

GS FOUNDATION  
BATCH FOR CSE 2024  
Ace CSAT 2023 – Booklet 5  
Comprehension Basics

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Comprehension

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

There's no fixed pattern to teach comprehension. It's a matter of practice and efforts to go through what is being said, understand the context, understand the core message and draw the core inferences. And that is where UPSC is coming from.

They don't want you to only answer questions based on text of passage. That you can do anyway. They want you to comprehend the context, content and inferences of the passage. And do it all in speed.

## 2) ASPECTS OF COMPREHENSION

There are five aspects to get to right answer of given comprehension:

1. Understand the context and assumptions the author has made
2. Understand the vocabulary used
3. Understand the core message and inference of the author – it typically comes in later part of the passage
4. Choosing the correct option from similar looking alternatives
5. Reading speed

Important thing to remember here is that, you've to answer based on passage given and NOT based on what you otherwise know about the topic.

Another important thing to remember is to read the statements very carefully. Special attention has to be given to words like 'only', 'all', 'exclusively', 'uniquely', 'most', 'almost', 'not', 'definitely', 'larger', 'largest' etc. – for these words change the meaning of passage or underlying tone.

## 3) TYPES OF QUESTIONS ASKED

Now let see what kind of questions UPSC keeps asking us:

1. Which option best reflects the message of the author/crux of the passage?
2. What does author mean by XYZ?
3. Based on the passage following assumptions have been made: (context)
4. According to passage, which of the following is true? (Understanding and reading carefully)
5. Passage is based on which idea? (context)
6. Which of the following is definite consequence of the passage?
7. Which of the following best describes underlying tone of the passage?
8. The author is against which of the following?
9. Which of the following is implied by the passage? (inference)
10. What is the main idea of the passage?
11. Which of the following reflects practical, lasting, rational solution as per passage?

#### 4) MEANING OF THE QUESTIONS

We firstly need to understand what do these questions mean?

1. **Assumption:** Something that is implicit or inherently true while making a statement. An assumption is something which is assumed, supposed and taken for granted. When someone says something, he may not be able to convey his entire idea into words. The particular part of his idea, not expressed in words or to be taken for granted is an assumption. The author has some prior beliefs based on which he/she writes the passage. In doing so, some assumptions are inherently made by the author – student has to use their analytical mind to unearth those based on the passage only.
2. **Crux:** It is the core idea or the message of the passage. Author has tried to make few arguments in the passage to come to some ultimate conclusion. He/she wants to convince reader of some of his idea or opinion. That is what the crux is.
3. **Conclusion:** Something which directly follows from the statements or arguments made by the author. Here you cannot assume anything and cannot use your prior knowledge or experience.
4. **Inference:** These are the set of conclusions that **can be** drawn from arguments made by the author in the passage. There can be more than one inference. You may not get answer directly in the passage but have to use your analytical mind to draw out inference. You may use your prior knowledge, experience to draw out inference from the passage if you can't derive inference from the passage.
5. **Underlying tone:** In the passage the author tried to defend his ideas. In doing so he/she ends up lending a specific direction or tone to the passage. The passage could criticise something or someone; it could praise something or someone etc. Underlying tone is about reader's understanding of author's mind or opinions.
6. **Implication:** Something which can be understood or inferred from the given information. The word implication follows from implicit which means implied **indirectly or being an integral part of something stated**. It is the **unexpressed part** of the statement. Sometimes implications are also taken as assumptions.
7. **Corollary:** If some statement, act or situation is given and we can derive some other statement or act or situation as a side-effect from it, it is called a corollary. Also, what options one might have based on given situation lead us to corollary.  
For instance, if your Quant and Reasoning is poor, corollary is you will focus more on comprehension.  
Or, if you are very confident in your comprehension abilities, corollary is that, you will attempt comprehension first.

#### 5) PRACTICE QUESTIONS

The main threat to maintaining progress in human development comes from the increasingly evident unsustainability of production and consumption patterns. Current production models rely heavily on fossil fuels. We now know that this is unsustainable because the resources are finite. The close link between economic growth and greenhouse gas emissions needs to be served for human development to become truly sustainable. Some developed countries have

begun to alleviate the worst effects by expanding recycling and investing in public transport and infrastructure. But most developing countries are hampered by the high costs and low availability of clean energy sources. Developed countries need to support developing countries' transition to sustainable human development.

Q. Unsustainability in production pattern is due to which of the following?

1. Heavy dependence on fossil fuels
2. Limited availability of resources
3. Expansion of recycling

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Consider the following statements: Developed countries can support developing countries' transition to sustainable human development by

1. making clean energy sources available at low cost
2. providing loans for improving their public transport at nominal interest rates
3. encouraging them to change their production and consumption patterns

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 1 and 2 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Unless the forces and tendencies which are responsible for destroying the country's environment are checked in the near future and afforestation of denuded areas is taken up on a massive scale, the harshness of the climatic conditions and soil erosion by wind and water will increase to such an extent that agriculture, which is the mainstay of our people, will gradually become impossible. The desert countries of the world and our own desert areas in Rajasthan are a grim reminder of the consequences of large-scale deforestation. Pockets of desert-like landscape are now appearing in other parts of the country including the Sutlej-Ganga Plains and Deccan Plateau. Where only a few decades back there used to be lush green forests with perennial streams and springs, there is only brown earth, bare of vegetation, without any water in the streams and springs except in the rainy season.

Q. According to the passage given above, deforestation and denudation will ultimately lead to which of the following?

1. Depletion of soil resource
2. Shortage of land for the common man
3. Lack of water for cultivation

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Economic science has dominated public policy since the 20th century. Debates have raged between “Keynesian” economists and “Friedman” economists: between “welfarists” who see the need for a government hand in the economy and “monetarists” who want governments out of the way to let private entrepreneurs loose and let an “invisible hand” produce good outcomes for all. Both sides agree that growth in GDP — the size of the economy measured in money terms — is essential. Far-sighted systems thinkers in the Club of Rome gave a wake-up call in 1972. They showed that pursuit of GDP growth was destroying the earth’s capacity to renew itself and provide resources for unbridled economic growth. They introduced the health of the planet into calculations of profit and growth. Meanwhile, economists continue to treat the natural environment as external to the economy. Pleas by communities to protect it are dismissed as impediments to “ease of doing business” and GDP growth.

Q. Which of the following is the crux of the message that author intends to give?

- (a) Every country needs to pursue higher GDP as Keynesian and Friedman economists both agree on it
- (b) Pursuit of GDP should be given up as it is destroying the Earth’s natural systems
- (c) Natural environment is part of our economic systems and impact on it must be part of our calculations of growth
- (d) Voice of the community must always be heard and not be discarded as against growth or ease of doing business

"In simple matters like shoe-making, we think only a specially trained person will serve our purpose, but in politics, we presume that everyone who knows how to get votes knows how to administer a State. When we are ill, is a guarantee of specific preparation and technical competence—we do not ask for the handsomest physician, or the most eloquent one: well then, when the whole State is ill should we not look for the service and guidance of the wisest and the best?"

Q. Which one of the following statements best reflects the message of the author of the passage?

- (a) We assume that in a democracy, any politician is qualified to administer a State.
- (b) Politicians should be selected from those trained in administration.
- (c) We need to devise a method of barring incompetence from public office.
- (d) As voters select their administrators, the eligibility of politicians to administer a State cannot be questioned.