the easiest ones, for the summit was the prize they all set their eyes on. Popular interest in mountaineering increased considerably after the ascent of the Alpine peak of Matterhorn in 1855 and Edward Whymper's dramatic account of the climb and fatal accident which occurred during the descent.

In the risky sport of mountaineering, the element of competition between either individuals or teams is totally absent. Rather, one can say that the competition is between the teams and the peaks themselves. The individuals making up a party must climb together as a team, for they depend upon one another for their safety. Mountaineering can be dangerous unless reasonable precautions are taken. However, the majority of fatal accidents happen to parties which are inexperienced or not properly equipped. Since many accidents are caused by bad weather, the safe climber is the man who knows when it is time to turn back, however tempting it may be to press on and try to reach the summit.

Questions

1. 'Mountaineering is now looked upon as a kind of sport.' Why ?
2. How are difficult mountain journeys part of the day-to-day life of men living in the mountains ?
3. Why do modern mountaineers prefer difficult routes to the easier ones ?
4. Do individuals really compete with each other in mountaineering ?
5. Give antonyms of 'everyday' and 'risky'.
6. How can mountaineering be dangerous ?

PASSAGE 16

You may be the best candidate for a job, but that is no guarantee that you will be offered it. Experience and qualifications are important, but you may also have to sell yourself as the best person for the post. This requires you to know as much about the position as possible.

Begin by thinking how you can make your best impression on the interviewers. Consider what the interviewers' likely prejudices and dislikes may be, and take these into account when answering questions and unveiling your personality. And reflect on the personal qualities that might be necessary for the work you will be doing. These qualities will surely be looked for and perhaps even tested in the interview. Research the company. The more you know about your potential employers, the better. Find out what the company's priorities are. Visit a library to read magazines, newspapers, company brochures, and reports that will bring you up to date with the latest developments in the company.

Know your own strengths. Sit down with a pen and paper, and match your skills and experience to the job description in the advertisement. Think how the employer would benefit by choosing you, rather than another candidate.

Know your weaknesses. Good interviewers are practised at finding the weaknesses in a candidate, so don't imagine that you are certain to get away with anything. But what you cannot hide you can always explain — provided you are well prepared. And if you think positively about yourself, you can turn those explanations to your advantage.

Questions

1. What two things are important while applying for a job ?
2. What else might you have to do ?
3. What must you take into account when answering questions ?
4. What may possibly be tested in the interview ?
5. Give antonyms of 'best', 'much' and 'move'.
6. Use 'priorities' and 'imagine' in sentences of your own.

PASSAGE 17

Properly planned and executed holidays can tone up both mind and body. But many of us don't know how to take a holiday. Good planning is all important. A leading clinical psychologist reports that many people seek his help after poorly planned holidays that have led to family quarrels. Instead of making their holiday a period of rest, development of understanding and love for their families, people try to block everything out with 'fun-packed' activity. When the 'fun' is over, they return in worse shape, mentally and physically, than when it began.

Here are other common holiday errors which, as a doctor, I caution against: some of us delude ourselves into thinking that a quick holiday will give instant relaxation and get us back on the track. Most people need a full three weeks or longer. To get any lasting good out of your holiday, you must have a change of pace and scene. That is one reason why travel can be so helpful. Thus, spending your entire holiday at home may be a mistake. Another common error that tourists often make is trying to see and do far too much. To be able to live in peace and quiet for a time is a mark of maturity. It gives you a chance to think about your family and yourself.

A holiday's success is measurable by the results it produces. A good one is often marked by relaxed muscles, more satisfying sleep, slower heart rate and reduction in blood pressure.

Questions

1. What is most important for a holiday?
2. What should we make of our holidays?
3. What happens if holidays are used to block out the realities of life with 'fun-packed' activities?
4. Why doesn't a quick holiday relax one completely?
5. Use 'seek' and 'helpful' in sentences of your own.
6. Give the noun form of 'delude'.

PASSAGE 18

Too much importance must not be attached to the wrong acts done by children, particularly if they happen to be of a minor nature. Many boys and girls at a younger age are likely to be in the habit of stealing, neglecting their studies, slipping out of their classes, or using bad language. In nearly every case, the root cause of the trouble is the fear that proper care of the child is not taken in the house, or sufficient interest is not shown in him. But if the parents were wise, they would correct the faults of their children by paying more attention to them. Whatever the case, one thing should never be done. The bad things in the children should never be repressed, that is, they should not be compelled to change for the better under fear of the rod. Physical punishment does not improve them. It only makes them worse than before.

Questions

1. What do boys and girls at a young age do?
2. What is the root cause of their misbehaviour?
3. What is the duty of a wise parent?
4. Why should a rod not be used to make the children better?
5. What is the one thing that should never be done?

PASSAGE 19

The difference, I suppose, proceeds from the idea that while the miser is the soul of selfishness, the spendthrift is at bottom a good-natured fellow and a lover of his kind. No doubt the vice of the spendthrift has a touch of generosity, but it is often generosity at other people's expense, and it is not seldom as essentially selfish as the vice of the miser. It is rather like the generosity of the man who, according to Sydney Smith, was so touched by a charity sermon that he picked his neighbour's pocket of a guinea and put it in the plate. I have no doubt that Lady Ida if she had got Miss Dobbs's money, would have scattered it about with a very free hand, and would have contributed to the collection plate quite handsomely. But she was selfish nonetheless. It was her form of selfishness to enjoy the luxury of spending money she hadn't got, just as it was Elves's form of selfishness to enjoy the luxury of saving money he had got. But I admit that the uncalculating spirit that lands people in debt is a more engaging frailty than the calculating spirit of a miser.

Questions

1. What does a spendthrift appear to be ?
2. What is often the source of a spendthrift's generosity ?
3. Why did the man pick the neighbour's pocket ?
4. What would Lady Ida have done with Miss Dobbs's money ?
5. Which, according to the author, is a more engaging weakness ?

PASSAGE 20

French physicist Antoine Becquerel wondered if fluorescent substance also produced X-rays. He found by chance that uranium salts emitted radiation that consisted of a stream of electrons, quite unlike X-rays.

Marie Curie was born in a poor Polish family. She left for Paris in 1891 with a burning desire to study science. She married Pierre, a chemist. They knew of Becquerel's discovery and set to refine pitchblende, a mineral ore which emitted a high amount of radiation. In 1898, they isolated a new element, polonium. Then they spent all their savings and a gruelling four years' working to extract radium. The Curies refused to patent their discovery.

Later, Marie became the first woman to teach at the Sorbonne. In 1911, she won an unprecedented second Nobel prize for Chemistry. Marie died of leukaemia because of prolonged exposure to radioactivity. Even today, her notebooks are too contaminated to handle.

Questions

1. Name Marie Curie's husband. What was his profession ?
2. What did the Curies find in 1898 ?
3. What did the couple ultimately want to extract ?
4. What was novel in Marie's teaching assignment at the Sorbonne ?
5. How did she die ?
6. What was unprecedented about her achievement ?