



*The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.*

—Dr. Seuss

## Introduction to Reading Comprehension for Common Admission Test (CAT)

Reading comprehension (RC) is characterised as no less than an evil character from the fables that hunts down the prince or the princess and jinxes the whole ball of the wax. Such notions of Reading comprehension are rampant in the minds of the aspirants preparing for CAT, GMAT, GRE, or any other exam that asks questions on this topic. Why is Reading comprehension a part of major exams if it is such a dreaded topic? What role does RC play in making a future manager or a CEO?

Reading comprehension is expected to reflect the comprehension skills of future managers. An aspirant's journey starts with the preparation of CAT, which leads to two years of B-School and then to an ever-striving journey for success driven by passion.

In this journey, an aspirant takes leaps and bounds of success, faces teething troubles, and overcomes them with due diligence and understanding. Reading comprehension builds the fundamentals of understanding, the quintessential ability to break down a problem into smaller fragments, and understanding the art of choosing between the best and the most probable.

An unseen passage is what comes to mind as soon as a person hears RC. Most of the students know the pattern of reading comprehension as they might have done this in their college or school.

Let's break down the term for better understanding.

### Trivia



Approximately 70% of the VARC section of CAT is reading comprehension.

*Reading* means to scan through what is written, and *comprehension* stands for understanding. The complete term stands for reading and understanding the given passage and answering the questions accordingly.

### Reading + Comprehension = Reading comprehension

Reading comprehension in CAT is not just about cramming but examining the texts and understanding the writer's thoughts, comprehending the elite vocabulary, inferring the implied, and answering the questions.

An aspirant preparing for CAT has to dive into the depths of reading and come out as a better reader and problem solver.

RCs are essential from a theoretical point of view as well. An aspirant can attain a better understanding of the topic and a clear picture of the notions made by the author





only if his mind is open to heterogeneous understanding.

When an aspirant dives into the depths of reading, he comes out not just as a better reader but as a much more learned person than he was before. This diverse reading on various topics opens up previously unknown horizons to the aspirant. This helps in solving RCs and analytical writing for GRE; in fact, it helps him in every sphere that requires comprehension and writing.



### Trivia

CAT was conducted as a computer-based test for the first time in 2009. Earlier it used to be a pen-paper-based test.

CAT is conducted by the IIMs rotation-wise. In 2021, IIM Ahmedabad conducted CAT.

## Part 1

### Are You Ready to Bell the Cat?

#### Number of Questions

The CAT VARC section contains 26 questions, out of which 18 questions are from reading comprehension. Just like the theory of carrot and stick, CAT rewards three marks for every correct answer and deducts one mark for every wrong one.

The number of passages may vary from 4 to 5 in the RC section. Generally, the word count of each RC in CAT varies from 450 to 800 words.

*If you have difficulties making a decision,  
choose the lesser of the two evils.*

—Rajneesh

#### Sequence of Questions

This is one thing that baffles many novice readers. Questions are never written in a manner synchronous to the alignment of the paragraphs in a passage, i.e., the first question may not be from the first paragraph of the passage.

A small creature such as a bee visits approximately more than 1000 flowers per day to make just a few drops of honey. Considering the speed of the bee and the time limit a bee has, it does an impressive job.

CAT requires you to attempt as many questions as you can in the given time limit and get the best possible result.

Questions in CAT are not arranged in the manner how we wish. You know as they say—

Questions are not arranged as per the level of difficulty. One may find the last question the easiest and the first to be the most difficult. The same is the case with the arrangement of RCs.

The first RC may not be the easiest (rarely would CAT ever give an easy RC); the sequence of RCs in CAT is as per the wishes of the test makers.

To master the art of Reading Comprehension, one should be good at reading and understanding the problem-solving skills as the cleverness of the reader is tested time and again for it to be at the zenith every time.

#### Your Ladder to Success

The first step to improve for Reading Comprehension is reading itself.



#### CAT Mantra

The questions in reading comprehension are not asked as per the flow of the text or as per the respective paragraphs.

For example, it is not necessary that question number 1 would be based on the first paragraph.



Heterogeneous reading is the need of the hour. Reading on various topics for better understanding is the litmus test for any B-School aspirant. Profound reading, along with clarity of notions, assists students in accomplishing coveted percentile in CAT.

An aspirant needs a lot of consistent practice and a clear strategy to achieve desired results.

*To lose patience is to lose the battle.*

—Mahatma Gandhi

## Trivia

Case study reading and evaluation is an essential part of every B-School. A case study has an average of 2,500 words.

## Part 2

### Heterogeneous Reading

No driver has ever gained expertise by driving on straight roads; the curves test the skills and bend the mind. Reading just one area shall provide benefits up to a limit. A reader may, by extensive reading, become an expert in the subject, but he would lack the skills of basic comprehension in other subjects.

Reading on various topics helps students gain knowledge and expertise in their sphere of interest. Such diverse reading helps develop familiarity with the topics and makes it easy for one to deal with RCs based on such domains.

One such example is CAT 2006. This paper had an RC based on ‘Communism’. To some, this topic might sound scary. To understand such a passage and infer the idea implied by the author, one should be aware of the topic, even if it falls outside the sphere of one’s interest.

*Give me six hours to chop down a tree  
and I will spend the first four sharpening  
the axe.*

—Abraham Lincoln

### Areas of Heterogeneous Reading



One must initially be aware of the different reading spheres before jumping into the arena. A fight without precise preparation may just lead to failure.

In CAT, the trend of Reading Comprehension that used to be asked in previous years’ tests had nearly one or two notions running



through the entire passage and various secondary or contrasting arguments running in conjunction with the main idea. In the present-day trend, passages are restricted in terms of a range of currents and crosscurrents of thoughts, braced or contrasted by concepts, examples, philosophies, etc.

Let us get a brief understanding of the heterogeneous areas of reading:

### **History and Politics (Social Science)**

#### **What**

- Social Science passages are one of the most important ones. Passages from history, geography, politics, and other such domains are a part of social science.
- Generally, these passages are not too difficult, and one may even find them interesting to read.

#### **Types of questions**

- Many *inferential and factual questions* are asked from these passages.

#### **How to prepare**

- HistoryExtra
- HistoryNet
- The Chronicle
- Speaking Tree

### **Business, Economics, and Banking**

#### **What**

- Understanding business nuances should be part and parcel of life for future managers. These passages prepare the emerging managers for the demands of the future.

#### **Types of questions**

- Factual and inferential questions are generally asked in this section.

#### **How to prepare**

- Big Think
- The Economist
- The Guardian
- Time



### **Trivia**

An RC on ‘Economic Crises’ was given in the 3rd slot of CAT 2020.

### **Science and Technology**

#### **What**

- This is a category that many find difficult to comprehend. Passages are based on physics, biology, technology, and other science-related topics.

#### **Types of questions**

- Passages based on science are full of details and facts. Fact-based questions and writing style are a few types frequently asked in such passages.

#### **How to prepare**

- Aeon Ideas (not essays)
- BBC—Edit/Science
- New Scientist – (int'l science magazine from the UK)
- Scientific American—(American science magazine)
- American Scientist—(American science magazine)
- The Scientist Magazine
- Smithsonian Magazine
- Nature

### **Philosophy and Psychology**

#### **What**

- This section includes passages related to philosophy, sociology, and psychology. These passages require deep understanding and a very good grip over the language.

#### **Types of questions**

- Questions related to *Tone and Inference* are asked from such passages.

#### **How to prepare**

- Psychology Today
- Speaking Tree



## Trivia



An RC on Anarchist philosophy was asked in the 1st slot of CAT 2020.

## Latest Political and Current Events

### What

- For an avid news follower, this is a piece of cake. If you keep track of current events, answering these passages will become easy.

### Types of questions

- Topics related to news and current events are rarely asked. Even if they form part of CAT, questions are formed based on facts and inferences.

### How to prepare

- National Geographic
- The New Yorker
- The New York Times
- Arts & Letters Daily
- The Wall Street Journal
- HuffPost
- The New Atlantis
- Council For Research In Values And Philosophy
- The Telegraph

## Literature, Linguistics, and Arts

### What

- This is a section that requires the complete attention of the reader. This section includes works of poetry and arts written by eminent authors who had gained eminence in their sphere of work.

## Types of questions

- In such passages, the authors make a lot of inferences and use different tones to present the main idea.

### How to prepare

- Narrative.ly
- Bloomberg
- The Hindu
- The Mint

## Rack Your Brain

**These are a few key economic terms.**

**Try to find their meaning:**

1. Bear market
2. Bull market
3. Business cycle
4. Comparative advantage
5. Deflation
6. Division of labour
7. Elasticity of demand
8. Financial markets
9. Fiscal policy
10. Gross domestic product (GDP)
11. Growth rate
12. Interest rates
13. Inflation
14. Keynesian economics
15. Law of demand
16. Law of supply
17. Macroeconomics
18. Marginal utility
19. Microeconomics
20. Monetarism
21. Oligopoly
22. Opportunity cost

### Passages on Heterogenous Reading

The following passages have been taken from different areas to give the students an idea of eclectic reading.

#### History and Polity (Social Science)

##### Previous Year Reading Comprehension: CAT 2003 (Cancelled Paper)

**Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

##### Topic: Why Did the British Give up India?

Right through history, imperial powers have clung to their possessions to death. Why, then, did Britain in 1947 give up the jewel in its crown, India? For many reasons. The independence struggle exposed the hollowness of the white man's burden. Provincial self-rule since 1935 paved the way for full self-rule. Churchill resisted independence, but the Labour government of Atlee was anti-imperialist by ideology. Finally, the Royal Indian Navy mutiny in 1946 raised fears of a second Sepoy mutiny and convinced British waverers that it was safer to withdraw gracefully. But politico-military explanations are not enough. The basis of the empire was always money. The end of the empire had much to do with the fact that British imperialism had ceased to be profitable. World War II left Britain victorious but deeply indebted, needing Marshall Aid and loans from the World Bank. This constituted a strong financial case for ending the no-longer-profitable empire.

Empire building is expensive. The U.S. is spending one billion dollars a day in

operations in Iraq that fall well short of full-scale imperialism. Through the centuries, empire building was costly yet constantly undertaken because it promised high returns. The investment was in armies and conquest. The returns came through plunder and taxes from the conquered.

No immorality was attached to imperial loot and plunder. The biggest conquerors were typically revered (hence titles like Alexander the Great, Akbar the Great, and Peter the Great). The bigger and richer the empire, the more the plunderer was admired.

This mindset gradually changed with the rise of new ideas about equality and governing for the public good, ideas that culminated in the French and American revolutions. Robert Clive was impeached for making a little money on the side, and so was Warren Hastings. The white man's burden came up as a new moral rationale for conquest. It was supposedly for the good of the conquered. This led to much-muddled hypocrisy. On the one hand, the empire needed to be profitable. On the other hand, the white man's burden made brazen loot impossible.

An additional factor deterring loot was the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny. Though crushed, it reminded the British vividly that they were a tiny ethnic group that could not rule a gigantic subcontinent without the support of important locals. After 1857, the British stopped annexing one princely state after another and instead treated the princes as allies. Land revenue was fixed in absolute terms, partly to prevent local unrest and partly to promote the notion of the white man's burden. The empire claimed to protect the Indian peasant exploitation by Indian elites. This was denounced as hypocrisy by nationalists like Dadabhoi Naoroji in the 19th century, who complained that land taxes led to an enormous drain from India to Britain. Objective calculations by historians like Angus Maddison suggest a drain of

#### Trivia



Note all the dates and events because questions are likely to be set around those zones.



perhaps 1.6 percent of Indian Gross National Product in the 19th century. But land revenue was more or less fixed by the Raj in absolute terms, and so its real value diminished rapidly with inflation in the 20th century. By World War II, India had ceased to be a profit centre for the British Empire.

Historically, conquered nations paid taxes to finance the new wars of the conqueror. India was asked to pay a large sum at the end of World War I to help repair Britain's finances. But, as shown by historian Indivar Kamtekar, the independence movement led by Gandhiji changed the political landscape and made mass taxation of India increasingly difficult. By World War II, this had become politically impossible. Far from taxing India to pay for World War II, Britain began paying India for its contribution of men and goods. Troops from white dominions like Australia, Canada, and New Zealand were paid for entirely by

these countries, but the British government shared Indian costs. Britain paid in the form of non-convertible sterling balances, which mounted swiftly. The conqueror was paying the conquered, undercutting the profitability on which all empires were founded. Churchill opposed this and wanted to tax India rather than owe it money. But he was overruled by Indian hands, who said India would resist payment and paralyse the war effort. Leo Amery, Secretary of State for India, said that when you are driving in a taxi to the station to catch a life-or-death train, you do not loudly announce that you have doubts about whether to pay the fare.

Thus, World War II converted India from a debtor to a creditor with over one billion pounds in sterling balances. Britain, meanwhile, became the biggest debtor in the world. It's not worth ruling over people who are afraid to tax.

## Questions

- 1.** What was the British's main lesson learned from the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857?
  - (A) That the local princes were allies, not foes.
  - (B) That the land revenue from India would decline dramatically.
  - (C) That the British were a small ethnic group.
  - (D) That India would be increasingly difficult to rule.
- 2.** Why didn't Britain tax India to finance its World War II efforts?
  - (A) Australia, Canada, and New Zealand had offered to pay for Indian troops.
  - (B) India had already paid a sufficiently large sum during World War I.
  - (C) It was afraid that India's refusal to pay would jeopardise its war efforts.
  - (D) The British Empire was built on the premise that the conqueror pays the conquered.
- 3.** Which of the following was not a reason for the emergence of the 'white man's burden' as a new rationale for empire-building in India?
  - (A) The emergence of the idea of the public good as an element of governance.
  - (B) The decreasing returns from imperial loot and increasing costs of conquest.
  - (C) The weakening of the immorality attached to an emperor's looting behaviour.
  - (D) A growing awareness of the idea of equality among people.
- 4.** Which one of the following best expresses the author's main purpose?
  - (A) To present the various reasons that can lead to the collapse of an empire and the granting of independence to the subjects of an empire.



- (B) To point out the critical role of the ‘white man’s burden’ in making a colonising power give up its claims to native possessions.
- (C) To highlight the contradictory impulse underpinning empire building which is a costly business but very attractive at the same time.
- (D) To illustrate how the erosion of the financial basis of an empire supports the granting of independence to an empire’s constituents.
5. Which of the following best captures the meaning of the ‘white man’s burden’, as used by the author?
- (A) The British claim to be a civilising mission directed at ensuring the good of the natives.
- (B) The inspiration for the French and American revolutions.
- (C) The resource drain that had to be borne by the home country’s white population.
- (D) An imperative that made open looting of resources impossible.

## Solutions

1. (C)

2. (C)

3. (B)

4. (D)

5. (A)

### Business, Economics, and Banking

Previous Year: CAT-2005

**Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

#### Topic: The Second Age of Globalisation

Crinoline and croquet are out. As yet, no political activists have thrown themselves in front of the royal derby on Derby Day. Even so, some historians can spot the parallels. It is a time of rapid technological change. It is a period when the dominance of the world’s superpower is coming under threat. It is an epoch when prosperity masks underlying economic strain. And, crucially, it is a time when policy-makers are confident that all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. Welcome to the Edwardian Summer of the second age of globalisation.

Spare a moment to take stock of what’s been happening in the past few months. Let’s start with the oil price, which has rocketed to more than \$65 a barrel, more than double its level 18 months ago. The accepted wisdom is that we shouldn’t worry our little heads about that because the incentives are there for businesses to build new production

and refining capacity, which will effortlessly bring demand and supply back into balance and bring crude prices back to \$25 a barrel. As Tommy Cooper used to say, ‘just like that’.

#### Trivia



A prior understanding of the topic saves more than 50% of the time while reading.

Then there is the result of the French referendum on the European Constitution, seen as thick-headed Luddites railing vainly against the modern world. What the French needed to realise, the argument went, was that there was no alternative to the reforms that would make the country more flexible, more competitive, more dynamic. Just the sort of reforms that allowed Gate Gourmet to sack hundreds of its staff at Heathrow after the sort of ultimatum that used to be handed out by Victorian mill owners. An alternative way of looking at the French ‘non’ is that our neighbours translate ‘flexibility’ as ‘you’re fired’.



Finally, take a squint at the United States. Just like Britain a century ago, a period of unquestioned superiority is drawing to a close. China is still a long way from matching America's wealth, but it is growing at a stupendous rate, and economic strength brings geopolitical clout. Already, there is evidence of a new scramble for Africa as Washington and Beijing compete for oil stocks. Moreover, beneath the surface of the US economy, all is not well. Growth looks healthy enough, but the competition from China and elsewhere has meant the world's biggest economy now imports far more than it exports. The US is living beyond its means, but in this time of studied complacency, a current account deficit worth 6 percent of gross domestic product is seen as a sign of strength, not weakness.

In this new Edwardian summer, comfort is taken from the fact that dearer oil has not had the savage inflationary consequences of 1973–1974, when a fourfold increase in the cost of crude brought an abrupt end to a post-war boom that had gone on uninterrupted for a quarter of a century. True, the cost of living has been affected by higher transport costs, but we are talking of inflation at 2.3 percent and not 27 percent. Yet the idea that higher oil prices are of little consequence is fanciful. If people are paying more to fill up their cars, it leaves them less to spend on everything else, but there is a reluctance to consume less. In the 1970s, unions were strong and able to negotiate large, compensatory pay deals that served to intensify inflationary pressure. In 2005, that avenue was pretty much closed off, but the abolition of all the controls on credit that existed in the 1970s means that households are invited to borrow more rather than consume less. The knock-on effects of higher oil prices are thus felt in different

ways—through high levels of indebtedness, inflated asset prices, and balance of payments deficits.

Some point out, rightly, that modern industrial capitalism has proved mightily reslient these past 250 years and that a sign of the enduring strength of the system has been the way it shrugged off everything—a stock market crash, 9/11, rising oil prices—that have been thrown at it in the half-decade since the millennium. Even so, there are at least three reasons for concern. First, we have been here before. The first era of globalisation mirrored our own in terms of political economy. There was a belief in unfettered capital flows, free trade, and the power of the market. It was a time of massive income inequality and unprecedented migration. Eventually, though, there was a backlash, manifested in a struggle between free traders and protectionists and in rising labour militancy.

Second, the world is traditionally at its most fragile at times when the global balance of power is in flux. By the end of the nineteenth century, Britain's role as the hegemonic power was being challenged by the rise of the United States, Germany, and Japan, while the Ottoman and Hapsburg empires were clearly in rapid decline. Looking ahead from 2005, it is clear that over the next two or three decades, both China and India—which together account for half the world's population—will flex their muscles.

Finally, there is the question of what rising oil prices tell us. The emergence of China and India means global demand for crude is likely to remain high when experts say production is about to top out. If supply constraints start to bite, any declines in the price are likely to be short-term cyclical affairs punctuating a long upward trend.

## Questions

1. Which of the following best represents the key argument made by the author?
  - (A) The rise in oil prices, the flux in the global balance of power, and historical precedents should make us question our belief that global economic prosperity will continue.
  - (B) The belief that modern industrial capitalism is highly resilient and capable of overcoming shocks will be discredited soon.
  - (C) Widespread prosperity leads to neglect of early signs of underlying economic weakness, manifested in higher oil prices and the global balance of power flux.
  - (D) A crisis is imminent in the West, given the growth of countries like China and India and increased oil prices.
2. What can be inferred about the author's view when he states, 'As Tommy Cooper used to say "just like that"'?
  - (A) Industry has an incentive to build a new production and refining capacity, and therefore oil prices would reduce.
  - (B) There would be a correction in oil price levels once a new production capacity is added.
  - (C) The decline in oil prices is likely to be short-term.
3. By the expression 'Edwardian Summer', the author refers to a period in which there is
  - (A) Unparalleled luxury and opulence.
  - (B) A sense of complacency among people because of overall prosperity.
  - (C) A culmination of overall economic prosperity.
  - (D) An imminent danger lurking behind economic prosperity.
4. What, according to the author, has resulted in a widespread belief in the resilience of modern capitalism?
  - (A) Growth in the economies of Western countries despite shocks in the form of an increase in levels of indebtedness and inflated asset prices.
  - (B) Increase in the prosperity of Western countries and China despite rising oil prices.
  - (C) Continued growth of Western economies despite a rise in terrorism, increased oil prices, and other similar shocks.
  - (D) The success of continued reforms aimed at making Western economies more dynamic, competitive, and efficient.

## Solutions

1. (A)

2. (D)

3. (B)

4. (C)

### Philosophy and Psychology

#### Previous Year CAT-2006

**Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

#### Topic: A Conception of Justice

My aim is to present a conception of justice which generalises and carries to a higher

level of abstraction the familiar theory of the social contract. To do this, we are not to think of the original contract as one to enter a particular society or to set up a particular form of government. Rather, the idea is that the principles of justice for the basic structure of society are the object of the original agreement. They are the principles that



free and rational persons concerned to further their own interests would accept in an initial position of equality. These principles are to regulate all further agreements; they specify the kinds of social cooperation that can be entered into and the forms of government that can be established. This way of regarding the principles of justice, I shall call justice fairness. Thus, we are to imagine that those who engage in social cooperation choose together, in one joint act, the principles which are to assign basic rights and duties and to determine the division of social benefits. Just as each person must decide by rational reflection what constitutes his good, that is, the system of ends which it is rational for him to pursue, so a group of persons must decide once and for all what is to count among them as just and unjust. The choice that rational men would make in this hypothetical situation of equal liberty determines the principles of justice.

In ‘justice as fairness’, the original position is not an actual historical state of affairs. It is understood as a purely hypothetical situation characterised to lead to a certain

### Trivia



The term ‘Psychology’ has its roots in ‘psyche’, which means ‘mind’, ‘soul’, or spirit. Logos stands for study.

Guess the complete meaning of this term?

conception of justice. Among the essential features of this situation is that no one knows his place in society, his class position, or social status, nor does anyone know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets and abilities, his intelligence, strength, and the like. I shall even assume that the parties do not know their conceptions of the good or their special psychological propensities. The

principles of justice are chosen behind a veil of ignorance. This ensures that no one is advantaged or disadvantaged in the choice of principles by the outcome of natural chance or the contingency of social circumstances. Since all are similarly situated and no one is able to design principles to favour his particular condition, the principles of justice are the result of a fair agreement or bargain. Justice as fairness begins with one of the most general choices that persons might make together, namely, with the choice of the first principles of a conception of justice which is to regulate all subsequent criticism and reform of institutions. Then, having chosen a conception of justice, we can suppose that they are to choose a constitution and a legislature to enact laws, and so on, all in accordance with the principles of justice initially agreed upon. Our social situation is just if it is such that by this sequence of hypothetical agreements we would have contracted into the general system of rules which defines it. Moreover, assuming that the original position does determine a set of principles, it will then be true that whenever social institutions satisfy these principles, those engaged in them can say to one another that they are cooperating on terms to which they would agree if they were free and equal persons whose relations with respect to one another were fair. They could all view their arrangements as meeting the stipulations which they would acknowledge in an initial situation that embodies widely accepted and reasonable constraints on the choice of principles. The general recognition

### Trivia



Notice the transition made by the author from one paragraph to the next.

Questions on inferences are made when new ideas are introduced.

of this fact would provide the basis for a public acceptance of the corresponding principles of justice. No society can, of course, be a scheme of cooperation that men enter voluntarily in a literal sense; each person finds himself placed at birth in some particular position in some particular society, and the

nature of this position materially affects his life prospects. Yet a society satisfying the principles of justice and fairness comes as close as a society can to being a voluntary scheme. It meets the principles that free and equal persons would assent to under fair circumstances.

## Questions

1. A just society, as conceptualised in the passage, can be best described as:

  - (A) A Utopia in which everyone is equal; no one enjoys any privilege based on their existing positions and powers.
  - (B) A hypothetical society in which people agree upon fair principles of justice.
  - (C) A society in which principles of justice are not based on the existing positions and powers of the individuals.
  - (D) A society in which principles of justice are fair to all.
2. The author has used the original agreement or original position in the passage as:

  - (A) A hypothetical situation conceived to derive principles of justice that are not influenced by the position, status, and condition of individuals in the society.
  - (B) A hypothetical situation in which every individual is equal and no individual enjoys any privilege based on the existing positions and powers.
  - (C) A hypothetical situation to ensure fairness of agreements among individuals in society.
  - (D) An imagined situation in which principles of justice would have to be fair.
3. Which of the following best illustrates the situation equivalent to choosing ‘the principles of justice’ behind a ‘veil of ignorance’?
4. Why, according to the passage, do principles of justice need to be based on an original agreement?

  - (A) Social institutions and laws can be considered fair only if they conform to principles of justice.
  - (B) Social institutions and laws can be fair only if they are consistent with the principles of justice as initially agreed upon.
  - (C) Social institutions and laws need to be fair to be just.
  - (D) Social institutions and laws evolve fairly only if they are consistent with the principles of justice as initially agreed upon.



5. Which of the following situations best represents the idea of justice as fairness, as argued in the passage?
- (A) All individuals are paid equally for the work they do.
- (B) Everyone is assigned some work for their livelihood.
- (C) All acts of theft are penalised equally.
- (D) All children are provided free education in similar schools.

## Solutions

1. (C)

2. (A)

3. (D)

4. (B)

5. (B)

### Literature and Linguistics

#### Previous Year CAT-2004

**Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

#### Topic: Painters and Their Subject Matter

The painter is now free to paint anything he chooses. There are scarcely any forbidden subjects, and today everybody is prepared to admit that a painting of some fruit can be as important as a painting of a hero dying. The Impressionists did as much as anybody to win this previously unheard-of freedom for the artist. Yet, by the next generation, painters began to abandon the subject altogether and began to paint pictures. Today the majority of pictures painted are abstract.

Is there a connection between these two developments? Has art gone abstract because the artist is embarrassed by his freedom? Is it that, because he is free to paint anything, he doesn't know what to paint? Apologists for abstract art often talk of it as the art of maximum freedom. But could this be the freedom of the desert island? It would take too long to answer these questions properly. I believe there is a connection. Many things have encouraged the development of abstract art. Among them has been the artists' wish to avoid the difficulties of finding subjects when all subjects are equally possible.

I raise the matter now because I want to draw attention to the fact that the painter's choice of a subject is a far more complicated question than it would initially seem. A subject does not start with what is put in front

#### Trivia



#### What is Linguistics?

Root word:

**Lingua = Tongue**

Scientific study of language that explains the use of phonetics, morphology, syntax, and semantics.

of the easel or with something the painter remembers. A subject starts with the painter deciding he would like to paint such-and-such because he finds it meaningful for some reason or other. A subject begins when the artist selects something for special mention. (What makes it special or meaningful may seem to the artist purely visual—its colours or its form.) When the subject has been selected, the function of the painting itself is to communicate and justify the significance of that selection.

It is often said today that subject matter is unimportant. But this is only a reaction against the excessively literary and moralistic interpretation of subject matter in the nineteenth century. In truth, the subject is the beginning and the end of a painting. The painting begins with a selection (I will paint this and not everything else in the world); it is finished when that selection is justified (now you can see all that I saw and felt in this and how it is more than merely itself).

Thus, for a painting to succeed, the painter and his public must agree on what is significant. The subject may have a personal meaning for the painter or individual spectator, but there must also be the possibility of their agreement on its general meaning. It is at this point that the culture of the society and period in question precedes the artist and his art. Renaissance art would have meant nothing to the Aztecs—and vice versa. If to some extent, a few intellectuals can appreciate them both today, it is because their culture is a historical one: its inspiration is history and therefore it can include within itself, in principle if not in every particular, all known developments to date.

### Trivia



Passages from linguistics are frequently asked in CAT.

Awareness of this genre is a must for every aspirant.

CAT 2019 Slot 2 had an RC based on linguistics.

When a culture is secure and certain of its values, it presents its artists with subjects. The general agreement about what is significant is so well established that the significance of a particular subject accrues and

becomes traditional. This is true, for instance, of reeds and water in China, of the nude body in the Renaissance, and of the animal in Africa. Furthermore, in such cultures, the artist is unlikely to be a free agent: he will be employed for the sake of particular subjects, and the problem, as we have just described it, will not occur to him.

When a culture is in a state of disintegration or transition, the artist's freedom increases—but the question of subject matter becomes problematic for him: he, himself, has to choose for society. This was the basis of all the increasing crises in European art during the nineteenth century. It is too often forgotten how many of the art scandals of that time were provoked by the choice of subject (Gericault, Courbet, Daumier, Degas, Lautree, Van Gogh, etc.).

By the end of the nineteenth century there were, roughly speaking, two ways in which the painter could meet this challenge of deciding what to paint and so choosing for society. Either he identified himself with the people and so allowed their lives to dictate his subjects to him: or he had to find his subjects within himself as a painter. By people, I mean everybody except the bourgeoisie. Many painters did, of course, work for the bourgeoisie according to their copy-book of approved subjects, but all of them, filling the Salon and the Royal Academy year after year, are now forgotten, buried under the hypocrisy of those they served so sincerely.

### Questions

1. When a culture is insecure, the painter chooses his subject based on:
  - (A) The prevalent style in the society of his time.
  - (B) Its meaningfulness to the painter.
  - (C) What is put in front of the easel.
  - (D) Past experience and memory of the painter.
2. In the sentence, “I believe there is a connection” (second paragraph), what two developments is the author referring to?
  - (A) Painters using a dying hero and using a fruit as a subject of painting.
  - (B) Growing success of painters and an increase in abstract forms.



- (C) Artists gaining freedom to choose subjects and abandoning subjects altogether.  
(D) Rise of Impressionists and an increase in abstract forms.
3. Which of the following is not necessarily among the attributes needed for a painter to succeed:  
(A) The painter and his public agree on what is significant.  
(B) The painting is able to communicate and justify the significance of its subject selection.  
(C) The subject has a personal meaning for the painter.  
(D) The painting of subjects is inspired by historical developments.
4. In the context of the passage, which of the following statements would not be true?
- (A) Painters decided on subjects based on what they remembered from their own lives.  
(B) Painters of reeds and water in China faced no serious problem in choosing a subject.  
(C) The choice of subject was a source of scandals in nineteenth-century European art.  
(D) Agreement on the general meaning of a painting is influenced by culture and historical context.
5. Which of the following views is taken by the author?  
(A) The more insecure a culture, the greater the artist's freedom.  
(B) The more secure a culture, the greater the artist's freedom.  
(C) The more secure a culture, the more difficult the choice of subject.  
(D) The more insecure a culture, the less significant the choice of the subject.

## Solutions

1. (B)

2. (C)

3. (D)

4. (A)

5. (A)

### Science and Technology

#### Previous Year CAT-2002

**Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

#### Topic: Human Cells: A Marvel of Nature's Design

Cells are the ultimate multitaskers: They can switch on genes and carry out their orders, talk to each other, divide in two, and much more, all at the same time. But they couldn't do any of these tricks without a power source to generate movement. The inside of a cell bustles with more traffic than Delhi roads, and, like all vehicles, the cell's moving parts need engines. Physicists and biologists have looked 'under the hood' of the cell—and laid out the nuts and bolts of molecular engines. The ability of such engines to convert chemical energy into motion is the envy of

### Trivia



When a lot of data is provided in an RC, make a flow-chart and write all the key points.

nanotechnology researchers looking for ways to power molecule-sized devices. Medical researchers also want to understand how these engines work. Because these molecules are essential for cell division, scientists hope to shut down the rampant growth of cancer cells by deactivating certain motors. Improving motor-driven transport in nerve cells may also help treat diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, or ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

We wouldn't make it far in life without motor proteins. Our muscles wouldn't contract. We couldn't grow because the growth process requires cells to duplicate their machinery and pull the copies apart.

And our genes would be silent without the services of messenger RNA, which carries genetic instructions over to the cell's protein-making factories. The movements that make these cellular activities possible occur along with a complex network of threadlike fibres, or polymers, along which bundles of molecules travel like trams. The engines that power the cell's freight are three families of proteins called myosin, kinesin, and dynein. For fuel, these proteins burn molecules of ATP, which cells make when they break down the carbohydrates and fats from the foods we eat. The energy from burning ATP causes changes in the proteins' shape that allow them to heave themselves along the polymer track. The results are impressive: These molecules can travel between 50 and 100 times their own diameter in one second. If a car with a 5-foot-wide engine were as efficient, it would travel 170 to 340 kmph.

### Trivia



Basic knowledge of some scientific terms would be an added advantage as science-based passages are asked frequently in the CAT.

Ronald Vale, a researcher at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and the University of California at San Francisco, and Ronald Milligan of the Scripps Research Institute have realised a long-awaited goal by reconstructing the process by which myosin and kinesin move, almost down to the atom. The dynein motor, on the other hand, is still poorly understood. Myosin molecules, best known for their role in muscle contraction, form chains

that lie between filaments of another protein called actin. Each myosin molecule has a tiny head that pokes out from the chain like oars from a canoe. Just as rowers propel their boat by stroking their oars through the water, the myosin molecules stick their heads into the actin and hoist themselves forward along the filament. While myosin moves along in short strokes, its cousin kinesin walks steadily along a different type of filament called a microtubule. Instead of using a projecting head as a lever, kinesin walks on two 'legs'. Based on these differences, researchers used to think that myosin and kinesin were virtually unrelated. But newly discovered similarities in the motors'.

ATP-processing machinery now suggests that they share a common ancestor molecule. Scientists can only speculate about what type of primitive cell-like structure this ancestor occupied as it learned to burn ATP and use the energy to change shape. "We'll never really know, because we can't dig up the remains of ancient proteins, but that was probably a big evolutionary leap", says Vale.

On a slightly larger scale, loner cells like sperm or infectious bacteria are prime movers that resolutely push their way through to other cells. As L. Mahadevan and Paul Matsudaira of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology explain, the engines in this case are springs or ratchets that are clusters of molecules, rather than single proteins like myosin and kinesin. Researchers don't yet fully understand these engines' fueling process or the details of how they move, but the result is a force to be reckoned with. For example, one such engine is a spring-like stalk connecting a single-celled organism called a vorticellid to the leaf fragment it calls home. The spring contracts when exposed to calcium, thus yanking the vorticellid down at speeds approaching 3 inches (8 centimetres) per second.

Springs like this are coiled bundles of filaments that expand or contract in response to



chemical cues. A wave of positively charged calcium ions, for example, neutralises the negative charges that keep the filaments extended. Some sperm use springlike engines made of actin filaments to shoot out a barb that penetrates the layers that surround an egg. And certain viruses use a similar apparatus to shoot their DNA into the host's cell. Ratchets are also useful for moving whole cells, including some other sperm and pathogens. These engines are filaments that simply grow at one end, attracting chemical building blocks from nearby. Because the other end is anchored in place, the growing end pushes against any barrier that gets in the way.

Both springs and ratchets are made up of small units that each move just slightly but collectively produce a powerful movement. Ultimately, Mahadevan and Matsudaira hope to better understand just how these particles create an effect that seems to be so much more than the sum of its parts. Might such an understanding inspire ways to power artificial nano-sized devices in the future? “The short answer is absolute,” says Mahadevan. “Biology has had a lot more time to evolve enormous richness in design for different organisms. Hopefully, studying these structures will not only improve our understanding of the biological world, but it will also enable us to copy them, take apart their components, and re-create them for other purposes”.

## Questions



- (A) I and II, but not III  
(B) I and III, but not IV  
(C) I and IV, but not II  
(D) III and IV, but not II
5. Read the four statements below: I, II, III, and IV. From the options given, select the one that includes statement(s) that represent the arguments presented in the passage.
- I. Myosin, kinesin, and actin are three types of protein.
- II. Growth processes involve a routine in a cell that duplicates their machinery and pulls the copies apart.
- III. Myosin molecules can generate vibrations in muscles.
- IV. Ronald and Mahadevan are researchers at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
- (A) I and II, but not III and IV  
(B) II and III, but not I  
(C) II and IV, but not I and III  
(D) I, III, and III, but not IV

### Solutions

1. (D)

2. (A)

3. (A)

4. (B)

5. (A)

### Part 4

#### Importance of Vocabulary and Grammar

*Grammar is a piano I play by ear.*

—Joan Didion

Grammar is the architectural base for one to emote oneself to the world outside. It is grammar that makes the use of simple words sound like a rhythm or the flow of a river. The more emphasis we lay on the language, the better it makes our understanding of the world around us. Grammar, if used properly, may precisely avoid any conundrum and bring out the lush of expression available in a language.

Random use of words would never make a meaningful sentence. It takes the understanding of words and the knowledge of their sequence to make a complete sentence.

In the current age of media, communication can take more than one form. It could be as simple as a note, email, or blog or may even go up to SOPs or thesis. A good manager would need to communicate clearly with his peers and subordinates. Imagine an email with muddled-up grammar that fails to convey the real message. That would indeed be chaotic.

Good grammar is not just about dodging errors; it gives one the ability to read and understand the nuances implied by the author. One's ability to comprehend is directly related to one's understanding of grammar. The B-school entrance tests necessitate good verbal skills. It would be a prerequisite for a manager to go through transcripts that may need a great level of comprehension and analytical abilities. But these abilities cannot be honed if one is not at ease with the sentence structure and vocab of the language.

However, to comprehend the complete passage, one must truly read between the lines. This doesn't literally mean reading between the lines, which would practically

#### Trivia



Questions based on grammar are asked in various B-School entrance tests such as NMAT, SNAP, XAT, etc.



lead nowhere, but the idea here is to pick up on the author's attitude. For instance, one fine day on seeing a troubled child a father would say, "Don't worry, everything will be fine". He isn't making a rational prediction from the available facts, but rather he is utilising words as an instrument of emotional comfort.

This approach is trainable and can be acquired by the reader by observing and getting hold of the author's attitude from the passage. From this, the reader can extract the essayist's emotions, values, outlook, and context. These unspoken pictures of facts should be created in the mind of the reader if one wishes to resolve the perils that are crafted from the passage in the examination.

### Importance of Vocabulary

*Your understanding of what you read and hear is, to a very large degree, determined by your vocabulary, so improve your vocabulary daily.*

—Zig Ziglar

### Sashi Tharoor: The man with infinite words

Sashi Tharoor has a bucket full of beautiful vocabulary that titillates your ear as soon as you hear them. Those mind-boggling words can make even the best scholars bonkers and as for amateurs, well, they worship him for it.

A man with an unfathomable vocabulary enchants all in a way no other skill can.

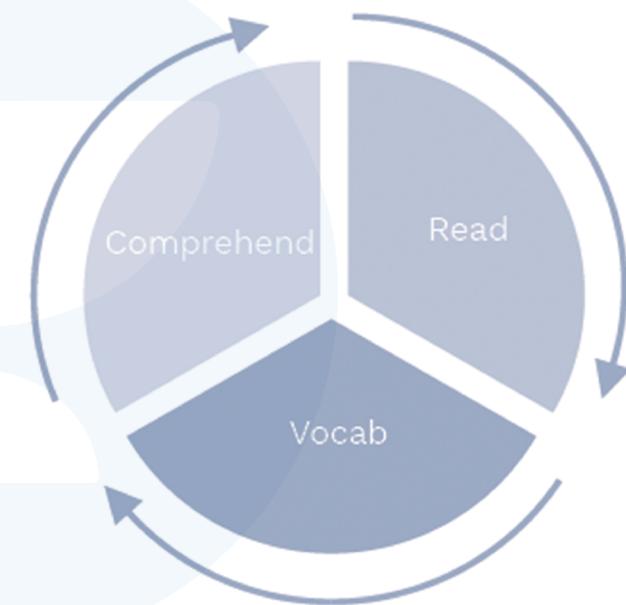
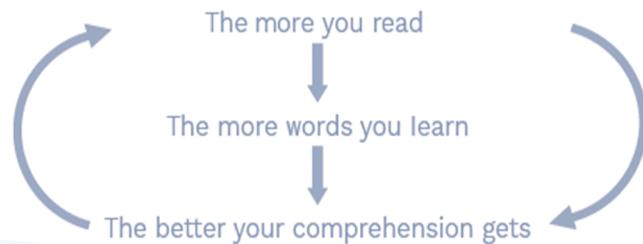
Working on a good vocabulary is not just an exercise one does for exams. Rather, it is a delightful and lucrative investment that is worth every minute you spend on it. Perhaps, our best thoughts might get stuck somewhere if the right words do not come up and save the day.

It does not matter if a person can read 100 words or 1000 words per minute; what really

matters is if the person can comprehend what they are reading. To put it in other words, vocabulary plays a major role in understanding the texts written and in answering the questions that follow.

### How should one get better at vocabulary?

The answer to this is pretty simple.



The write-up given below is an excerpt from *Midnight's Children*, written by Salman Rushdie.

### Try finding the meaning of the words in bold.

I was born in the city of Bombay... once upon a time. No, that won't do; there's no getting away from the date: I was born in Doctor Narlikar's Nursing Home on August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1947. And the time? The time matters, too. Well then: at night. No, it's important to be more... On the stroke of midnight, as a matter of fact. Clock-hands joined palms in respectful greeting as I came. Oh, spell it out, spell it out: at the precise instant of India's arrival

at independence, I **tumbled** forth into the world. There were **gasps**. And, outside the window, fireworks, and crowds. A few seconds later, my father broke his big toe; but this accident was a mere **trifle** when set beside what had **befallen** me in that **benighted** moment, because thanks to the **occult tyrannies** of those blandly saluting clocks I had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destinies **indissolubly** chained to those of my country.

For the next three decades, there was to be no escape. **Soothsayers** had **prophesied** me, newspapers celebrated my arrival, and politicos **ratified** my **authenticity**. I was left entirely without a say in the matter. I, Saleem Sinai, later variously called **Snotnose**, Stainface, Baldy, Sniffer, Buddha, and even Piece-of-the-Moon, had become heavily **embroiled** in Fate-at the best of times a dangerous sort of involvement. And I couldn't even wipe my own nose at the time.

Now, however, time (having no further use for me) is running out. I will soon be thirty-one years old. Perhaps. If my **crumbling**, overused body permits. But I have no hope of saving my life, nor can I count on having even a thousand nights and a night. I must work fast, faster than Scheherazade, if I am to end up meaning-yes, meaning something. I admit it: above all things, I fear **absurdity**.

And there are so many stories to tell, -too many, such an excess of **intertwined** lives, events, miracles, places, **rumours**, so dense a **commingling** of the **improbable** and the **mundane**! I have been a swallower of lives; and to know me, just the one of me, you'll have to swallow the lot as well. Consumed **multitudes** are **jostling** and **shoving** inside me; and guided only by the memory of a large white bed sheet with a roughly circular hole some seven inches in diameter cut into the centre, clutching at the dream of that holey, **mutilated** square of linen, which is my **talisman**, my open-sesame, I must commence the business of remaking my life from the point at which it really began, some thirty-two

years before anything as obvious, as present, as my clock-ridden, crime-stained birth.

Do you know the meaning of the words written in bold?

**It is time for a quiz!**

Are the following words paired correctly with their definitions? Select True or False.

1. **Crouched:** (adj.) in deplorable condition  
• True                  • False
2. **Blister:** (noun) (pathology) an elevation of the skin filled with serous fluid; (verb) get blistered; cause blisters to form on; subject to harsh criticism  
• True                  • False
3. **Talisman:** (noun) the quality of lacking taste and refinement; looseness or roughness in texture (as of cloth);  
• True                  • False
4. **Rippling:** (noun) a small wave on the surface of a liquid  
• True                  • False
5. **Ominous:** (adj.) squatting close to the ground  
• True                  • False
6. **Verbiage:** (adj.) lacking enlightenment or knowledge or culture; overtaken by night or darkness  
• True                  • False
7. **Hostile:** (noun) the time of life when sex glands become functional  
• True                  • False
8. **Ramshackle:** Something that is very stable or sturdy  
• True                  • False
9. **Colossal:** (noun) over-abundance of words; the manner in which something is expressed in words  
• True                  • False



**10. Catapult:** (noun) a plaything consisting of a Y-shaped stick with elastic between the arms; used to propel small stones; verb shoot forth or launch, as if from a catapult; hurl as if with a sling

- True
- False

**11. Benighted:** (adj.) very unfavourable to life or growth; characterised by enmity or ill will; impossible to bring into friendly accord; noun troops belonging to the enemy's military forces

- True
- False

**12. Ratified:** (adj.) presaging ill fortune; threatening or foreshadowing evil or tragic developments

- True
- False

**13. Arch:** (noun) a trinket or piece of jewellery thought to be a protection against evil

- True
- False

**14. Absurdity:** (noun) a ludicrous folly; a message whose content is at variance with reason

- True
- False

**15. Coarseness:** (adj.) formally approved and invested with legal authority

- True
- False

**16. Immutable:** (adj.) not subject or susceptible to change or variation in form or quality or nature

- True
- False

**17. Insanitary:** (adj.) not sanitary or healthful

- True
- False

**18. Hiatus:** (noun) a detail that is considered insignificant; (verb) considered not very seriously; act frivolously; waste time; spend one's time idly or inefficiently

- True
- False

**19. Summons:** (noun) an order issued by a court of law to be present in court

- True
- False

**20. Trifle:** (adj.) so great in size or force or extent as to elicit awe

- True
- False

**21. Puberty:** (adj.) expert in skulduggery; (used of behaviour or attitude) characteristic of those who treat others with condescension; noun

- True
- False

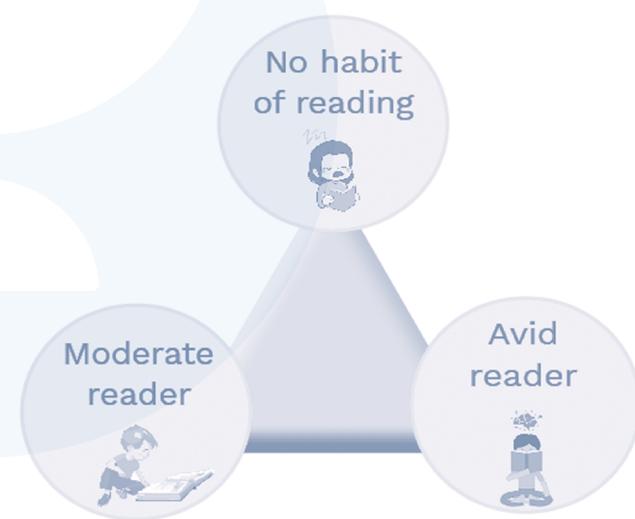
**22. Mundane:** (adj.) something that is very special or is regarded highly by all

- True
- False

**Note:** It is evident enough that without a proper understanding of words, we cannot determine the full meaning of the paragraphs. Knowledge of vocabulary is essential for reading comprehension.

### Three Categories of Readers

Where do you put yourself as a reader?



Your answer to the question determines how much hard work you need to put in for the exam.

Let's analyse the three categories and see where you stand.

The first category is the one that requires maximum attention. When these aspirants read a passage, they are not able to comprehend even a single part of the passage. They try to read but the words do not make sense to them. This may sound disturbing but the situation can be improved.

The second category understands some parts of the passage. This is the category with the maximum number of students. These students are able to read but they take time and a lot of effort to comprehend a passage completely.

The third category is the one that we all wish to be. An avid reader who scans all that comes his way. This is the category that actually aces the VARC section of CAT.

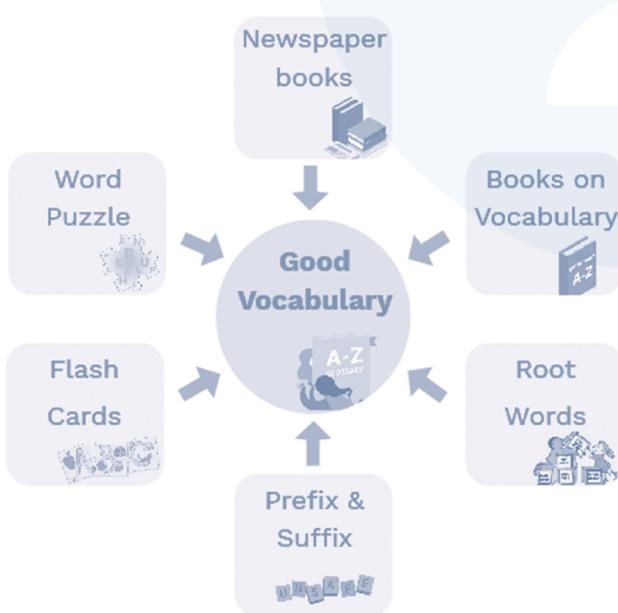
Now, this is not written to dishearten anyone but to make one realise that it is not difficult to jump from one category to another.

Just like riding a bicycle is a skill that can be learned, reading, too, is a skill that can be learned and honed to perfection. For an aspirant who practises regularly with full dedication, it just takes 15 days to jump from one category to another.

*Creativity is always a leap of faith.  
You're faced with a blank page, blank  
easel, or an empty stage.*

—Unknown

## How to Develop a Strong Vocabulary



- Read newspapers and books that test your comprehension skills and offer you a lexicon that makes you test your limits. Keep track of words that you have

learned every day by writing them down in a separate notebook. Surprisingly, you will notice these words getting repeated now and then. This will give you a stronger grip upon them.

- Get a few books on vocabulary. Refer to our list of vocabulary for learning with fun.
- The stronger the roots of a tree, the stronger the tree is. Having a proper grip on root words gives one the edge in vocabulary.
- Play word games and puzzles to remember words for a longer period of time. Solving crosswords is a very good and entertaining way in this direction.
- Prefixes and suffixes are also crucial for building up a good repository of words. These help determine the part of speech of the word very easily.
- Make the most of your time and develop a habit of using flashcards for vocabulary. Whenever you get time, take the flashcards out and revise your vocab.

*No matter what anybody tells you,  
words and ideas can change the world.*

—John Keating

Let us see how good you are at vocabulary! Here is a list of words. Find their meanings and try the exercises that follow.

Counterfeit | Bigot | Kindle | Abhor | Remuneration | Hamper | Noxious | Talisman | Placid | Enfranchise

Now try matching those words with their definitions.

### Match the following words with their meanings:

Placid	hate
Enfranchise	a narrow-minded, prejudiced person
Counterfeit	fake; false
Bigot	give voting rights
Kindle	hinder; obstruct
Abhor	to start a fire
Remuneration	harmful; poisonous; lethal



Hamper	calm; peaceful
Noxious	payment for work done
Talisman	lucky charm

### Word Puzzle

Here is another test for the same words.

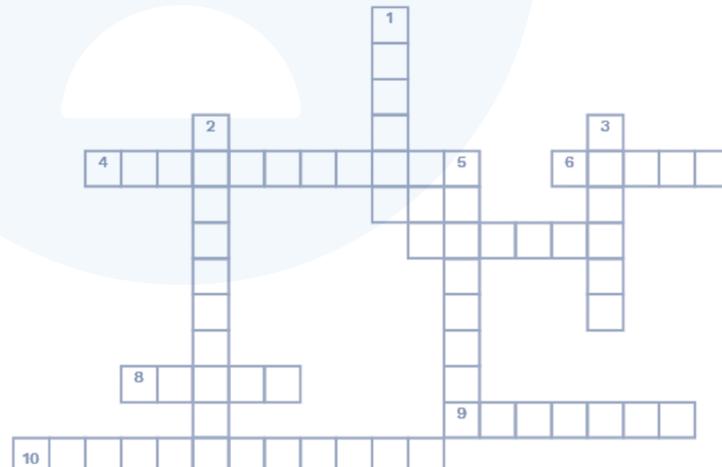
The first list contains the meanings of the words. Find the words in the word puzzle!

- hate
- narrow-minded, prejudiced person
- fake; false
- give voting rights
- hinder; obstruct
- to start a fire
- harmful; poisonous; lethal
- calm; peaceful
- payment for work done
- lucky charm

T	I	E	F	R	E	T	N	U	O	C	N
P	E	Y	L	V	S	R	K	T	R	O	N
L	B	S	B	Z	E	U	A	R	I	G	K
A	D	Y	I	P	M	L	O	T	L	W	D
C	M	T	M	H	I	N	A	I	K	R	T
I	Y	A	R	S	C	R	B	I	X	D	N
D	H	P	M	L	E	N	N	T	T	O	B
A	B	A	M	N	Y	D	A	O	R	R	N
B	N	T	U	Q	L	Z	G	R	Q	Z	R
H	Z	M	V	E	V	I	N	R	F	D	G
O	E	K	D	T	B	P	L	D	X	N	M
R	J	X	X	L	J	P	Q	K	M	N	E

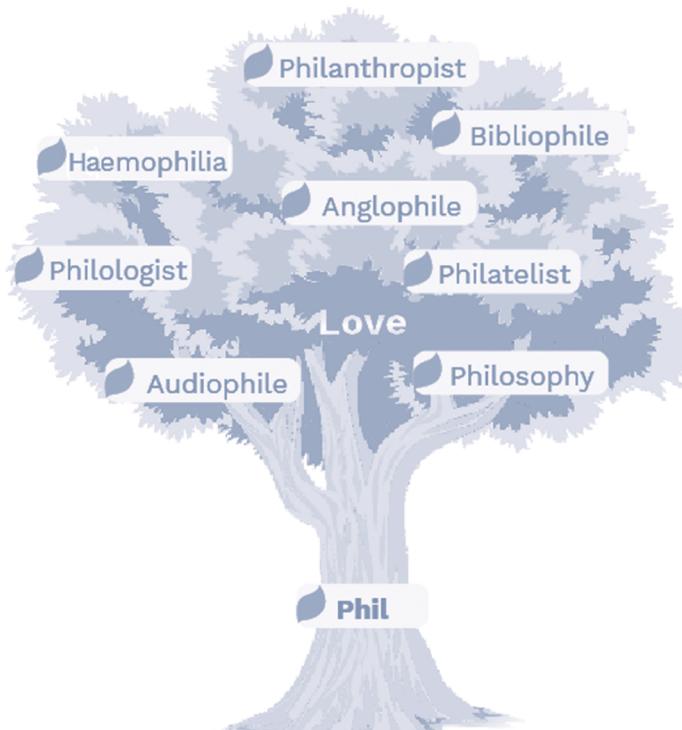
### Crossword

ACROSS
4 fake; false
6 narrow minded, prejudiced person
7 calm; peaceful
8 hate
9 harmful; poisonous; lethal
10 payment for work done
DOWN
1 hinder; obstruct
2 give voting rights
3 to start a fire
5 lucky charm



### Root Words

Learning words through roots is one of the best ways to remember them.



Many words can be understood easily with the help of root words.

For a better understanding, have a look at the given picture. The root word here is ‘Phil’ along with certain words containing the root ‘Phil’.

**For example:**

Let us break down the word philanthropist:



The full meaning of the word is ‘one who loves mankind’.

**Rack Your Brain**

Try to find out the meanings of the rest of the words:

Bibliophile

Angrophile

Philosophy

Audiophile

Philologist

Hemophilia

Philatelist

Philosophy

**Part 5**

**Different Approaches to Reading**

**Visualisation**

The storybooks of children are filled with pictures for a better understanding. The child may forget the text but would remember the pictures for a longer time period.

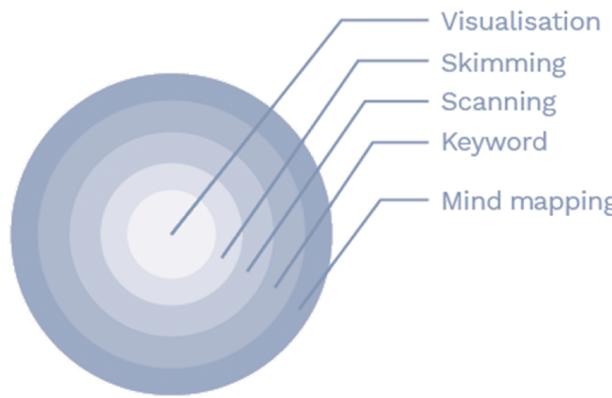
How does visualisation help?

To imagine what one is reading is the biggest asset of all. The more details a person can imagine, the better his reading and comprehension skills are. A better understanding of text should also come with a greater reading speed. As the RC evolves, the individual



pictures should form a complete movie in the reader's mind.

Try practising this technique, and soon you will be able to master it!



### Exercise

Try imagining the following sentence.

- 'The perils of the forest are obscure to a rookie'.

That may have been too much for some.

Try visualising the following sentence:

- The dangers of the forest are not known to a beginner.

The sentence above becomes easy to understand as it states things in an easy manner. Visualisation can only be done once you are able to understand the meaning of the sentences.

### Skimming

School XYZ has three sections. The students who have scored the best are kept in section—A. Section B has students who are above average, and section C has students who score the bare minimum required to move on to the next class.

The best students kept in section A are the ones that are skimmed from the rest.

Skimming is the process where the cream is separated from the rest of the matter. The best is taken out and what is left is just unnecessary details. When skimming is done in milk, the separated cream accounts for not even 10% of the entire product.

This is the same thing that we need to apply while reading.

Skimming is how one can read huge portions of texts in the least amount of time. When a person skims an RC, he skips all the unnecessary details and just maintains his focus on the passage's main idea.

Let us go back a few years in time. When you were in school, you were asked to write essays based on the following format:

- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion

These are the parts that skimming focuses on. It goes to the first and last parts to find the main idea and looks at the passage's body for essential details.

To ace the art of skimming, use these two skills.

- First-line Last-line Rule
- Paragraph Consistency

Let us try this in a passage.

The following excerpt has been taken from a leading newspaper.

The Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules notified by the Centre on August 12 acknowledge the gravity of pollution caused by plastic articles of everyday use, particularly those that have no utility beyond a few minutes or hours. Under the new rules, the manufacture, sale, and use of some single-use goods made with plastic, polystyrene, and expanded polystyrene, such as earbuds, plates, cups, glasses, cutlery, wrapping, and packing films, are prohibited from July 1 next year, while others such as carry bags must be at least 75 microns thick from September 30, 2021, and 120 microns from December 31 next year, compared to 50 microns at present. The decisions follow recommendations made by an expert group constituted by the Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals two years ago. In 2018, India won praise globally for asserting on World Environment Day that

it would eliminate all single-use plastic by 2022, a theme that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has stressed more than once. Yet, policy coherence to achieve the goal has been lacking. (1)

The Central Pollution Control Board has reported that 22 States have, in the past, announced a ban on single-use plastic, but this has had little impact on the crisis of waste choking wetlands and waterways and being transported to the oceans to turn into microplastic. At about 34 lakh tonnes generated in 2019-20, India has a staggering annual volume of plastic waste, of which only about 60% is recycled. What is more, a recent study of the top 100 global producers of polymers that culminate in plastic waste found six of them based in India. It is unsurprising, therefore, that despite the staggering problem, policymakers have been treading on eggshells. The international view is changing, however, and support for a UN Plastic Treaty is growing; the majority of G7 countries too are supportive of cleaning up the oceans through a charter in the interests of human wellbeing and environmental integrity. (2)

India's policies on environmental regulation are discordant, lofty on intent but feeble on outcomes, and plastic waste is no different. State governments have felt no compulsion to replace municipal contracts, where companies are paid for mixed waste haulage, with terms requiring segregation and accounting of materials. Considerable amounts of plastic waste cannot be recycled because of lack of segregation, leading to incineration, while mixing newer types of compostable plastic will confound the problem. Patchy regulation has led to prohibited plastic from moving across State borders. Now that the Centre has adopted a broad ban, further pollution must end. Microplastic is already found in the food chain, and governments must act responsibly to stop the scourge. (3)

There are three paragraphs above. To skim the entire passage, one needs to follow the approaches suggested.

### Sample solution:

- Look at each paragraph's starting and ending lines to skim the passage successfully. This would give the reader a complete idea of the story and theme of the passage.
- The first line of the first paragraph talks about the new Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, and the last line talks about the failures of the central government policies.
- Second paragraph's first line talks about 22 states banning plastic, but this has no solid outcome. The last line talks about the G7 countries coming together to curb the use of plastic.
- Third paragraph's first line talks about the bad policies on plastic waste in India, and the last line talks about the urgency to treat micro-plastic waste as it has already entered the food chain.

After going through all the paragraphs, one might have understood the passage. Most of the time, it is advisable to skim the passage as this would give an aspirant a clear image and even save a lot of time.

### Scanning

Scanning is reading in more detail. It is a little different from skimming. Consider the following points:

- While skimming is reading rapidly to get a general overview of the content, scanning is reading rapidly to find specific facts.
- Skimming tells you what general information is within a section, whereas scanning helps you locate a particular fact.
- Skimming is like swimming on the surface, but scanning is more like scuba diving.
- While skimming is a bird's-eye view of the passage, the goal of scanning is to locate and swoop down on particular facts.

So, when should you scan?

- While reading the first and the last paragraphs.
- While reading the first and the last sentences of every paragraph.
- While locating your answers after reading the questions.



Scanning to answer questions:

If you are scanning for facts to answer a specific question, first note the keywords in the question. Then follow these steps:

- Read each question completely before starting to scan.
- Look for answers to only one question at a time. Scan separately for each question.
- When you locate a keyword in the passage, read the surrounding text carefully to see if it is relevant.
- Re-read the question to determine if the answer you found is relevant and then do your process of elimination.

### **Read the passage given below and scan all the details.**

Anything related to space science, failure or success, is larger than life; this is a new frontier for achievement and conquest within the realms of science and technology. The recent attempt by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to place an earth observation satellite (EOS-3) in a geosynchronous orbit using the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV-F10) failed due to a ‘performance anomaly’—a malfunctioning of the trusted rocket launcher. All seemed to be well as the stage two and three separated as planned, but when the time came for the cryogenic third stage to light up, there appeared to be a failure and an ensuing deviation from the expected path, as seen in the control panel. There was an immediate disruption in the telecast, which had been showing a view of the control panel. The camera veered towards troubled faces, discussion, and probably efforts to salvage the mission. Finally, Dr. K. Sivan, Chairman of ISRO, announced in a short sentence that the mission could not be accomplished. Speculation may run rife about the reasons for this unexpected failure after many successful launches since 2017. ISRO had fewer launches during the pandemic in 2020 than it did in earlier years. This particular launch was originally planned for March 5, 2020, and was called off because of a technical

glitch a few hours before the launch. It is also to be mentioned that the cryo engine in question is of a Russian design originally, unlike that of the GSLV Mark III rocket, which is indigenous.

The failure of this mission is worrying not only because it breaks a long, successful run, but because there are several important missions in the pipeline: Aditya-L1, the sun watcher, and the Gaganyaan mission, which will carry humans to space, are slated for the coming years. Thursday’s failure will increase the stress on ISRO scientists to doubly ensure the chances of success in these missions. In the meantime, the impact of this failed mission is being kept away from interested citizens for now. For some time at least, there will be no official word on what actually happened and how the mission failed. This owes in no small measure to the propensity of ISRO to cover up and enshroud events in mystery, especially mishaps. Admittedly, the stakes are high in terms of investment and national pride, but scientists, of all people, should wear the belief that failure is as much part of the game as success. From a culture of warding off eyes, the organisation should embrace the limelight. ISRO indeed has many stories to tell of scientific endeavour, the method, and the manner of progress, and as it opens its doors to the public gaze, it can only rise to the skies.

Let us look at all the details provided in the first paragraph.

#### **First paragraph**

- ISRO’s attempt- EOS-3—in orbit-GSLV-F10 - failed - deviation from the expected path - Chairman of ISRO - mission could not be accomplished - originally been planned for March 5, 2020, and was called off - cryo engine in question is of a Russian design - GSLV Mark III rocket - which is indigenous.

#### **Second paragraph**

- Important missions - Aditya-L1, the sun watcher, and the Gaganyaan mission - O



scientists to doubly make sure in future—have faith—opening up of ISRO in front of the world.

A quick scan of the passage above would render many details such as the theme, the main idea, and the data presented in the paragraphs. However, this technique is more elaborate than skimming and takes more time.

### Keywords

*Life is keywords, #life, #truth, #true...*  
—Deyth Banger

Keywords are the words of the highest importance in a paragraph. They contain all the necessary elements that a reader needs to grasp in a passage.

There are two ways in which keywords can be useful.

1. While skimming and scanning, keep an eye on the important words in every paragraph. Such words could be names, dates, places, reasons, conclusions, etc. Keep them at the back of your mind, or put them down on a scribbling sheet. These words will come in handy later.
2. When you read a question, try to pinpoint the keywords before darting back to the passage for the wild hunt. Identifying the keywords will help you locate the answer more easily.

For instance, if a question is stated as, ‘What does the author mean by “like the sheer innocence of a newborn”?’; the first step is to hunt for the keyword ‘newborn’ and try to read the two lines above and below.

#### Trivia



If you locate a keyword twice in a passage, in different paragraphs, make sure you read both the portions before going ahead with your answer.

Let us look at the following example for better understanding.

The world is only starting to grapple with how profound the artificial-intelligence revolution will be. AI technologies will create waves of progress in critical infrastructure, commerce, transportation, health, education, financial markets, food production, and environmental sustainability. Successful adoption of AI will drive economies, reshape societies, and determine which countries set the rules for the coming century.

This AI opportunity coincides with a moment of strategic vulnerability. US President Joe Biden has said that America is in a “long-term strategic competition with China”. He is right. But it is not only the United States that is vulnerable; the entire democratic world is, too, because the AI revolution underpins the current contest of values between democracy and authoritarianism. We must prove that democracies can succeed in an era of technological revolution.

China is now a peer technological competitor. It is organised, resourced, and determined to win this technology competition and reshape the global order to serve its narrow interests. AI and other emerging technologies are central to China’s efforts to expand its global influence, surpass the economic and military power of the US, and lockdown domestic stability. China is executing a centrally-directed systematic plan to extract AI knowledge from abroad through espionage, talent recruitment, technology transfer, and investments.

After a glance, one could easily find the keywords mentioned in the passage.

#### Trivia



Flow Charts help a lot in understanding the flow of the text.  
Try using them in Para-Jumbles and you would never get stuck in them again.



Let us have a look at the keywords in the passage.

### First paragraph

- artificial-intelligence revolution | AI technologies | Progress | adoption of AI |

### Second paragraph

- coincides | strategic vulnerability | competition | But | AI revolution underpins | democracy and authoritarianism

### Third paragraph

- technological competitor | reshape the global order | global influence | economic and military power | centrally-directed systematic plan

Keywords are not just a tool to find data but are even helpful in finding the intricacies mentioned in the passage. A student can comprehend transitions made by the author with the help of keywords.

### Mind Mapping

A map gives us a clear picture of an area and a thorough understanding of the terrain. Like a map that we use in our day-to-day lives to look for places, a mind map creates stops and signals that help us retain what we have read for a longer period of time. A mind map gives a clear image of the passage to the reader.

While reading, the aspirant marks all the important points that he needs to remember and creates footnotes accordingly.

### How to apply mind mapping?

Mind mapping is visualising all the events and happenings mentioned in the passage. The author needs to look at all the keywords and scan through the entire passage to do this.

The reader should make bullet points and jot down events in a flow chart. This *flow chart* would help the reader understand the organisation of the passage.

Let us try to map the passage below and mark all the important points.

Even with all its challenges, the country is setting a global example in meeting its Nationally Determined Contributions

Did you know that even on the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change (December 2020), India was the only G20 nation compliant with the agreement? Or that the country has been ranked within the top 10 for two years consecutively in the Climate Change Performance Index, released by an independent international organisation that evaluates the performance of countries emitting 90%+ of global greenhouse gases (GHGs)? Or that the Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) scheme is the world's largest zero-subsidy LED bulb programme for domestic consumers?

Despite these accomplishments, global pressures are intensifying on India to commit more to the Conference of the Parties (COP26), scheduled for November 2021 in Glasgow. Early this year, the COP26 President, Alok Sharma, and the United States Special Presidential Envoy for Climate, John Kerry, visited India. In July, the U.S. called out to every significant economy to commit to a meaningful reduction by 2030.

That brings us to the question. Is it fair to apply pressure on India to raise its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) committed in the Paris Agreement? We can attempt to answer the question by comparing the achievements of other countries vis-a-vis.

Given that climate change is a global public good and there is a free-rider problem—there is not much incentive for countries to contribute their fair share since they can enjoy benefits even otherwise.

Let us first gather the historical perspective. Examining World Bank data for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (metric tons per capita) over two decades since the Kyoto protocol informs that at the current rate, both China and the U.S. could emit five times more than India in 2030. The U.K.'s emission levels could be more than 1.5 times India's. Brazil, with its dense forests, may end up at similar levels.

Among recent efforts, last year, China, the world's largest GHG emitter, joined the 'race to zero' and targets carbon neutrality by

2060. Interestingly, it hopes to peak CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2030 by bending the emissions curve. The Climate Action Tracker, an independent scientific analysis tracking governments' actions, also expressed its concern stating, "Most worryingly, China remains committed to supporting the coal industry while the rest of the world experiences a decline and is now home to half of the world's coal capacity". Recently, the U.S. rejoined the Paris Agreement and committed to reducing emissions by 50%-52% in 2030 and reaching net-zero emissions economy-wide by 2050. While they re-energise their fight on climate change, legislation may not be straightforward, given the Democrats' strength in Congress. Such ambitions will also require much more near-term investment than even the U.S. President Joe Biden's \$2.3 trillion infrastructure package.

During the novel coronavirus pandemic, the French government set green conditions for bailing out its aviation industry. However, the analysts say that no baseline for reducing emissions from domestic flights was fixed, and it is unclear what measures were adopted to promote rail for domestic travel.

An Australian Prime Minister in 2018 lost his chair on a proposal to address climate change through an emissions-reduction target. The complicated domestic politics prevented them from addressing the problem, despite the country being vulnerable, and stretches of the famous Great Barrier Reef having died in recent years. It was, at least, the third instance in Australia when climate issues brought down its Prime Minister. It illustrates how difficult it is for governments to develop policies to mitigate climate change.

In comparison, with all its challenges, India is on track (as reports/documents show) to meet and exceed the NDC commitment to achieve 40% electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel-based sources by 2030; this share is 38.18% (November 2020). Similarly, against the voluntary declaration

for reducing the emission intensity of GDP by 20%-25% by 2020, India has reduced it by 24% between 2005 and 2016. More importantly, we achieved these targets with around 2% out of the U.S. \$100 billion committed to developing nations in Copenhagen (2009), realised by 2015.

As part of its mitigation efforts, India is implementing one of the most extensive renewable energy expansion programmes to achieve 175 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2022 and 450 GW by 2030. India has also coupled its post-pandemic revival with environmental protection. As part of the fiscal stimulus, the Government announced several green measures, including a \$26.5-billion investment in biogas and cleaner fuels, \$3.5 billion in incentives for producing efficient solar photovoltaic (PV), and advanced chemistry cell batteries, and \$780 million toward an afforestation programme.

Some activists feel that India needs to demonstrate action at the global level. However, we need to appreciate that among many steps, India provided leadership for setting up the International Solar Alliance, a coalition of solar-resource-rich countries, and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, a partnership of governments, United Nations agencies, multilateral development banks, the private sector, and knowledge institutions.

The developed nations could also intensify their pressure, especially on jurisdictions not meeting the Paris Agreement goals. At this stage, India can always share independent international assessments, acknowledging that our climate action is among the few compatible with the well-below 2°C warming target. India's contribution to global emissions is well below its equitable share of the worldwide carbon budget by any equity criterion.

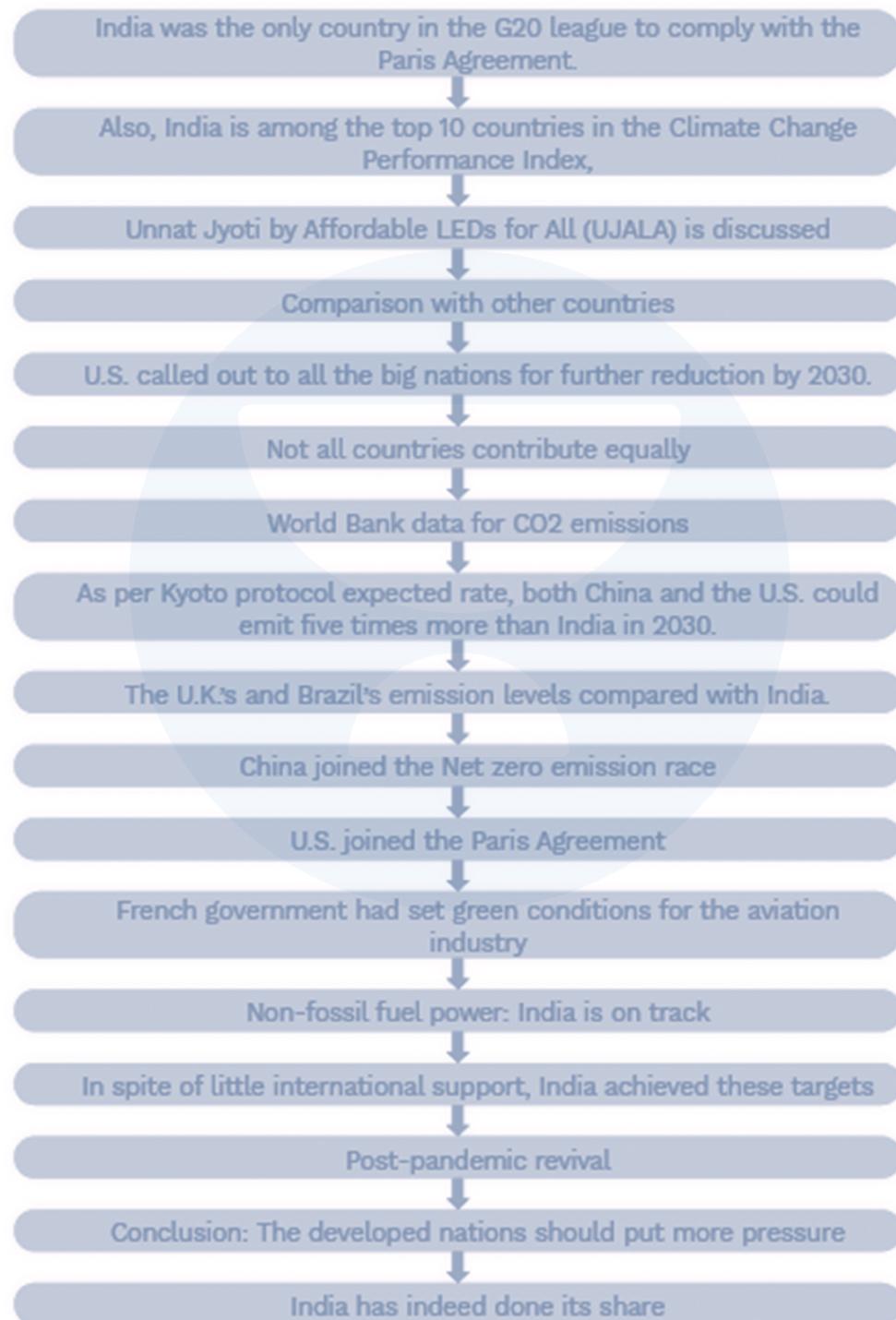
To sum up, India has indeed walked the talk. Other countries must deliver on their promises early and demonstrate tangible



results ahead of COP26. We can always suo motu revise the NDC for the first stocktake (2023) while simultaneously protecting our interests. Sustaining the entire planet does not rest on a few countries; everyone has to act.

Once you have read the passage, make a flowchart and write down all the important events that have taken place in the passage.

A sample map of the passage above has been provided. Look at it and see if you have covered all the relevant points:



## Level Up Your Reading Speed

*Not all readers are leaders, but all leaders are readers.*

—Harry S. Truman

### Introduction

Tarun is a student of IIM Ahmedabad. It is 10 pm, and he has 3 files to go through before the presentation the next day. Each file has more than 100 pages. He should not look careless in front of the professor and needs to finish all the work as soon as possible.

What he does next is what we need to learn! He quickly skims and scans all the files, marks all the important keywords, and makes a map of all the things he has read. He writes them in a flow chart and finishes the files in one-tenth of the time.

Now, he is all set for the presentation.

The tools used by Tarun for reading are a part of speed reading.

If you are given 10 hours for the VARC section in CAT, I believe all of you would be able to solve the test and score a maximum percentile. The scenario changes dramatically when the number of questions remains the same, but there is a clock that keeps a check on you.

Every section in CAT has a time limit. The aspirants need to solve the questions within that time frame. The one who makes the most of his time will ace the game.

In CAT 2020, 40 minutes were allotted for the VARC section. There were a total of 26 questions that made a total of 2,404 words

### Trivia



Howard Stephen Berg, USA, is the Guinness World Record holder for fast reading with a whooping speed of 25,000 words per minute!

to read! To boil it down to every minute, there were 189 words to read in 60 seconds.

A slow reader with an average of 90 to 100 words per minute would grapple with the questions. On the other hand, if his reading speed increases, he would fare better. Hence, we can say that time management is an important element in making or breaking the exam.

The bottom line—Read regularly so that your reading speed increases gradually.

### How to improve your reading speed

*Speed's what we need.*

—Mickey Goldmill, Rocky 2

The first mindset change that needs to be accepted is that reading is like playing the guitar or pottery. Like every other skill, reading too requires daily practice, discipline, and dedication from the aspirant.

Let's look at some steps that can help you improve your reading.

- Set the timer: Record the number of words that you actually read in 1 or 2 minutes. If it is very low, don't lose heart. It can be improved.
- Set a goal: Now, set a realistic goal. If you have been reading at 100 wpm, you cannot suddenly expect to reach 200. Move up slowly.
- Improve your vocabulary: This helps in gliding across the sentences without actually having to read every single word.
- Scan, skim, and skip: We have already discussed these techniques. You can apply a combination of these techniques to ensure smooth sailing.
- Read more and more: The more you read, the better you will get. The better you get, the higher will be your speed. But, this takes time. Remember, Rome wasn't built in a day.
- Use peripheral vision: Instead of reading the words one by one, take in chunks of



the sentences. This again happens with practice, vocabulary, and some external knowledge.

- Increase your knowledge base: With regular reading comes the expanded horizon which in turn helps connect fast while reading a passage. Read diverse stuff.
- Stop reading aloud: Last but not least, control that inner monologue. Your voice tries to keep up with your eyes and in the process, delay happens.

*Champions keep playing until they get it right.*

—Billie Jean King

## Regression

Skip-back or regression is when a reader re-reads the words and sentences given in a passage. The purpose of this is to try and understand the meaning of the words that are difficult to comprehend. On average, a reader reads the same thing almost three times before moving towards the next part. This is the biggest time-eater that a student faces.

Regression is not something that a person does by his or her sheer will. It is something done subconsciously. The reader remains quite unaware of the fact that he has devoted thrice the time than he should have devoted to the same passage.

There are multiple reasons behind regression such as lack of focus, inability to understand vocabulary, no interest in the topic mentioned, feeling tired/drowsy, etc.

One needs to go to the core to stop regression.

## Eye span

One can read with great efficiency and speed with a proper eye span. Avid readers have a bigger eye span than those who read rarely. Eye span is the number of words that the eye can cover without making any or with little movement.

Eye span improves with practice. One should keep the reading sheet or screen at

a reasonable distance to get the maximum benefit of eye span. Keeping the reading material too close would mean that the eye would have to make movements more than required thus slowing you down.

## Fixation

The time taken by an eye to read a word is called fixation.

There are several things around us and generally, we look at most of them with a quick glance. Our brains process the things that we see quickly.

Try this

Look around you and see the things that are kept nearby. Most of us would not take much time in this process. With a quick glance, we can figure out a thing and move towards the next one.

Our brain works with words in the same manner. We only stop at a thing that seems new or weird as our brains were not able to process them initially.

Similarly, when we see words that are new to us we stop and reread them. The fixation of one's eye on a word depends on the familiarity of that word.

The more time we spend on each word, the slower our reading speed gets.

## Trick to improve!

**Simple solution:** Read more to get more familiar with new words. Good knowledge of vocabulary helps to read faster.

## Speed bumps

There are a few factors other than the above mentioned that slow us down. These are factors such as Lip Movement or Vocalisation.

## Lip movement

The speed of our eyes is faster than the speed of our lips. Once we try to move our lips along with reading, initially it feels good, but with progression, it slows a person down. The speed of reading can be increased only up to the speed of the lip movement.

## Vocalisation

Like lip movement, vocalisation too slows us down.

But aren't we told to read loudly as kids?

As a child, we are told to read loudly because it improves our pronunciation of words. Now, the primary focus is not to clear one's pronunciation but to be able to read the text and answer the given questions within a stipulated period of time. To be able to do it successfully, one needs to eliminate all the hurdles that come one's way.

Vocalisation reduces our reading speed as our eyes are a lot faster than our speed of speaking.

Hence, to make the most of the given time, do not practice reading with vocalisation.

So, what should your reading ritual look like?

### 1. The process is simple—start reading:

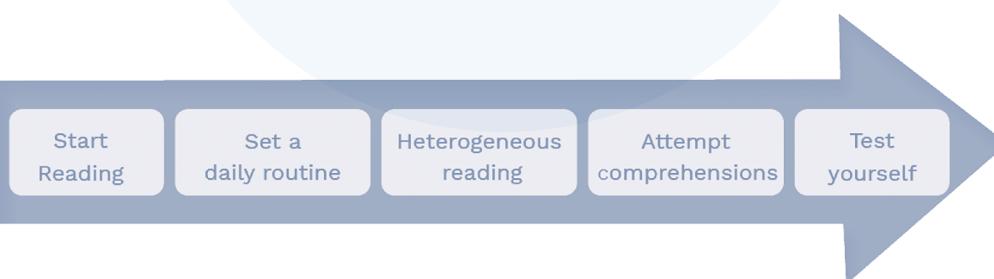
This does not mean that one should start with the articles most difficult to comprehend or topics that require strenuous efforts to understand. Start with something simple. Something that pleases your mind and soothes the eyes. The regression is caused by both the eyes and the mind, therefore, one needs to control both of them.

**2. Set a daily routine:** Make conscious efforts every day and read something for at least 15 to 20 minutes. As the truth your reading capability is only known by you, work your way accordingly. If you feel that you lack a lot, work your way up and gradually you will gather pace at it.

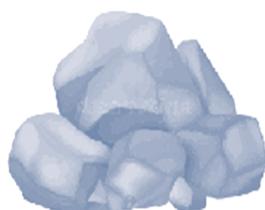
**3. Heterogeneous reading:** Read topics from various websites, newspapers, and journals. This would give you a view of all the areas of reading and would soon make you comfortable with topics that were, initially, outside your area of interest.

**4. Attempt comprehensions:** After such deliberate attempts, start attempting reading comprehensions. Start using all the aforementioned techniques and solve the questions. This would not be easy for the first few days but, if followed sincerely, would lead to results one might have not even imagined accomplishing.

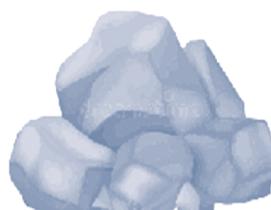
**5. Test yourself:** Conduct a self-assessment of the number of words that you can read in a minute. Keep taking such tests till the time your reading speed reaches your expected goals.



## Three Boulders of Effective Reading



Before Reading



While Reading



After Reading



## Before Reading

- Familiarisation with the topic and genre:** A discussion with someone familiar is always easier than a discussion done with a stranger. The same theory applies when we read a comprehension. A prior familiarisation with the topic would give a boost to the reader. Familiarisation not only provides confidence but also gives speed to scan through the entire passage. As the reader is familiar with the subject, he finds himself in an agreeable position.
- Make a strategy to attempt RC:** Aspirants who form a strategy to attempt RC score higher than those who try solving them haphazardly. Your strategy may include reading the question first or skimming the RC before everything else.

*Don't give up. Obstacles can be overcome through strategy and learning.*

—Hidetaka Miyazaki

## While Reading

- Maintain concentration:** The most important thing is to maintain one's

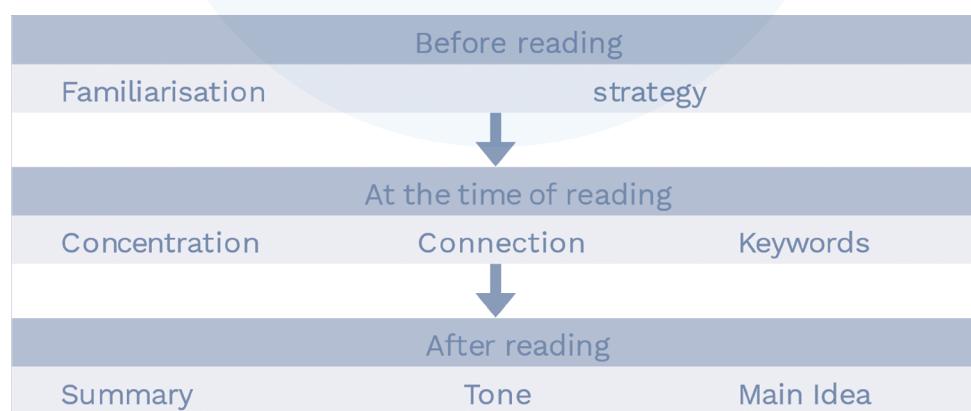
concentration. Concentrate on the text and the questions asked. Do not answer questions in a rush!

- Connect the dots:** While reading, try to connect all the information and try linking all the paragraphs for a better understanding. In this way, you will create a chain and understand the flow of thoughts of the writer.
- Mark the important areas and keywords:** Mark all the important areas and keywords while reading the passage. In this way you will not have to regress back and finding answers would become easy.

## After Reading

- Summary:** The first thing is to understand the summary of the passage. Even if you do not write it down, the summary should be clear in your mind.
- Main Idea:** Write down the main idea and the primary purpose of the author.
- Tone:** If provided, do comprehend the author's tone in the passage with the help of opinions given in it.

Let us sum up what we have learned:



## Reading Principles

For those who find it difficult to locate the most important parts in an RC, this section is there to assist you.

There are certain ways one can improve one's reading skills. For the maximum result and time utilisation, one needs to read in an efficient manner to capture all the necessary details and avoid all the clutter.

Here are certain ways that we suggest one to use to boost one's reading skills.

These are the key focus areas in a sentence. With the use of these techniques, the key focus areas in the passage would be easy to determine.

### Trivia



#### Clause:

A group of words with complete meaning.

For example:

Karan is a doctor and Mohan is a lawyer.

There are two independent clauses written over here.

- Main clause and subordinate clause:** The first step is to identify the main clause and the subordinate clause. The main clause of a sentence is more important than the subordinate clause as it shares the main idea of the sentence.

Look at the following examples:

**We had written a letter to the principal** before the exams started.

**I met him in a cafe** where he worked as a barista.

The part of the sentence which is in bold is the main clause. It contains information that is essential for understanding the main idea of the sentence. The

purpose of the sentence can be found in the main clause.

The sentence written in bold is the main clause as it captures the essence of the sentence whereas the subordinate clause adds some extra information to the passage.

- Structure words:** Structure words are important to notice transitions in the passage. Take a clear understanding of the clause that follows after the structure words. Structure words pin-point all the important information in the passage.

Do pay attention to what is written after the structured words.

These are a few examples of structure words:

Contradiction	Conclusion	Addition	Sequence	Time
But	Since	In addition	Then	When
In spite of	Therefore	Additionally	After	As soon as
Despite	Hence	Furthermore	Afterwards	Provided
Whereas	Thence	Moreover	Next	If
On the other hand	Because of	Also	Firstly	
Another facet	So	In addition to	Secondly	
However	As a result	Along with		
While	Consequently			
Though		Finally		
Although				
Yet				

Look at the following paragraph:

#### Example 1

- If Djokovic could lord over a year, he would become the first man to do that since the great Rod Laver's clean sweep back in 1969. Among women, Steffi Graff was the last to achieve this feat in 1988. However, a record-busting quest is never easy. Djokovic is acutely conscious of that after having blown a chance to pocket a Golden Slam as he crashed out of the recent Tokyo Olympics, failing to even win a bronze.



The use of ‘however’ changes the tone of the passage completely.

The passage is an excerpt from a leading newspaper.

Look at another example.

### Example 2

- The war may have helped him politically—his coalition won a huge majority in the delayed June Parliamentary elections which were held in all regions except in Tigray—but it has pushed Tigray into an endless rebellion and shaken up the country’s ethnic balance.

The use of ‘but’ in the sentence changes the tone of the sentence completely.

### Rack Your Brain

Find the structure words in the following paragraph:

- (a) “With digital commerce becoming ubiquitous, and with the Googles and the Apples controlling this experience through their platforms, it has become imperative for government laws to regulate them but a lot of jurisdictions have barred them” from completely controlling all the activities of their users.
- (b) “Australia, which only recently brought in a law to make Internet platforms pay media companies for displaying their content, has yet not reported of bringing digital payment services such as Apple Pay, Google Pay and WeChat Pay under its regulatory ambit”.

3. **Use of ‘that’:** Generally, the use of that denotes something important after it. When that is used as a conjunction it marks the happening of an important event after it.

- Karan is sad *that* his sister got a chocolate.

- Reena is confident *that* her student will be accepted to IIM Ahmedabad.
- He may have hoped *that* the federal troops could oust the TPLF from power and establish order quickly.

4. **Use of appositive:** Words written in appositives are extra information to the subject of the passage. These add extra information and do not add anything substantial in nature.

- Karan, the doctor, is in town.
- Mohan, who lives near the college, is absent today.

### Trivia



To avoid unnecessary hassle, skip the part written in appositives.

### Trivia



Passages that state examples, at times, ask the reader, the reason behind writing the example.

5. **Use of hyphen (-):** Hyphens add extra information to the passage. Words written in between hyphens provide auxiliary details which are not important to the main idea of the subject.

Look at the following examples:

- The war may have helped him politically—his coalition won a huge majority in the delayed June Parliamentary elections which were held in all regions except in Tigray—but it has pushed Tigray into an endless rebellion and shaken up the country’s ethnic balance.
- The playground—cold and wet in the November rain—was not used by children.



- Mohan—his head held high—went out of the class.

### Trivia



Ever wondered what the dash in ‘mother-in-law’ stands for?

The answer is, a hyphen.

Words joined by hyphens are called compound words.

For example,

Father-in-law

Commander-in-chief

- Use of colon (:):** A colon is used to give stress, present a list, and clarify details. Details mentioned after the colon are important and should not be avoided by the reader.

Look at the following examples:

- There were only two choices left: fight or die.
- We knew which band would win the game: Guns and Roses

- Semicolon (;):** A semicolon is used to connect two clauses that share the same thought and meaning.

Clauses written before semicolons should be ignored as they contain the same meaning as that of the clauses written after them.

- We had too many problems; we lost the match.
- She had a big test the next day; she did not sleep that night.

- Use of examples:** Examples are written to clarify a point. These should be ignored as they do not add anything new to the sentence.

Look at the following examples to get a better understanding.

- Environmental change cannot be delivered only by infrastructure. To be

effective, it needs to be accompanied by social change, for example, travelling less as well as travelling better. We need to develop not only new railways and tramlines and wind farms and power lines, but a new way of life.

- He can play many sports, for example, hockey, cricket, and tennis.

- Rule of first and last line:** This concept makes it easy for the reader to get the main idea of the paragraph without reading all the details.

Let us try this with an example:

**Read the first line and the last line of the passage carefully.**

All Central government employees must attend office on all working days, according to a new order issued by the Department of Personnel and Training, bringing to an end most of the exemptions allowed during the pandemic. The decision has been taken based on the Home Ministry's January 27 guidelines for the containment of COVID-19, said the February 13 order. "The government servants at all levels are to attend office on all working days without any exemption to any category", said the order. "The officers/staff shall follow staggered timings to avoid overcrowding in offices/workplaces as decided by the Heads of Department". It also directed all departments to comply with the latest standard operating procedure on preventive measures to prevent COVID-19 spread in offices, issued by the Health Ministry on February 13, and to ensure regular sanitising, social distancing, and wearing of masks.

The first line and the last line of a passage carry the main idea of the passage. These lines help us in identifying the crux.

**Solution:** The main idea of this paragraph is that all central government employees must attend the office and should follow



the COVID-19 protocols. The main idea of this paragraph was easy to determine with the help of the first and last line rule.

**10. Paragraph consistency:** The writer tries to connect the entire passage with a chain of thoughts. All the paragraphs carry the central theme of the passage and add a few more points to it

**Read carefully:** If the first paragraph and the last paragraph carry the same thought then the main idea is in the first paragraph. If the first and the last paragraph do not correlate with each other in terms of thought then, try to correlate the second and the last paragraph.

If the second and the last paragraphs match, then the first paragraph becomes irrelevant.

Consistency of thoughts is the key to answering the main idea of the passage. To understand this further, let us take an example.

“India is a world of many wonders, but we need to see it from the eyes of a traveller, and not a tourist. Travelling solo gives that liberating experience of soaking in every ounce of the beauty from the simple life of the countryside to the evolving beauties of cities across India”.

A creative head of a film production house, Ms. Nidhi embarked on an all-India tour on February 7 from Kochi. Calling her journey ‘The Great Indian Solo Trip’, she says it was planned with a purpose to ‘experience first-hand how safe’ India is, especially for women, as well as to document her travel experiences for her next book.

“I had earlier written two travel books based on my journey through different regions. But this one is special because I had been waiting to do a solo trip for a long time. When you are alone, you are more attentive. The journey is almost meditative,’ she says. Ms. Nidhi has so

far covered 2,300 kilometres crossing Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh. In her next leg of the journey, she will be heading to Odisha and West Bengal travelling northwards and intends to complete 100 days of her solo trip by covering 25,000 kilometres.

Travelling on a shoestring budget in a Renault Kwid, which she fondly calls as Kuruvi (meaning a little bird in Malayalam), Ms. Nidhi’s red car stands out in a crowded road with the map of her travel route marked prominently on it. For the tour, she made some basic ergonomic interior modifications to the car. Halting in the Youth Hostel Associations and other budget-friendly accommodations, Ms. Nidhi says her journey so far has been memorable and enriching. From interacting with tribals in Araku to soaking in the countryside charm of Andhra Pradesh, she made pit stops across the region to document the heart-warming stories of agrarian success from the rural parts.

Over here, the 2nd and the last paragraph talk about Ms. Nidhi who is a solo traveller. Hence, the main idea is in the 2nd and the last paragraph of the passage.

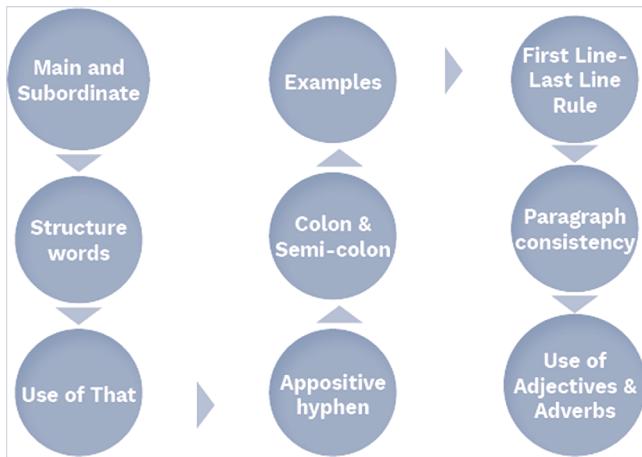
**11. Use of adjectives and adverbs:** Adjectives and adverbs are the key to understanding the tone of the passage.

To understand this further, let us take an example.

Karan is a student. (In this sentence no adjective is used.)

Karan is a brilliant student. (In this sentence the term ‘brilliant’ modifies the term student and makes the reader understand the attitude of the author towards the subject.)

With practice, one can gather great command over the use of the reading principles.



Try to apply all that we have learned in this part to the following passage.

**Mark the part of the passage that carries the main idea and important details and strike out the unnecessary details.**

The staggering collapse of part of a glacier in Uttarakhand's Nanda Devi Mountain and the ensuing floods which claimed many lives come as a deadly reminder that this fragile, geologically dynamic region can never be taken for granted. A significant slice of the glacier dislodged by a landslide, according to some satellite images, produced roaring torrents in the Rishiganga and Dhauliganga rivers in Chamoli district.

Though the immediate rescue of nearly 15 people by the ITBP, the Army, and other agencies brings some cheer, scores of people are still missing in the wave of water, silt and debris that swamped the rivers and filled tunnels in the Tapovan power project.

An example of this is the rescuers who tried to locate the survivors could find only a few.



**The part that is visible to every reader**

Once you have read the aforementioned, have a look at the skimmed part written below.

**The part that a CAT aspirant needs to see!**



The staggering collapse of part of a glacier in Uttarakhand's Nanda Devi mountain and the ensuing floods which claimed many lives come as a deadly reminder **that this fragile, geologically dynamic region is very volatile in nature. A significant slice of the glacier dislodged by a landslide, according to some satellite images, produced roaring torrents in the Rishiganga and Dhauliganga rivers in Chamoli district.**

Though the immediate rescue of nearly 15 people by the ITBP, the Army, and other agencies brings some cheer **yet scores of people are still missing in the wave of water, silt, and debris that swamped the rivers and filled tunnels in the Tapovan power project.**

An example of this is the rescuers who tried to locate the survivors could find only a few.

The highlighted part over here shows all the important details that are to be read by an aspirant.

## Part 8

### Writing Style of the Author in Reading Comprehension

Like a musician who has developed his own style of music and whenever you hear that

rhythm, it instantly fills your brain with the lyrics. Writers, too, have a tendency of developing a writing style that becomes their signature.



Generally, there are four types of writing styles that we need to understand to be able to classify RCs.

1. Narrative
2. Descriptive
3. Persuasive
4. Expository

### **What Is a Writing Style?**

Writing style is the use of words in a way that marks the exclusivity of the author. An actor creates a mark by his acting or a singer does so by his or her voice a writer does the same with the use of words. The way of writing can be changed as per the desire of the author and the need of the hour.

The style of a news anchor can be expository whereas a teacher might use descriptive style to explain something to his or her students. We all must have been to a shop where the seller might have been a bit more pushy than normal, to sell his goods, and that style can clearly be marked as persuasive.

#### **Narrative Writing Style**

Narrative writing is an elaborated form of the descriptive writing style as it narrates a complete story from the starting to the end. A precise plotline is framed and followed to convey the theme set by the author. The use

#### **Trivia**



Identifying the writing style of the author is a common question type in CAT.

Pay importance to the structure of words to identify the writing style correctly.

of predictions and flashbacks is a common part of the narrative writing style.

Narrative passages are easy to read because they have a storytelling format. Such a passage can be a story, a person's experience, or an excerpt from someone's journal/ travelogue/ biography/ autobiography.

Tips for narrative reading comprehensions

- There are no arguments and counter-arguments in narrative passages. Usually, the story is used to build toward one central idea
- The main idea of such passages is very important. Try using the skimming method to extract the main idea of the passage.
- Do understand the tone of the RC and of the characters mentioned as there is, generally, a question or two asked from such passages.

An example of the narrative writing style is given below.

By 1970, the surviving heirs to copyrights were his daughter Lady Jean Bromet (Dame Jean), Princess Nina Mdivani, the widow of his son Dennis who had remarried her husband's secretary Anthony Harwood, and Anna Conan Doyle, Adrian's widow.

The three women, who were equal beneficiaries, did not get on well and were constantly in litigation.

After Adrian's death in 1970, Princess Nina Mdivani approached Jonathan Clowes; a Literary Agent based in London, asking him to conduct a financial audit of the literary estate as she felt that the income was low under Adrian's management.

Jonathan Clowes discovered that considerable sums of money had bypassed the beneficiaries and had been paid to Adrian and his associates as ‘consultant fees’. For instance, three films had been licensed including *The Adventures of Brigadier Gerard* and *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, with total budgets of \$30 million and, according to the files; the literary estate’s royalties were less than \$30,000.

Jonathan Clowes’ findings further aggravated the beneficiaries’ relationship and he suggested that they sell the literary estate and share the proceeds. To his surprise, they all agreed. The sale of the literary estate was subsequently advertised in a number of newspapers, including *Variety*. Booker Brothers offered the highest bid.

However, as soon as this offer was received, the three women went back on the warpath. Dame Jean and Anna wanted to accept the Booker Brothers offer, but Nina did not. So the three women went to Court once more. The case dragged on for weeks, at great cost, until Johnathan Clowes, once again, came up with a suggestion. He advised Nina to buy out her two sisters-in-law, offering the Booker Brothers price plus an extra £10,000. She thought this was a good idea but didn’t have the money. Based upon the expected revenue of the literary estate, Jonathan Clowes persuaded the Royal Bank of Scotland to finance Princess Mdivani’s purchase of the literary works.

### Rack Your Brain

#### What is the writing style of the author in the poem?

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary, Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,

As of someone gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.

“Tis some visitor,” I muttered, “tapping at my chamber door—

Only this and nothing more.”

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;

And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.

Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow

From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—

For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—

Nameless here for evermore.

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain

Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;

So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating

“Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door—

Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door;—

This it is and nothing more.”

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,

“Sir,” said I, “or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;

But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,

And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,

That I scarce was sure I heard you”—here I opened wide the door;—

Darkness there and nothing more.

—By Edgar Allan Poe



## Previous Year Reading Comprehension: CAT 2021 | Slot 1

**Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

The sleights of hand that conflate consumption with virtue are a central theme in *A Thirst for Empire*, a sweeping and richly detailed history of tea by the historian Erika Rappaport. How did tea evolve from an obscure ‘China drink’ to a universal beverage imbued with civilising properties? The answer, in brief, revolves around this conflation, not only by profit-motivated marketers but by a wide variety of interest groups. While abundant historical records have allowed the study of how tea itself moved from east to west, Rappaport is focused on the movement of the idea of tea to suit particular purposes.

Beginning in the 1700s, the temperance movement advocated for tea as a pleasure that cheered but did not inebriate, and industrialists soon borrowed this moral argument in advancing their case for free trade in tea (and hence more open markets for their textiles). Factory owners joined in, compelled by the cause of a sober workforce, while Christian missionaries discovered that tea ‘would soothe any colonial encounter’. During the Second World War, tea service was presented as a social and patriotic activity that uplifted soldiers and calmed refugees. But it was tea’s consumer-directed marketing by importers and retailers ‘and later by brands’ that most closely portends current trade debates. An early version of the ‘farm to table’ movement was sparked by anti-Chinese sentiment and concerns over

trade deficits, as well as by the reality and threat of adulterated tea containing dirt and hedge clippings. Lipton was soon advertising ‘from the Garden to Tea Cup’ supply chains originating in British India and supervised by ‘educated Englishmen’. While tea marketing always presented direct consumer benefits (health, energy, relaxation), tea drinkers were also assured that they were participating in a larger noble project that advanced the causes of family, nation, and civilisation. . . . Rappaport’s treatment of her subject is refreshingly apolitical. Indeed, it is a virtue that readers will be unable to guess her political orientation: both the miracle of markets and capitalism’s dark underbelly are evident in tea’s complex story, as are the complicated effects of British colonialism. Commodity histories are now themselves commodities: recent works investigate cotton, salt, cod, sugar, chocolate, paper, and milk. And morality marketing is now a commodity as well, applied to food, ‘fair trade’ apparel, and eco-tourism. Yet tea is, Rappaport makes clear, a world apart ‘an astonishing success story in which tea marketers not only succeeded in conveying a sense of moral elevation to the consumer but also arguably did advance the cause of civilisation and community’. I have been offered tea at a British garden party, a Bedouin campfire, a Turkish carpet shop and a Japanese chashitsu, to name a few settings. In each case, the offering was more an idea of ‘friendship, community, respect’ than a drink, and in each case the idea then created a reality. It is not a stretch to say that tea marketers have advanced the particularly noble cause of human dialogue and friendship.

### Questions

1. The author of this book review is LEAST likely to support the view that:
  - (A) Tea drinking was sometimes promoted as a patriotic duty.
  - (B) The ritual of drinking tea promotes congeniality and camaraderie.
  - (C) Tea drinking has become a social ritual worldwide.
  - (D) Tea became the leading drink in Britain in the nineteenth century.

2. This book review argues that, according to Rappaport, tea is unlike other ‘moralit y’ products because it:
- (A) Appealed to a universal group and not just to a niche section of people.
  - (B) Had an actual beneficial effect on social interaction and society in general.
  - (C) Was actively encouraged by interest groups in the government.
  - (D) Was marketed by a wide range of interest groups.
3. According to this book review, A Thirst for Empire says that, in addition to ‘profit-motivated marketers’, tea drinking was promoted in Britain by all of the following except:
- (A) Factories to instil sobriety in their labour.
  - (B) Tea drinkers lobbying for product diversity.
  - (C) Manufacturers who were pressing for duty-free imports.
  - (D) The anti-alcohol lobby as a substitute for the consumption of liquor.
4. Today, ‘conflat[ing] consumption with virtue’ can be seen in the marketing of:
- (A) Sustainably farmed foods.
  - (B) Ergonomically designed products.
  - (C) Travel to pristine destinations.
  - (D) Natural health supplements.

### Descriptive Writing Style

How do you explain to someone what a particular painting looks like?

To explain something we need to express all the details that are linked to it. Our sense of taste, smell, sound, look, feel and touch make us gather all the information that we have for a thing. To clearly articulate what one is able to see in an image, one requires to be very elaborate to include all the details.

Descriptive or Informative passages describe or provide information about a concept, a thing, an event, or a person. Language is

straightforward as the author usually makes his/her explanation as clear as possible.

Tips for descriptive reading comprehensions:

- The tone of a descriptive passage usually tends to be neutral/objective. A descriptive passage can be heavily loaded with jargon belonging to a branch of knowledge.
- A better understanding of the passage can be attained by reading the questions first.
- Do not get entangled in the extra information offered by the author as these passages contain information that at times becomes unnecessary.

The best approach is to understand the general/overall message in the paragraphs and avoid getting caught up in understanding the terms specific to a branch of knowledge.

The following excerpt about the discovery of an archaeological site is a good example of a descriptive passage.

Archaeologists have hailed the discovery of what is believed to be the largest ancient city found in Egypt, buried under sand for millennia, which experts said was one of the most important finds since the unearthing of Tutankhamun’s tomb.

The famed Egyptologist Zahi Hawass announced the discovery of the ‘lost golden city’, saying the site was uncovered near Luxor, home of the Valley of the Kings.

“The Egyptian mission under Dr. Zahi Hawass found the city that was lost under the sands,’ the archaeology team said. “The city is 3,000 years old, dates to the reign of Amenhotep III, and continued to be used by Tutankhamun and Ay”.

It called the find the largest ancient city, known as Aten, ever uncovered in Egypt.

Betsy Bryan, Professor of Egyptian art and archaeology at Johns Hopkins University, said the find was the “second most important archaeological discovery since the tomb of Tutankhamun”, according to the team’s statement.



Items of jewellery such as rings have been unearthed, along with coloured pottery vessels, scarab beetle amulets, and mud bricks bearing the seals of Amenhotep III.

Hawass, a former antiquities minister, said: “Many foreign missions searched for this city and never found it”.

### **Previous Year Reading Comprehension: CAT 2001**

#### **Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

Studies of the factors governing reading development in young children have achieved a remarkable degree of consensus over the past two decades. This consensus concerns the causal role of phonological skills in young children’s reading progress. Children, who have good phonological skills or good ‘phonological awareness’, become good readers and good spellers. Children with poor phonological skills progress more poorly. In particular, those who have a specific phonological deficit are likely to be classified as dyslexic by the time they are 9 or 10 years old.

Phonological skills in young children can be measured at a number of different levels. The term phonological awareness is a global one and refers to a deficit in recognising smaller units of sound within spoken words. Developmental work has shown that this deficit can be at the level of syllables, onsets, and rimes, or phonemes. For example, a 4-year-old child might have difficulty in recognising that a word like valentine has three syllables, suggesting a lack of syllabic awareness. A 5 year old might have difficulty in recognising that the odd word out in the set of words fan, cat, hat, mat is fan. This task requires an awareness of the sub-syllabic units of the onset and the rime. The onset corresponds to any initial consonants in a syllable, and the rime corresponds to the vowel and to any following consonants. Rimes correspond to rhymes in single-syllable words, and so the rime in fan differs from the rime in cat, hat, and mat. In longer

words, rime and rhyme may differ. The onsets in val:en:tine are /v/ and /t/, and the rimes correspond to the spelling patterns ‘al’, ‘en’, and ‘ine’.

A 6-year-old might have difficulty in recognising that plea and pray begin with the same initial sound. This is a phonemic judgement. Although the initial phoneme /p/ is shared between the two words, in plea it is part of the onset ‘pl’, and in pray it is part of the onset ‘pr’. Until children can segment the onset (or the rime), such phonemic judgements are difficult for them to make.

In fact, a recent survey of different developmental studies has shown that the different levels of phonological awareness appear to emerge sequentially. The awareness of syllables, onsets, and rimes appears to emerge at around the ages of 3 and 4, long before most children go to school. The awareness of phonemes, on the other hand, usually emerges at around the age of 5 or 6, when children have been taught to read for about a year. An awareness of onsets and rimes thus appears to be a precursor of reading, whereas an awareness of phonemes at every serial position in a word only appears to develop as reading is taught. The onset-rime and phonemic levels of phonological structure, however, are not distinct. Many onsets in English are single phonemes, and so are some rimes (e.g., sea, go, zoo).

The early awareness of onsets and rimes is supported by studies that have compared the development of phonological awareness of onsets, rimes, and phonemes in the same subjects using the same phonological awareness tasks. For example, a study by Treiman and Zudowski used a same/different judgement task based on the beginning or the end sounds of words. In the beginning sound task, the words either began with the same onset, as in plea and plank, or shared only the initial phoneme, as in plea and pray. In the end-sound task, the words either shared the entire rime, as in spit and wit, or shared only the final phoneme, as in

rat and wit. Treiman and Zudowski showed that 4-year and 5-year-old children found the onset-rime version of the same/different task significantly easier than the version

based on phonemes. Only the 6-year-olds, who had been learning to read for about a year, were able to perform both versions of the tasks with an equal level of success.

## Questions

1. From the following statements, pick out the true statement according to the passage:
  - (A) A monosyllabic word can have only one onset.
  - (B) A monosyllabic word can have only one rhyme but more than one rime.
  - (C) A monosyllabic word can have only one phoneme.
  - (D) All of the above.
2. Which one of the following is likely to emerge last in the cognitive development of a child?
  - (A) Rhyme
  - (B) Rime
  - (C) Onset
  - (D) Phoneme
3. A phonological deficit in which of the following is likely to be classified as dyslexia?
  - (A) Phonemic judgement
  - (B) Onset judgement
  - (C) Rime judgement
  - (D) Any one or more of the above
4. The Treiman and Zudowski experiment found evidence to support the following:
  - (A) At age 6, reading instruction helps children perform, both, the same-different judgement task.
  - (B) The development of onset-rime awareness precedes the development of an awareness of phonemes.
  - (C) At age 4–5, children find the onset-rime version of the same/different task significantly easier.
  - (D) The development of onset-rime awareness is a necessary and sufficient condition for the development of an awareness of phonemes.
5. The single-syllable words rhyme and rime are constituted by the exact same set of:
  - I. Rime(s)
  - II. Onset(s)
  - III. Rhyme(s)
  - IV. Phoneme(s)
  - (A) I and II
  - (B) I and III
  - (C) I, II, and III
  - (D) II, III, and IV

## Persuasive Writing Style

How to successfully convince others?

Present the audience with a point, back it with logic, cite some examples and if required sprinkle it with emotions and you have successfully persuaded most of the audience.

If someone gives his point of view and backs it with logic, reasoning, and examples the person is using persuasive skills to influence the reader. Emotions happen to be a core part of persuasive writing.

Persuasive passages are denser and more difficult to read than narrative or descriptive passages.

Generally in these passages, arguments and examples are given to support a side in the passage. The author will support his/her side of the debate by giving many supporting arguments.

Opinions in newspapers, advertisements, review, and cover letters are all written in a persuasive writing style.

Tips for persuasive reading comprehensions:

- Generally, the author uses terms like 'likewise, additionally, in the same manner' to prove a particular point.



- Keep a note of the author's tone in the passage. This would make questions related to the author's opinion easy to answer.

The best approach is to understand the important arguments rather than waste time on complex jargon.

The following excerpt is a good example of a persuasive passage.

The imagination of people gives long life to an icon. If the followers of an icon insist on rigidity and don't allow others to remember him or her in their own way, then they make their own icons ineffective, knowingly or unknowingly. The important events of the life of icons provide people the space to create their own narratives.

Similarly, Ambedkar has transformed into a folk icon due to this flexible re-imagin-ing. Women from marginal communities in Maharashtra's villages remember him as their deity and mahapurusha in the songs that they sing at the birth of a child, or a marriage. I have seen Dalit youths from villages in Uttar Pradesh touch the feet of Ambedkar's statues before appearing for their board examinations. If a radical-mind-ed person opposes this deification, it means he or she does not understand the dynamics of people's remembrance and the ways through which common people forge their relation with the images of Ambedkar.

Educated followers may indeed read his texts and use his arguments and vision for the emancipation of marginal communities, but Ambedkar appears in many different ways in ordinary life. One may find a photo of Ambedkar with Kabir in various Kabir ashrams in India. In some neo-Buddhist households of UP and Bihar, I have seen Ganesha, Buddha, and Ambedkar being worshipped together. Calendars with images of Vaishno Devi, Ravidas, and Ambedkar hang side by side, as I have observed in households in rural UP.

## Previous year Reading Comprehension: CAT 2020 | Slot 3

**The passage below is accompanied by a set of questions. Choose the best answer to each question.**

[There is] a curious new reality: Human contact is becoming a luxury good. As more screens appear in the lives of the poor, screens are disappearing from the lives of the rich. The richer you are, the more you spend to be off-screen.

The joy—at least at first—of the internet revolution was its democratic nature. Facebook is the same Facebook whether you are rich or poor. Gmail is the same Gmail. And it's all free. There is something mass market and unappealing about that. And as studies show that time on these advertisement-support platforms is unhealthy, it all starts to seem déclassé, like drinking soda or smoking cigarettes, which wealthy people do less than poor people. The wealthy can afford to opt-out of having their data and their attention sold as a product. The poor and middle class don't have the same kind of resources to make that happen.

Screen exposure starts young. And children who spent more than two hours a day looking at a screen got lower scores on thinking and language tests, according to early results of a landmark study on brain development of more than 11,000 children that the National Institutes of Health is supporting. Most disturbingly, the study is finding that the brains of children who spend a lot of time on screens are different. For some kids, there is premature thinning of their cerebral cortex. In adults, one study found an association between screen time and depression.

Tech companies worked hard to get public schools to buy into programs that required schools to have one laptop per student, arguing that it would better prepare children for their screen-based future. But this idea isn't how the people who actually build the screen-based future raise their own children.

In Silicon Valley, time on screens is increasingly seen as unhealthy. Here, the popular elementary school is the local Waldorf School, which promises a back-to-nature, nearly screen-free education. So as wealthy kids are growing up with less screen time, poor kids are growing up with more. How comfortable someone is with human engagement could become a new class marker.

Human contact is, of course, not exactly like organic food. But with screen time, there has been a concerted effort on the part of Silicon Valley behemoths to confuse the public. The poor and the middle class are told that screens are good and important for

them and their children. There are fleets of psychologists and neuroscientists on staff at big tech companies working to hook eyes and minds to the screen as fast as possible and for as long as possible. And so human contact is rare.

There is a small movement to pass a ‘right to disconnect’ bill, which would allow workers to turn their phones off, but for now, a worker can be punished for going offline and not being available. There is also the reality that in our culture of increasing isolation, in which so many of the traditional gathering places and social structures have disappeared, screens are filling a crucial void.

### Questions

1. Which of the following statements about the negative effects of screen time is the author least likely to endorse?
    - (A) It can cause depression in viewers.
    - (B) It increases human contact as it fills an isolation void.
    - (C) It is shown to have adverse effects on young children’s learning.
    - (D) It is designed to be addictive.
  2. The statement “The richer you are, the more you spend to be off-screen” is supported by which other line from the passage?
    - (A) “... studies show that time on these advertisement-support platforms is unhealthy ...”.
    - (B) “Gmail is the same Gmail. And it’s all free”.
    - (C) “How comfortable someone is with human engagement could become a new class marker”.
    - (D) “... screens are filling a crucial void”.
  3. The author is least likely to agree with the view that the increase in screen-time is fuelled by the fact that:
    - (A) Screens provide social contact in an increasingly isolating world.
- (B) Some workers face punitive action if they are not online.
  - (C) With falling costs, people are streaming more content on their devices.
  - (D) There is a growth in computer-based teaching in public schools.
4. The author claims that Silicon Valley tech companies have tried to ‘confuse the public’ by:
    - (A) Promoting screen time in public schools while opting for a screen-free education for their own children.
    - (B) Developing new work-efficiency programmes while lobbying for the ‘right to disconnect’ bill.
    - (C) Concealing the findings of psychologists and neuroscientists on screen-time use from the public.
    - (D) Pushing for greater privacy while working with advertisement-support platforms to mine data.

### Expository Writing Style

How-to articles are the best examples to understand this style of writing. Expository writing style provides evidence, facts, data, or results to prove a certain point.

The author analyses an idea from various perspectives/ viewpoints/ vantage points.



He/she tries to explain to the readers the idea layer by layer. It is also possible that the

### Trivia



'How - to - articles' are one of the most searched ones on the internet.

There are many websites that solve queries of millions of users.

For Example

Wiki How

author is trying to himself/herself understand the idea or the issue in the discussion.

The author provides all the details to get to a conclusion and prove a certain point.

Editorials, How-To Articles, recipes, and business or technical writings are all a part of Expository writing.

Tips for expository reading comprehensions:

- A lot of factual questions are asked from such passages. Do note the opinion and data from such passages.
- Authors tend to give a lot of examples to support their claims.
- Structure-based questions form an essential part of such passages.

The best approach is to understand key ideas in the passage. If one has an overview of the analysis in a passage, it will be easy to answer the questions.

An example of expository writing style is given below.

The pandemic has upended many certainties. But it has reinforced one major trend in global politics: The rise of Asia. While the global economy crashed in 2020, economies such as Vietnam and China grew. Several Asia's open societies have shown us how to successfully contain the virus. And without the leading vaccine exporter, India, the world will not beat the pandemic.

As an exporting nation, Germany has long observed Asia's rise through the lens of economic opportunity. However, that falls short of the mark today. At the end of the day, the region's rise has created three Asias. There is the familiar Asia of business—open, dynamic, interconnected. However, there is also an Asia of geopolitics, with ever-starker nationalisms, territorial conflicts, arms races, and Sino-American rivalry. Lastly, we have an Asia of global challenges, without which fair globalisation and getting on top of the pandemic or the climate crisis are impossible.

These three 'Asias' are increasingly at loggerheads. Geopolitical rivalries threaten free trade. The fight against the pandemic is mutating into a systemic competition between democracy and authoritarianism. And frenzied economic growth is fuelling climate change. With these dynamics, the region between the African east coast and the US west coast, the Indo-Pacific, will have a decisive impact on the world's future.

For Germany, this means that we must invest more in this region—not only economically, but also politically. To this end, the German government has, for the first time, adopted guidelines for the Indo-Pacific, with which we seek cooperation with all countries of the region: For open economies and free trade; for the fight against pandemics and climate change; and for an inclusive, rules-based order.

To assert these interests, we need the clout of a united Europe. That is why we, together with France and the Netherlands, have commenced work on a European strategy for the Indo-Pacific. The strategy is set to be in place by the end of the year, and the EU foreign ministers will begin consultations this month.

### Previous year Reading Comprehension: CAT 2018 | Slot 2

**The passage below is accompanied by a set of questions. Choose the best answer to each question.**

NOT everything looks lovelier the longer and closer its inspection. But Saturn does. It is gorgeous through Earthly telescopes.

However, the 13 years of close observation provided by Cassini, an American spacecraft, showed the planet, its moons, and its remarkable rings off better and better, revealing finer structures, striking novelties, and greater drama.

By and large the big things in the solar system—planets and moons—are thought of as having been around since the beginning. The suggestion that rings and moons are new is, though, made even more interesting by the fact that one of those moons, Enceladus, is widely considered the most promising site in the solar system on which to look for alien life. If Enceladus is both young and bears life, that life must have come into being quickly. This is also believed to have been the case on Earth. Were it true on Enceladus, that would encourage the idea that life evolves easily when conditions are right.

One reason for thinking Saturn's rings are young is that they are bright. The solar system is suffused with comet dust, and comet dust is dark. Leaving Saturn's ring system (which Cassini has shown to be more than 90% water ice) out in such a mist is like leaving laundry hanging on a line downwind from a smokestack: it will get dirty. The lighter the rings are, the faster this will happen, for the less mass they contain, the less celestial pollution they can absorb before they start to discolour Jeff Cuzzi, a scientist at America's space agency, NASA, who helped run Cassini, told the Lunar and Planetary

Science Conference in Houston that combining the mass estimates with Cassini's measurements of the density of comet-dust near Saturn suggests the rings are no older than the first dinosaurs, nor younger than the last of them—that is, they are somewhere between 200 m and 70 m years old.

That timing fits well with a theory put forward in 2016, by Matija Cuk of the SETI Institute, in California and his colleagues. They suggest that at around the same time as the rings came into being an old set of moons orbiting Saturn destroyed themselves, and from their remains emerged not only the rings but also the planet's current suite of inner moons—Rhea, Dione, Tethys, Enceladus, and Mimas.

Dr. Cuk and his colleagues used computer simulations of Saturn's moons' orbits as a sort of time machine. Looking at the rate at which tidal friction is causing these orbits to lengthen they extrapolated backwards to find out what those orbits would have looked like in the past. They discovered that about 100 m years ago the orbits of two of them, Tethys and Dione, would have interacted in a way that left the planes in which they orbit markedly tilted. But their orbits are untilted. The obvious, if unsettling, conclusion was that this interaction never happened—and thus that at the time when it should have happened, Dione and Tethys were simply not there. They must have come into being later.

## Questions

1. The phrase ‘leaving laundry hanging on a line downwind from a smokestack’ is used to explain how the ringed planet's:
  - (A) Atmosphere absorbs comet dust.
  - (B) Moons create a gap between the rings.
  - (C) Rings discolour and darken over time.
  - (D) Rings lose mass over time.
2. Data provided by Cassini challenged the assumption that:
  - (A) All big things in the solar system have been around since the beginning.
  - (B) New celestial bodies can form from the destruction of old celestial bodies
  - (C) Saturn's ring system is composed mostly of water ice.



- (D) There was life on earth when Saturn's rings were being formed.
3. Based on the information provided in the passage, we can infer that, in addition to water ice, Saturn's rings might also have small amounts of:
- (A) Methane and rock particles.  
(B) Rock particles and comet dust.  
(C) Helium and methane.  
(D) Helium and comet dust.
4. The main objective of the passage is to:
- (A) Provide evidence that Saturn's rings and moons are recent creations.  
(B) Highlight the beauty, finer structures, and celestial drama of Saturn's rings and moons.
- (C) Demonstrate how the orbital patterns of Saturn's rings and moons change over time.  
(D) Establish that Saturn's rings and inner moons have been around since the beginning of time.
5. Based on the information provided in the passage, we can conclude all of the following except:
- (A) Saturn's lighter rings discolour faster than rings with greater mass.  
(B) Thethys and Dione are less than 100 million years old.  
(C) None of Saturn's moons ever had suitable conditions for life to evolve.  
(D) Saturn's rings were created from the remains of older moons.

## Part 9

### Question Types

*Fears are educated into us, and can, if we wish, be educated out.*

—Karl Augustus Menninger

Once we are done reading the passage, we need to move on to the questions. There are various types of questions that can be asked in the exam. So, let's check some common ones and see how they can best be tackled.

Now, before we jump on to the various question types, there is one thing that every aspirant needs to understand. One can make the most out of a passage when he duly understands a few basic things about it. This does not mean that the questions are not important but there is something, if known by an aspirant, would boost his chances to score maximum in every RC.

These are three things that every aspirant should be able to do in a passage:

- Write a *Summary*.
- Find the *primary purpose* behind writing the passage.

- The *central idea* of the passage and of the paragraphs.

Let us look at the following passage for an example:

### Example

The following excerpt has been taken from a prestigious international magazine.

Flowing a few inches deep following a recent rain, the Los Angeles River looks more like a vast flooded interstate highway rather than any river found in nature. And yet it is the largest paved waterway in the world, best known as the filming site for car scenes in movies such as *Grease* and *Terminator 2*.

Hemmed in by towering concrete floodwalls, the urban river courses nearly 49 miles through Los Angeles County, from its headwaters in the Simi Hills and Santa Susana Mountains to its mouth in Long Beach. The river was left in a relatively natural state until 1938, when a disastrous flood breached its banks, killing 115 people and destroying 5,000 homes. Pressure quickly built on both the city and the federal government to take drastic action to contain the river.

Although this radical transformation protected human life and property, it also diminished a diverse riparian ecosystem that hosted spawning grounds for various aquatic species, including the southern California steelhead trout, which is now federally endangered. These days, the much-reduced river supports only the hardiest of species, most of them non-native, such as sunfish and carp.

Let us have a look at the three of the aforementioned passage:

**Summary:** These days, The Los Angeles River looks nothing like a river. The urban river was surrounded by concrete floodwalls after the floods in 1938, following the public uproar. Although the construction has served its purpose well, it has destroyed the aquatic ecosystem the river once supported.

### Trivia



Like the speed of water determines the flow of the river, the faster the river flows, the less turns it takes. In the same manner, the more focused the author is on a topic, the lesser auxiliary information he provides on it.

**Primary purpose:** The primary purpose of the passage is to educate readers about the aftereffects of the flood prevention measures taken after the floods of 1938 on the aquatic life of the river.

**Central idea:** The Central Idea of the passage is that the Los Angeles River has lost most of its aquatic life with some of them becoming endangered after the construction of flood walls around its bank after the floods of 1939.

**Second paragraph:** The river is surrounded by walls. The origin and the course the river takes. The flood and its aftereffects.

**Third paragraph:** The negative consequences of the building walls around the

river especially on the fishes of the river ecosystem.

### Here Is a List of Question Types Asked in RC

#### Main Idea

The main idea is the key issue of a passage that the author wants to draw your attention to.

Try asking yourself this question – ‘What is the aspect that the author is trying to discuss?’ So, even if the big picture is global warming, there must be a specific angle related to global warming that is the main idea. It could be global warming and its effects, the way it is being tackled, the people who downplay it, or maybe how the remedial steps are short-term.

The main idea will be present either in the first or the last part of the passage. In some cases, when the passage starts with an example or incident covering the whole of the first paragraph, the main idea slips down to the second paragraph. So, keep an eye out for this elusive character and you will find it easy to answer the questions.

Given below are a few examples of main idea-based questions:

- What is the central idea of the passage?
- Which of these is the correct main idea of the passage?
- What is the gist that the given passage implies?
- What is the gist of the passage?

#### Question 1

Write the central idea and the primary purpose of the following excerpt?

The farmers' movement invites us to revisit the trajectory of India's agriculture to understand its real problems. Beginning in the mid-1960s, India and, especially, Punjab experienced a massive productivity boom as a result of the widespread adoption of Green Revolution technologies. This transition was driven by public investment in irrigation and



market infrastructure. Essential to the system's success was the minimum support price, which incentivised the cultivation of wheat and rice.

- Central idea
- Primary purpose
- Sample solution

#### **Central idea of the aforementioned passage:**

The steps like minimum support price and government spending on irrigation and market infrastructure were the reasons behind India's agricultural productivity boom in the 1960s.

**Primary purpose of the aforementioned passage:** To sensitise readers about the reasons explaining the revolution in India's agriculture in the 1960s.

#### **Question 2**

Which of the following options most accurately and succinctly captures the central idea of the following excerpt?

Yet the scale of debt puts mortgage-holders in a state of indentured servitude which, if we could only stop blinking at our own good fortune for a second, we might object to. The ideal citizen for the age is the one who bought their house in January 1958, paid off their mortgage decades ago, and is now sitting on millions. This is why we're all supposed to rail against boomers (though technically people in this position, now in their 80s, are part of the 'silent generation' that preceded boomers), but you can bet that they're spending all that hard-earned leisure worrying about their children and grandchildren. The world we're accelerating into is working for landlords and for banks. Or to put that more simply, for capital alone.

- (A) With mortgage loans and debts at an all-time high, even the seniors who are very comfortably retired are forced to spend a lot to keep their progeny out of debt.
- (B) The senior citizens are in huge debt because they borrowed heavily from the

banks by mortgaging the houses they had bought in the late 1950s.

- (C) We are creating a world in which people are working towards generating capital while having neither any other goals nor any other achievements.
- (D) The debt amount has piled up for most of us except for 'the silent generation', who are worried about the financial future of their debt-ridden posterity.

#### **Solution: (D)**

- (A) The first option is incorrect. It mentions that senior citizens are spending their savings to secure their children and grandchildren's future. This idea has not been mentioned in the passage. Hence, the option is incorrect.
- (B) The second option is incorrect. It mentions that the seniors are in debt, an idea that is contrary to the information mentioned in the passage.
- (C) The third option is incorrect because it mentions an idea that cannot be substantiated based on the passage, people do not have any other goal or achievement apart from capital generation.
- (D) The fourth option most succinctly and accurately captures the theme of the excerpt. Hence, it is the correct answer.

Try writing the main idea of the passages given below:

#### **Passage 1**

A penny for your thoughts? Somehow if one owns a coin from 1965 he has no idea what would be the worth of that coin today. It is one of the rarest coins in the market as it double died. Another coin from the 1930s is one of the best coins that has been catching the attention of collectors. This was the year when the coins were made out of copper in place of metal as the country was out of metal due to the war.

#### **Main idea**

#### **Passage 2**

If you are a lover of Halloween, and trick or treat is what you wait for every

year, then let us try and learn something about it. It is a holiday celebrated each year on October 31, and Halloween 2021 will occur on Sunday, October 31. The tradition originated with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, when people would light bonfires and wear costumes to ward off ghosts. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated November 1 as a time to honour all saints. Soon, All Saints Day incorporated some of the traditions of Samhain. The evening before was known as All Hallows Eve, and later Halloween. Over time, Halloween evolved into a day of activities like trick-or-treating, carving jack-o-lanterns, festive gatherings, donning costumes, and eating treats.

### Main idea

**Previous Year Question Based on Main Idea:  
CAT 2020 | Slot 1**

**The passage below is accompanied by a set of questions. Choose the best answer to each question.**

Vocabulary used in speech or writing organises itself in seven parts of speech (eight, if you count interjections such as Oh! and Gosh! and Fuhgeddaboudit!). Communication composed of these parts of speech must be organised by rules of grammar upon which we agree. When these rules break down, confusion and misunderstanding result. Bad grammar produces bad sentences. My favourite example from Strunk and White is this one: "As a mother of five, with another one on the way, my ironing board is always up".

Nouns and verbs are the two indispensable parts of writing. Without one of each, no group of words can be a sentence, since a sentence is, by definition, a group of words containing a subject (noun) and a predicate (verb); these strings of words begin with a capital letter, end with a period, and combine to make a complete thought which starts in the writer's head and then leaps to the reader's.

Must you write complete sentences each time, every time? Perish the thought. If your work consists only of fragments and floating clauses, the Grammar Police aren't going to come and take you away. Even William Strunk, that Mussolini of rhetoric, recognised the delicious pliability of language. "It is an old observation", he writes, "that the best writers sometimes disregard the rules of rhetoric". Yet he goes on to add this thought, which I urge you to consider: "Unless he is certain of doing well, [the writer] will probably do best to follow the rules".

The telling clause here is unless he is certain of doing well. If you don't have a rudimentary grasp of how the parts of speech translate into coherent sentences, how can you be certain that you are doing well? How will you know if you're doing ill, for that matter? The answer, of course, is that you can't, you won't. One who does grasp the rudiments of grammar finds a comforting simplicity at its heart, where there need be only nouns, the words that name, and verbs, the words that act.

Take any noun, put it with any verb, and you have a sentence. It never fails. Rocks explode. Jane transmits. Mountains float. These are all perfect sentences. Many such thoughts make little rational sense, but even the stranger ones (Plums deify!) have a kind of poetic weight that's nice. The simplicity of noun-verb construction is useful—at the very least it can provide a safety net for your writing. Strunk and White caution against too many simple sentences in a row, but simple sentences provide a path you can follow when you fear getting lost in the tangles of rhetoric—all those restrictive and non-restrictive clauses, those modifying phrases, those appositives, and compound-complex sentences. If you start to freak out at the sight of such unmapped territory (unmapped by you, at least), just remind yourself that rocks explode, Jane transmits, mountains float, and plums deify. Grammar is . . . the pole you grab to get your thoughts up on their feet and walking.



## Question 1

Which one of the following quotes best captures the main concern of the passage?

- (A) "Nouns and verbs are the two indispensable parts of writing. Without one of each, no group of words can be a sentence . . .".
- (B) "Strunk and White caution against too many simple sentences in a row, but simple sentences provide a path you can follow when you fear getting lost in the tangles of rhetoric . . .".
- (C) "The telling clause here is Unless he is certain of doing well".
- (D) "Bad grammar produces bad sentences".

This question is based on the main idea of the passage.

### Solution: (D)

As per the context of the passage, grammar is a basic element of the language. At a time when the rules of grammar break down, it results in confusion. Therefore, the essence of the passage is captured by the line 'Bad grammar produces bad sentences'.

The first two options i.e. A and B are very narrow in concept and hence are eliminated.

Option C though comes close to the main idea of the passage yet it makes it very generic in nature.

### Title

**Question:** Name a word our ears are most attentive to?

**Answer:** Your Name

A title is a name that is given to the passage. Though it cannot contain the entirety of the passage yet it holds the gist and the thought of the passage. Title is one of the most important questions asked in CAT / GMAT / GRE or any other exam.

The title of the passage gives the reader a clear idea of what the passage is about.

The title should reflect the core of the passage and should create an image in the minds of the readers. The title is the first

thing that a person reads in the passage and it should reflect what the author wants to convey.

The technique for title:

- First, locate the main idea.
- Pay special attention to the first and the last paragraphs.
- Check the first line of every other paragraph.
- Go to the options and do your process of elimination.

Given below are a few examples of title-based questions.

- Find an appropriate title for the passage?
- A suitable title for the passage would be-
- Give a title to the passage.



### CAT Mantra

Titles of the passage can easily be found once you have found out the main idea.

The title can be neither too broad nor too narrow. Ignore options that are too generic and also options that represent just a thread of the discussion.

### Question Based on Title

**Read the passage carefully and answer the question that follows.**

A mathematician, a philosopher and a gambler walk into a bar. As the barman pulls each of them a beer, he decides to stir up a bit of trouble. He pulls a die from his pocket and rolls it ostentatiously on the bar counter: it comes up with a 1.

The mathematician says: 'The probability that 1 would come up is 1/6, and at the next throw it will be the same. If we roll the die infinitely many times, the relative frequency of the number 1 will converge to 1/6, that is, to one occurrence every six throws'.

The philosopher strokes her chin, and remarks: 'Well, this doesn't mean we won't get

the number at the next throw. Actually, it's physically possible to have the same number on the next 1,000 throws, although that's highly improbable'.

The gambler says: 'I know you're both right, but I wouldn't bet on that number for the next throw'.

'Why not?' asks the mathematician.

'Because I trust mathematics, and so I expect that number to come up about once every six throws', the gambler answers. 'Having the same number twice in a row is a rare event. Why would that happen right now?'

The gambler's 'argument' is a mix of conceptual inadequacy, misinterpretation, irrelevant application of mathematics, and misleading use of language. She thinks that she has some new information that will increase her chances of winning—that there are now five numbers to choose from instead of six, and as such the randomness of the game is 'losing its strength'. This sort of belief reinforces a gambler's impulse to bet—it won't make her quit the game, but rather continue gambling. Some people believe that confronting problem gamblers with the 'reality' of mathematics—a kind of mathematical counselling, often called 'facing the odds'—can help them overcome it. After all, since our earliest school days, many of us have learned to trust mathematics as the provider of necessary and logical truths. But we also trust our senses, as well as the patterns we discern from our experiences and the words we use to communicate with one another. Mathematics has its own language, and the extent to which we should trust mathematics depends on how we interpret these words, especially when applied to physical reality. In fact, understanding gamblers' relationship to maths reveals something deeper about the nature of mathematics itself.

All games of chance—whether casino games such as roulette, craps, blackjack and slots, or lottery and bingo, or card games such as

poker or bridge—rely on certain basic statistical and probabilistic models. Uncertainty is built into them, which is what makes games 'fun' to play and also explains their continued existence. Casino games would never run if 'the house' wasn't confident that they'd always win in the end. The mathematics of the games, including their rules and pay-out schedules, assures the house will profit in aggregate, regardless of individual behaviour.

In mathematical terms, this guarantee is expressed through the fact that the house edge (HE) of a game is positive. The expected value of a bet (EV) is defined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} &(\text{probability of winning}) \times (\text{payoff if you win}) \\ &+ (\text{probability of losing}) \\ &\times (\text{loss if you lose}) \end{aligned}$$

The HE of a game is defined as the opposite of the expected value calculated for all possible bets ( $\text{HE} = -\text{EV}$ ). For example, in European Roulette, a wheel spins and you have to decide where you think a small ball will land. There are 37 numbers (0 to 36). If you bet \$1 on one number (called a straight-up bet), the payoff is 35 times what you bet, and the probability of winning is  $1/37$ . So the EV of that bet is:

$$(1/37) \times \$35 + (36/37) \times (-\$1)$$

That is about  $-\$0.027$  or, as a percentage, 2.7 per cent of the initial bet. EV can be read as an average; in our example, you might expect to lose on average \$2.70 at every 100 plays with that bet over the long run. This means that European Roulette has a house edge of 2.7 per cent. This is the house's share of all the income produced by that game in the form of bets over the long run.

From a player's point of view, a positive house edge should mean that she can't make a living off that game: over the long run, the house will have an advantage. That's why a pragmatic principle of safe gambling behaviour is: 'When you make a satisfactory win, take the money and get out of there'.



### What could be a suitable title for the passage?

- (A) Mathematics of gambling
- (B) Philosophy of gambling
- (C) Mathematics and gambling
- (D) Mathematics of chance

#### Solution: (A)

Option B is certainly out of the question, as philosophy has not been emphasised here.

Option C can be ruled out, as mathematics and gambling have not been discussed separately here, but in the same context.

Now, option A and option D are close contenders, but one should go with option A as the words ‘mathematics’ and ‘gambling’ are the highlights here.

Hence, option A ‘mathematics of gambling’ is the right choice here.

#### Write the title of the passages given below.

**Passage 1:** A hermit took care of a temple in a small village. He took alms and shared them with a few people who helped him clean the temple. There was a mouse in the temple that kept stealing the hermit’s food and causing trouble for him. The hermit could not get rid of the mouse no matter what he did. The mouse continued to steal food, even when it was kept in an earthen pot hung from the roof.

Distraught, the sage sought advice from a friend, who told him to find the mouse’s food reserves and destroy them. After a thorough search of the premises, the sage found the stockpile of the mouse and destroyed it. With its food gone, the mouse was unable to jump high up to the roof for food. It became weak and got caught by the hermit, who threw it far away from the temple. The mouse was hurt and never returned to the temple.

#### Title

**Passage 2:** A weaver and his wife lived in a village. He went to the forest to get the wood that he needed to repair his loom. As he began to chop the tree, a djinn appeared and asked him not to cut his abode. In return,

the genie offered to give anything that the weaver wanted. The weaver left the forest to discuss this with his wife. The greedy and dim-witted wife told the weaver to ask the genie for an extra head and two extra hands so he can think more and work more.

The stupid weaver agreed and went back to the djinn, which immediately granted the wish. The weaver happily walked back to the village, where people thought him to be a monster and beat him to death.

#### Title

#### Inference

The word inference means ‘a conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning’. To infer is to read between the lines and understand what is written beyond the literal words. To understand the deep thoughts of the author and the reason behind his writings.

Please keep the following points in mind while taking out an inference:

- An inference will **ALWAYS** be true according to the passage. So, while evaluating the options, look closely if they are correct according to the data given above.

For example, XYZ, an inexpensive product, is being considered as a fuel-replacement option by various countries. However, it is a time-taking process and needs careful consideration.

Based on the above example, if an option states that XYZ is quite difficult to produce, we can safely eliminate it as that is **NOT TRUE** according to the data given. Time-taking and difficulty are two different things.

- An inference will always be implied and implicit.

Based on the above example, if an option says XYZ does not cost much money, it will be eliminated as it’s clearly given. However, if an option says that the other fuel sources available on the market are more expensive than XYZ, that can be correct. It is implied in the example that countries are considering



XYZ, so the other options must not be as cost-effective.

Questions based on inference reasoning can be:

What inference can be made from these lines?

What would the proper implication of these lines be?

What can you infer from the statement?

What is meant by the author in these lines?

**The following excerpt has been taken from *Midnight's Children* by Salam Rushdie.**

**Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

Padma—our plump Padma—is sulking magnificently. (She can't read and, like all fish-lovers, dislikes other people knowing anything she doesn't. Padma: strong, jolly, a consolation for my last days. But definitely a bitch-in-the-manger.) She attempts to cajole me from my desk: 'Eat, na, food is spoiling'. I remain stubbornly hunched over paper. 'But what is so precious', Padma demands, her right hand slicing the air up down up in exasperation, 'to need all this writing-shitting?' I reply: now that I've let out the details of my birth, now that the perforated sheet stands between doctor and patient, there's no going back. Padma snorts. Wrist smacks against forehead. 'Okay, starve, who cares two pice?' Another louder, conclusive snort... but I take no exception to her attitude. She stirs a bubbling vat all day for a living; something hot and vinegary has steamed her up tonight. Thick of waist, somewhat hairy of forearm, she flounces, gesticulates, exits. Poor Padma. Things are always getting her goat. Perhaps even her name: understandably enough, since her mother told her, when she was only small, that she had been named after the lotus goddess, whose most common appellation amongst village folk is 'The One Who Possesses Dung'.

**1. Define the character of Padma?**

**Solution:**

2. What is the view of the author towards Padma?

**Solution:**



### CAT Mantra

Generally, inferential questions cannot have verbatim answers. It means the correct answer should be the rephrased version of what is mentioned in the passage.

### Passage 2

The optimism epidemic had been caused by one single human being, whose name, Mian Abdullah, was only used by newspapermen. To everyone else, he was the Hummingbird, a creature which would be impossible if it did not exist. 'Magician turned conjurer', the newspapermen wrote, 'Mian Abdullah rose from the famous magicians' ghetto in Delhi to become the hope of India's hundred million Muslims'. The Hummingbird was the founder, chairman, unifier and moving spirit of the Free Islam Convocation; and in 1942, marquees and rostrums were being erected on the Agra maidan, where the Convocation's second annual assembly was about to take place. My grandfather, fifty-two years old, his hair turned white by the years and other afflictions had begun whistling as he passed the maidan. Now he leaned around corners on his bicycle, taking them at a jaunty angle, threading his way between cowpats and children.

1. What does the author mean by calling Mian Abdullah the hummingbird?

**Solution:**

**Previous Year Questions Based on Inferences: CAT 2020 | Slot 2**

**The passage below is accompanied by a set of questions. Choose the best answer to each question.**



### CAT Mantra



More than 50 % of the questions asked in CAT are inferential.

Therefore, these form an indispensable part of CAT.

The claims advanced here may be condensed into two assertions: [first, that visual] culture is what images, acts of seeing, and attendant intellectual, emotional, and perceptual sensibilities do to build, maintain, or transform the worlds in which people live. [And second, that the] study of visual culture is the analysis and interpretation of images and the ways of seeing (or gazes) that configure the agents, practices, conceptualities, and institutions that put images to work.

Accordingly, the study of visual culture should be characterised by several concerns. First, scholars of visual culture need to examine any and all imagery—high and low, art and non-art. They must not restrict themselves to objects of particular beauty or aesthetic value. Indeed, any kind of imagery may be found to offer up evidence of the visual construction of reality.

Second, the study of visual culture must scrutinise visual practice as much as images themselves, asking what images do when they are put to use. If scholars engaged in this enterprise inquire what makes an image beautiful or why this image or that constitutes a masterpiece or a work of genius, they should do so with the purpose of investigating an artist's or a work's contribution to the experience of beauty, taste, value, or genius. No amount of social analysis can account fully for the existence of Michelangelo or Leonardo. They were unique creators of images that changed the way their contemporaries thought and felt and have continued to shape the history of art, artists, museums,

feeling, and aesthetic value. But a study of the critical, artistic, and popular reception of works by such artists as Michelangelo and Leonardo can shed important light on the meaning of these artists and their works for many different people. And the history of meaning-making has a great deal to do with how scholars, as well as lay audiences today, understand these artists and their achievements.

Third, scholars studying visual culture might properly focus their interpretative work on lifeworlds by examining images, practices, visual technologies, taste, and artistic style as constitutive of social relations. The task is to understand how artefacts contribute to the construction of a world. . . . Important methodological implications follow: ethnography and reception studies become productive forms of gathering information, since these move beyond the image as a closed and fixed meaning-event.

Fourth, scholars may learn a great deal when they scrutinise the constituents of vision, that is, the structures of perception as a physiological process as well as the epistemological frameworks informing a system of visual representation. Vision is a socially and a biologically constructed operation, depending on the design of the human body and how it engages the interpretive devices developed by a culture to see intelligibly. Seeing operates on the foundation of covenants with images that establish the conditions for a meaningful visual experience.

Finally, the scholar of visual culture seeks to regard images as evidence for an explanation, not as epiphenomena.

### Question 1

- All of the following statements may be considered valid inferences from the passage, except:
  - Artefacts are meaningful precisely because they help to construct the meanings of the world for us.

- (B) Studying visual culture requires institutional structures without which the structures of perception cannot be analysed.
- (C) Understanding the structures of perception is an important part of understanding how visual cultures work.
- (D) Visual culture is not just about how we see, but also about how our visual practices can impact and change the world.

**Solution: (B)**

- (A) After a careful examination of the passage, you will realise that it does not talk about ‘institutional structures’; hence B is incorrect.
- (B) Referring to the context where it says “... task is to understand how artefacts contribute to the construction of a world”, we understand that A is true.
- (C) Refer to the context where it says “scholars may learn a great deal when they scrutinise the constituents of vision, that is, the structures of perception as a physiological process as well as the epistemological frameworks informing a system of visual representation”, proves that C is also true.
- (D) The first paragraph of the passage proves D to be true as well.

**Fact-Based**

*There is nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact.*

—Arthur Conan Doyle

Fact-based questions are directly based on data given in the passages. These questions require one to locate the answer in the passage and answer it accordingly. A passage with a lot of details would ask factual questions from an aspirant.

Facts-based RCs require skimming and scanning by the reader as they have a lot of data in them. To get the answers in the best possible time, solve the questions through skimming and scanning.

Questions that ask True / False or Agree / Disagree are mostly fact-based questions.

**Understand the difference between data and opinion.**

Facts that are given in a passage need to be distinguished from opinion. Opinions are coined by the authors on the facts available. It is not the facts but the opinions that carry a lot of weight in a passage. Correct identification of the opinion from the passage would lead to a better understanding of the nuances made by the author.

Questions such as:

The tone of the author, the Author’s attitude, would the author agree or not with the following statements or any other such question can only be answered with the understanding of the opinion of the author.

Hence, it becomes essential for a reader to distinguish between the two.

Look at the following example.

The following excerpt has been taken from a leading newspaper.

**Read the following passage and differentiate data from opinion.**

Amidst the national lockdown, the Supreme Court and several other courts have been holding virtual proceedings. A question of concern to the Bar is whether virtual courts have become the ‘new normal’ and whether it means a move away from the idea of open courts towards technology-based administration of justice without the physical presence of lawyers and litigants. Chief Justice of India S.A. Bobde emphasises that virtual courts are open courts too; and that one cannot describe them as closed or in camera proceedings. The correct way of framing the difference, he says, is to call them virtual courts as distinct from ‘courts in congregation’. A three-judge Bench headed by the CJI, in an order earlier this month, laid down broad norms for courts using video-conferencing and ratified the validity of virtual judicial proceedings. Two aspects are not in dispute: the vital necessity to keep the courts open even during a national lockdown so that access to justice is not denied



to anyone; and second, the need to maintain physical distancing. The Supreme Court Bar Association has written to the CJI and other judges that open court hearings should be restored at the earliest, subject of course to the lockdown ending. Citing earlier judgments on the importance of open court hearings, the SCBA has requested that the use of video conferencing should be limited to the duration of the current crisis, and not become the ‘new normal’ or go on to replace open court hearings.

Underline the opinion of the author and then look at the given answer:

The opinion given by the author in the above passage is

“Two aspects are not in dispute: the vital necessity to keep the courts open even during a national lockdown so that access to justice is not denied to anyone; and second, the need to maintain physical distancing”.

The rest of the details that are given in the passage are just data and supporting elements to it.

Questions based on dates, figures and other such details form a part of fact-based questions.

These are a few examples of fact-based questions:

As per the information given in the passage, what is \_\_\_\_\_?

All the following are correct, except -

All the following are incorrect, except -

What is meant by this line “\_\_\_\_\_”?

#### **Previous Year Questions Based on Facts:**

**CAT 2019 | Slot 1**

**The passage below is accompanied by a set of questions. Choose the best answer to each question.**

Scientists recently discovered that Emperor Penguins—one of Antarctica’s most celebrated species—employ a particularly unusual technique for surviving the daily chill. As detailed in an article published today in the journal

Biology Letters, the birds minimise heat loss by keeping the outer surface of their plumage below the temperature of the surrounding air. At the same time, the penguins’ thick plumage insulates their body and keeps it toasty.

The researchers analysed thermographic images taken over roughly a month during June 2008. During that period, the average air temperature was 0.32 degrees Fahrenheit. At the same time, the majority of the plumage covering the penguins’ bodies was even colder: the surface of their warmest body part, their feet, was an average 1.76 degrees Fahrenheit, but the plumage on their heads, chests and backs were -1.84, -7.24, and -9.76 degrees Fahrenheit respectively. Overall, nearly the entire outer surface of the penguins’ bodies was below freezing at all times, except for their eyes and beaks. The scientists also used a computer simulation to determine how much heat was lost or gained from each part of the body—and discovered that by keeping their outer surface below air temperature, the birds might paradoxically be able to draw very slight amounts of heat from the air around them. The key to their trick is the difference between two different types of heat transfer: radiation and convection.

The penguins do lose internal body heat to the surrounding air through thermal radiation, just as our bodies do on a cold day. Because their bodies (but not surface plumage) are warmer than the surrounding air, heat gradually radiates outward over time, moving from a warmer material to a colder one. To maintain body temperature while losing heat, penguins, like all warm-blooded animals, rely on the metabolism of food. The penguins, though, have an additional strategy. Since their outer plumage is even colder than the air, the simulation showed that they might gain back a little of this heat through thermal convection—the transfer of heat via the movement of a fluid (in this case, the air). As the cold Antarctic air cycles around their bodies, slightly warmer air comes into contact with the plumage and donates minute

amounts of heat back to the penguins, then cycles away at a slightly colder temperature.

Most of this heat, the researchers note, probably doesn't make it all the way through the plumage and back to the penguins' bodies, but it could make a slight difference. At the very least, the method by which a penguin's plumage wicks heat from the bitterly cold air that surrounds it helps to cancel out some of the heat that's radiating from its interior. And given the Emperors' unusually demanding breeding cycle, every bit of warmth counts. Since [penguins trek as far as 75 miles to the coast to breed and male penguins] don't eat anything during [the incubation period of 64 days], conserving calories by giving up as little heat as possible is absolutely crucial.

1. In the last sentence of paragraph 3, 'slightly warmer air' and 'at a slightly colder temperature' refer to \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_ respectively:

- (A) The air inside penguins' bodies keeps warm because of metabolism of food AND the fall in temperature of the body air after it transfers some heat to the plumage.
- (B) The cold Antarctic air which becomes warmer because of the heat radiated out from penguins' bodies AND the fall in temperature of the surrounding air after thermal convection.
- (C) The air trapped in the plumage which is warmer than the Antarctic air AND the fall in temperature of the trapped plumage air after it radiates out some heat.
- (D) The cold Antarctic air whose temperature is higher than that of the plumage AND the fall in temperature of the Antarctic air after it has transmitted some heat to the plumage.

**Solution: (D)**

2. Which of the following can be responsible for Emperor Penguins losing body heat?

- (A) Food metabolism  
(B) Reproduction process

- (C) Plumage  
(D) Thermal convection

**Solution: (B)**

**Tone**

The tone of the passage epitomises the author's feelings or approach towards the topic. That is to say, it is the principal sentiment of the author that is displayed for the topic. We all show different emotions in different situations. One might say the same words in a severe or gracious or mocking tone depending upon the circumstances. In the same way, tones in RC differ in unlike circumstances.

Tones can be:

- Overall: This can be taken from the last 5 lines of the passage. For example, what is the overall tone of the author?
- Specific: This can be taken from the specific paragraph. For example, what is the tone of the author towards the Captain's breach of contract?

**Rack Your Brain**

**Find the tone of the song**

**Hello —Adele**

Hello, it's me

I was wondering if after all these years  
you'd like to meet

To go over everything

They say that time's supposed to heal ya  
But I ain't done much healing

Hello, can you hear me?

I'm in California dreaming about who we  
used to be

When we were younger and free

I've forgotten how it felt before the  
world fell at our feet

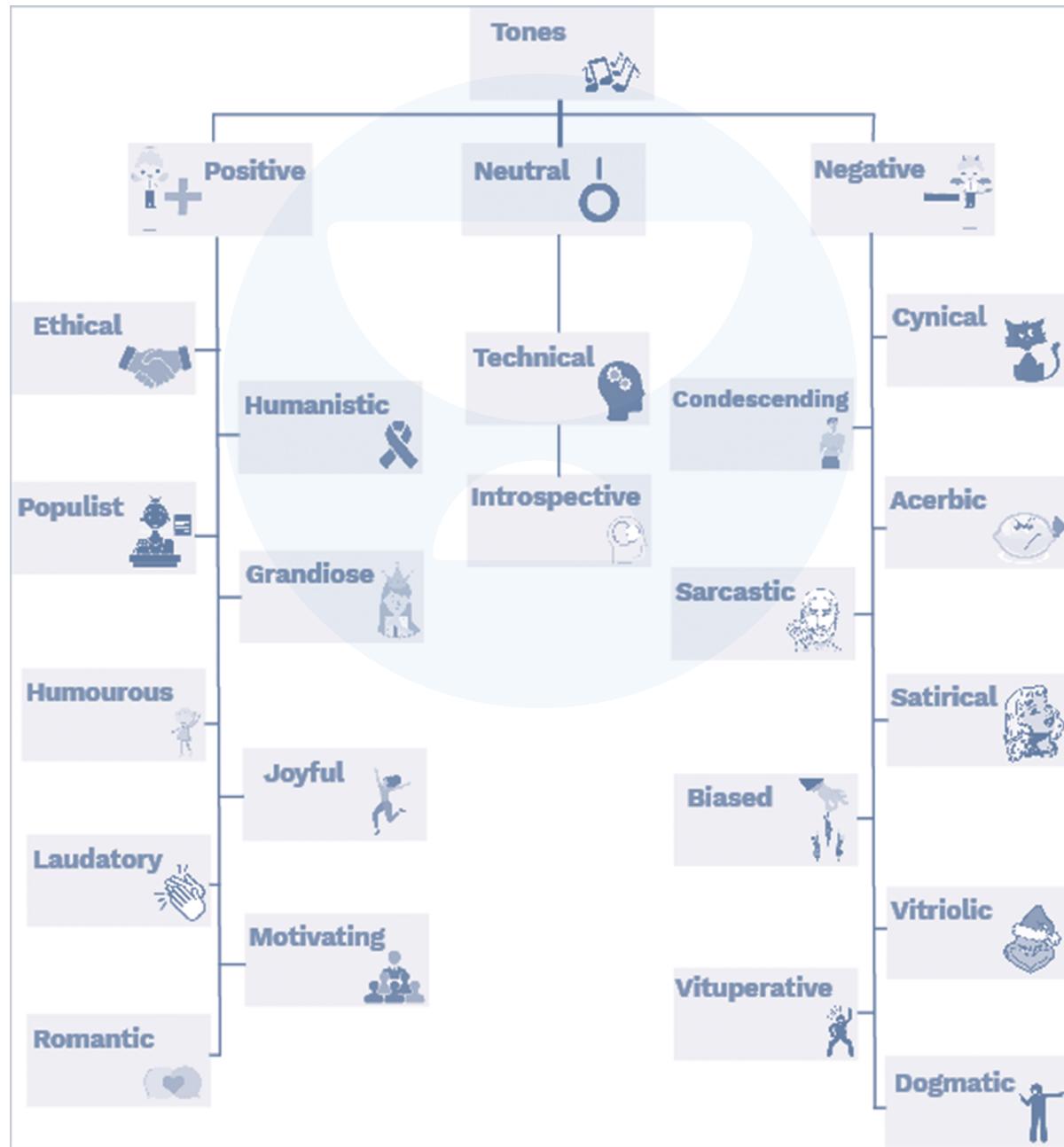
There's such a difference between us

And a million miles  
 Hello from the other side  
 I must've called a thousand times  
 To tell you I'm sorry for everything that  
 I've done  
 But when I call, you never seem to be  
 home

### Examples of questions based on tone include

- Which of these is the tone of the author?
- Which of these words would represent the attitude of the author?

### Some examples of tones according to their intensity





In this chart, tones are mentioned as per their intensity.

Example of intensity:

He was **happy**.

He was **delighted**.

He was **euphoric**.

### CAT Mantra



Tones form an intricate part of the VARC section.

Understanding of tones not only helps in RC but also in Odd One Out, Para-Summary and Para-Jumbles.

### List of some important tones

Acerbic	harsh, severe, bitter, caustic, sardonic, stinging
Aggressive	Actions and words that indicate that the subject may harm someone
Apathetic	When the author shows no emotions at all
Apologetic	When the author shows remorse for actions or words
Biased	Being favourable towards someone or something

Commiserating	Sorrowful or saddened by something
Condescending	Wrongful show of superiority or seniority
Contemptuous	Scornful behaviour
Cynical	Mocking behaviour
Derisive	Not kind or insulting
Disparaging	Making someone feel that he or she is little or trivial
Dogmatic	Sticking to one's opinions adamantly
Emotional	Marked by show of feelings and emotions
Ethical	Related to principles or morals
Euphemistic	Using words that are less harsh in place of more aggressive ones

Grandiose	Elaborated and excessive words to describe things
Humanistic	Related to the affairs of human beings in their day to day lives
Humorous	A matter of laugh or amusement
Introspective	Questioning oneself
Incendiary	Something that is instigating
Laudatory	To praise or extol



Motivating	To push the reader towards something
Obsequious	Servile or excessively menial attitude
Pedestrian	Lacking originality or banal
Populist	Related to common people
Provocative	Stirring or pushing
Romantic	Related to love and romance
Sarcastic	Use of irony to banter or mock
Satirical	Mocking someone for his weakness
Speculative	Not real or not practical in nature
Technical	Use of jargon or language that is difficult to understand
Vitriolic	Excessive anger or hatred
Vituperative	Abusive or very harsh

### Extreme tones

The following are some extreme tones. These are present among the options but can be safely eliminated, as an extreme tone cannot be the answer in the RC passages of the CAT.

Possible tone	Meaning of the word
Acerbic	Harsh/severe, bitter
Belligerent	Aggressively hostile, bellicose
Caustic	Biting, acerbic
Condescending	Patronising; showing/imploring patronising descent from dignity/superiority
Contemptuous	Expressing contempt/disdain
Cynical	displaying a belief that people are always self-seeking and never altruistic in their actions
Derisive	Unkind and displaying contempt
Disparaging	Speak slightly, depreciating, belittling
Incendiary	Causing strong feelings
Obsequious	Fawning, showing servile complaisance; flattering, deferential
Provocative	Inciting, stimulating, irritating, vexing
Vitriolic	Full of anger and hatred
Vituperative	Cruel and angry criticism



To understand how tones are asked in the examination, attempt the following passages and questions.

### Passage 1

#### Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

We've all heard the numbers: Consumer confidence is down; retail sales are down. And for many of us, the markets we serve are down, as well. There is an important relationship to note here. Confidence - an attitude - is down, so sales are down. When confidence is up, sales follow. The principle at work here is this: Our actions follow our attitudes. The relationship between actions and attitudes is so close, that the two go hand-in-hand, and our actions can be seen as outward expressions of our attitudes.

Ok, so what does that have to do with you? Here's what: If the markets you serve are down, that action (lack of buying) is a result of an attitude (lack of confidence). And you can influence that attitude, and be part of the solution, or be influenced by it, and thus contribute to the problem.

#### Trivia



Refer to our notes on Figures of Speech to get a better understanding of tones.

Attitudes are contagious. You know that if you spend a lot of time with negative people, you begin to see what's wrong with everything and everyone. Hang around a lot with depressed people, and you become depressed. On the other hand, if you are with energetic and optimistic people, it rubs off on you as well.

Here's one more piece of this puzzle. You can choose your attitudes. You can choose to be happy, you can choose to be sad, you can choose to be confident, and you can choose to be cautious. Don't believe it? Take this little test. Tomorrow, as you are

eating breakfast, tell yourself these things over and over. "It's going to be a rotten day. Everybody's afraid to buy. Most people probably won't even see me. I'll probably be laid off soon anyway". Now, having repeated that litany of dreariness to yourself, pay attention to what kind of attitude you exhibit during the course of the day. You are probably not going to be effervescent and overwhelmingly positive. Instead, you'll be depressed and discouraged, and you'll spread it to the people around you like the plague.

You could, on the other hand, dramatically change your attitude for the day if you were to get up in the morning, and repeat this kind of dialogue with yourself: "It's going to be a good day. I can't wait to see what good things are going to happen. I know there's some good things I can do for my customers. I'm going to make a difference in their businesses and their lives". The result of that kind of train of thought is confidence and positive energy. And you'll spread that, also.

Here's the point. You can choose to be part of the problem, or part of the solution. You can choose to be influenced by the negativity around you. You can reflect that cautiousness and lack of confidence. You can contribute to that downward spiral in attitude. In that case, you have chosen to be part of the problem.

On the other hand, you can choose to be part of the solution. You can choose an attitude of confidence and optimism. By so doing, you influence those around you and you do your small part to contribute to the solution. Of course you are not single-handedly going to change world attitudes. But you can positively influence those in your spheres of contact.

You are a professional. You contact more individuals in the course of the day than most people do. Your customers, prospects, colleagues; your friends and family; the people you work with and supervise; even your managers - all of them can be influenced via your attitude. Because of your position of



great potential influence, you have a greater responsibility to be proactive, and to lead others.

It's time for you to step up to the plate and to become a positive leader for those around you.

**Choose the correct set that defines the tone of the author in this passage.**

- (A) Zealous, optimistic, and encouraging
- (B) Zealous, optimistic, and alarming
- (C) Ostensible, elegant, and inflated
- (D) Exaggerated, enthusiastic, and energetic

**Solution: (A)**

All three words given in option A describe the traits displayed by the author; hence, it is the most accurate set to define his mood and tone.

The author in no way sounds alarming; hence, B cannot be correct.

Option C portrays a very negative image of such a positive author; hence, it cannot be chosen.

'Exaggerated' is the word that cancels option D. The author has not exaggerated to any extent. Hence, D should not be chosen.

**Passage 2**

**Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.**

The term 'gender' is used to define all the things one says or does to disclose himself or herself as having been a boy or man, girl or woman sexually, socially and etc. Gender role refers to all personal and social characteristics including clothing, speech pattern, behaviours, actions, occupations, activities, etc. Since women have been considered the subordinated sex, the wave of feminism has resulted in a new phenomenon known as 'gender consciousness'. Consequently, the women gradually have become determined to find ways to undermine such subordination. They have tried to prove that although they are different, they are not inferior. They want to prove their abilities and for this purpose, they have decided to defy the socially

constructed beliefs. They have made attempts to establish equality with men, both politically and socially. Most feminist critics believe that society is the main cause of imposing gender distinctions.

A person's sex is a primary state of anatomic or physiologic parameters. A person's gender is a conclusion reached in a broad sense when individual gender identity and gender role are expressed. An often-used phrase to point out the difference, it has some merit when dealing with these definitions. Sexual identity is in the perineum; gender identity is in the cerebrum. Increasingly, the more subjective sense of gender identity takes precedence in evaluating patients' needs. In instances when a discrepancy exists between sex and gender, compassion and empathy are essential to foster better understanding and an appropriate relationship between the physician and the patient. Conceptually, professionals dealing with development may fairly state that sex is biologically determined, whereas gender is culturally determined.

Proponents of social learning theory criticise biological approaches for neglecting to consider the way in which behaviour is affected by social influences. Markbank and Letherby, in their book entitled *Introduction to Gender: Social Science Perspective*, Second Edition, assert:

"As biological approaches assume a biological dichotomy, they are unable, according to their critics, to explain diversity among women and among men. In addition, if we look at different cultures, be that across geographical or across history, it is clear that what it means to be a woman or a man differs. In fact, gender roles are exceedingly changeable across societies with certain tasks being assigned to the female in one society and to the male in another."

Social learning theory purports that women and men are products not of biology but of culture and society that boys and girls learn gender-appropriate behaviour from birth as

we are all surrounded by gender socialisation messages from our families”.

De Beauvoir (1908–1986) in *The Second Sex* (1949), claims: “one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman, later. No biological, psychological, or economic fate determines the figure that the human female presents in society; it is civilisation as a whole that produces this creature, intermediate between male and eunuch, which is described as a feminine” (De Beauvoir 1949). In *Gender Trouble* (1990), Judith Butler makes a comment in this respect and states: If there is something right in Beauvoir’s claim that ‘one is not born, but rather becomes a woman later, it follows that woman itself is a term in process, a becoming, a constructing that cannot rightfully be said to originate or to end. As an ongoing discursive practice, it is open to intervention and resignation. Even when gender seems to congeal into the most reified forms, the ‘congealing’ is itself an inconsistent and insidious practice, sustained and regulated by various social means.

According to Butler, feminism doesn’t accept biology as a destiny but opposing this idea, it develops an account of patriarchal culture which maintains that masculine and feminine genders would inevitably be built upon bodies (male and female) by cultural bias; it insists that being a man or a woman on the basis of being male or female is inevitably a culturally made idea and as a consequence, there will be no choice, difference or resistance. Being biologically a male, and not feeling like a man, is considered a sign indicating that ‘the experience of a gendered cultural identity is considered an achievement’. She rejects the ‘sex/ gender distinction to argue that there is no sex that is not always already a gender’.

**Q.** Which of the following correctly describes the tone of the author?

- (A) There is a hint of contempt in the author’s tone.
- (B) The author feels dejected because of the pitiable condition of women.

- (C) The author is baffled because of the lookalike in the terms ‘gender’ and ‘sex’.
- (D) The author shows no bias towards the anatomical or cultural interpretation of sexuality.

**Solution: (D)**

The author uses a neutral tone in dealing with the concepts. S/he is neither contemptuous nor dejected. These are extreme words. Similarly, the author is not baffled or puzzled about the definitions. The author is competent enough to clarify the terms. Hence, option D is the correct answer.

**Try to identify the tone of the poem given below.**

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:  
‘Pipe a song about a Lamb!’  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
‘Piper, pipe that song again’  
So I piped: he wept to hear

**Tone of the poem:**

**Try to identify the tone of the poem given below.**

And still of a winter’s night, they say, when  
the wind is in the trees,  
When the moon is a ghostly galleon tossed  
upon cloudy seas,  
When the road is a ribbon of moonlight over  
the purple moor,  
A highwayman comes riding-- Riding-- riding--  
A highwayman comes riding, up to the old  
inn-door.

**Tone of the poem:**

**CAT Mantra**



Questions on poems are asked in XAT.



## Exercise

Make three sentences with the tones mentioned below:

1. Grandiose

Sentence:

2. Aggressive

Sentence:

3. Euphemistic

**Sentence:**

## Paragraph and Structure-Based

*I thrive in structure. I drown in chaos.*

—Anna Kendrick

The structure of a passage means its organisation or flow. One has to keep an eye on the way the passage progresses and also if there is a change in tone in the paragraphs.

Some examples include:

- What is the organisation of the passage?
- If the author were to extend the passage, what would the next paragraph be?
- What is the purpose of the second/third/fourth paragraph?



**CAT Mantra**

## PEEL

**P** = Point

**E** = Evidence

**E** = Example

**L** = Link

Structure of writing used by writers. Can be used to write skills in SOP.

Structure of writing used by writers. Can be used to write skills in SOP.

**Given below is a passage followed by a structure-based question.**

The majority of over-50s believe the UK government should be doing more to address the climate crisis, even if it leads to higher prices, a study has found.

A survey of more than 500 people aged 50 and over found that almost two-thirds want ministers to move faster on climate initiatives, regardless of whether it meant products and services would be more expensive over time, or more difficult to access. More than two in three people polled said they had bought fewer clothes to cut down on waste in recent years, while half reduced their vehicle use and consumed less meat and dairy. One in five said they only bought seasonal food, while half said they had reduced home energy use. However, the findings come as other research showed older homeowners were unlikely to receive significant financial benefits from greening their properties.

The government is aiming to upgrade as many homes as possible to an average energy efficiency rating of C by 2035. But the average cost of improvements—which could mean insulating water tanks and lofts, or installing solar panels and heat pumps—can be much higher for older people because they tend to own older and less energy-efficient homes.

A study by the Nationwide Building Society found the cost of improvements was about £8,100 on average, but rose to £25,800 for homes with an F or G energy efficiency rating.

The average annual savings of greening a home are estimated at about £1,780 a year, meaning owners of older properties would only reap financial benefits after 14 years.

Meanwhile, better energy performance certificates (EPCs) are having a limited impact on house prices. While the worst-performing homes were valued at 3.5% less than the average home, the greenest only attracted a premium of about 1.7%, Nationwide said.

The financial implications could ‘disincentivise’ older property owners from taking action,



Harvey said. “However, the value that people attach to energy efficiency is likely to change over time, especially if the government takes measures to incentivise greater energy efficiency in future to help ensure the UK meets its climate change obligations”.

1. Which of the following best describes the organisation of the passage?
  - (A) To tackle the situation of the climate crisis, all the properties are receiving significant financial benefits from greening their properties.
  - (B) To tackle the situation of the climate crisis, all the properties will be receiving significant financial benefits from greening their properties in near future.
  - (C) To tackle the situation of the climate crisis, only the new properties are receiving significant financial benefits from greening their properties.
  - (D) To tackle the situation of the climate crisis, no property is receiving significant financial benefits but the new properties will be receiving significant financial benefits from greening their properties.

#### CAT Mantra



#### PREP

**P** = Point (Opening)

**R** = Reason

**E** = Example

**P** = Point (Conclusion)

Use PREP to understand the exact structure of the paragraphs.

#### Vocabulary

A vocabulary-based question may directly ask the meaning or the opposite of a particular word stated in the passage. Alternatively, it may ask the inference related to a word or phrase.

A big repository of words always helps in weaving our way through passages. It makes comprehension easy. Hence, this is the first thing that a CAT aspirant should start building.

#### Given below are questions based on contextual vocab.

1. Read the passage and choose the option that correctly explains the meaning of the word given in bold.

“With the weather last night we lost everything,’ the Huapai resident posted on Facebook. “We have pushed ourselves to the limit of swimming horses in and bringing them up into the second level of our house. Thankfully we were able to get the kids taken out by jetski. If anyone has some hay or horse feed they can kayak or boat down to us it would be so so appreciated”. “We’ve been dealing with drought conditions and suddenly we’ve got this,’ Auckland mayor Phil Goff told Radio NZ. “The rain through the night was hitting around 90mm an hour which is a hell of a lot of rain.

“That’s now come back but it’s still around 40mm an hour ... then the weather is expected to *dissipate* so we imagine later this morning things will be getting better”. New Zealand’s weather forecasting agency MetService issued a yellow “heavy rain watch” on Monday, upgrading it to orange warning on Tuesday morning after the bulk of the rain had fallen.

- (A) To vanish for some time but continue for a longer time
- (B) To stop for a moment and then continue heavily
- (C) To break to waste
- (D) To become less or completely disappear

2. Read the passage and choose the option that correctly explains the meaning of the word given in bold.

A new Covid variant detected in South Africa has made headlines around the world.



On Monday the National Institute for Communicable Diseases in South Africa issued an alert about the ‘C.1.2 lineage’, saying it had been detected in all provinces in the country, but at a relatively low rate. C.1.2 was first detected in May, the alert said, but Delta is still the dominant variant spreading in South Africa and the world. A virologist and lecturer in immunology and infectious diseases with the University of Sydney’s Central Clinical School, Dr Megan Steain, said it’s because of the particular mutations that C.1.2 contains.

‘It contains quite a few key mutations that we see in other variants that have gone on to become variants of interest or concern,’ Steain said. ‘Any time we see those particular mutations come up, we’d like to keep an eye on the variant to see what it’s going to do. These mutations may affect things like whether it **evades** the immune response, or transmits faster’. evades

- (A) To avoid meeting with someone
- (B) To avoid problems till they go away
- (C) To affect the system as to cause trouble
- (D) To run away to avoid something



#### CAT Mantra

A reader with the knowledge of more than 3000 high-frequency words has a greater chance of scoring a higher percentile.

#### Previous Year Questions Based on Vocabulary: CAT 2020 | Slot 2

**The passage below is accompanied by a set of questions. Choose the best answer to each question.**

The claims advanced here may be condensed into two assertions: [first, that visual] culture is what images, acts of

seeing, and attendant intellectual, emotional, and perceptual sensibilities do to build, maintain, or transform the worlds in which people live. [And second, that the] study of visual culture is the analysis and interpretation of images and the ways of seeing (or gazes) that configure the agents, practices, conceptualities, and institutions that put images to work.

Accordingly, the study of visual culture should be characterised by several concerns. First, scholars of visual culture need to examine any and all imagery—high and low, art and non-art. They must not restrict themselves to objects of particular beauty or aesthetic value. Indeed, any kind of imagery may be found to offer up evidence of the visual construction of reality.

Second, the study of visual culture must scrutinise visual practice as much as images themselves, asking what images do when they are put to use. If scholars engaged in this enterprise inquire what makes an image beautiful or why this image or that constitutes a masterpiece or a work of genius, they should do so with the purpose of investigating an artist’s or a work’s contribution to the experience of beauty, taste, value, or genius. No amount of social analysis can account fully for the existence of Michelangelo or Leonardo. They were unique creators of images that changed the way their contemporaries thought and felt and have continued to shape the history of art, artists, museums, feeling, and aesthetic value. But study of the critical, artistic, and popular reception of works by such artists as Michelangelo and Leonardo can shed important light on the meaning of these artists and their works for many different people. And the history of meaning-making has a great deal to do with how scholars as well as lay audiences today understand these artists and their achievements.

Third, scholars studying visual culture might properly focus their interpretative work on

lifeworlds by examining images, practices, visual technologies, taste, and artistic style as constitutive of social relations. The task is to understand how artefacts contribute to the construction of a world. Important methodological implications follow: ethnography and reception studies become productive forms of gathering information, since these move beyond the image as a closed and fixed meaning-event.

Fourth, scholars may learn a great deal when they scrutinise the constituents of vision, that is, the structures of perception as a physiological process as well as the epistemological frameworks informing a system of visual representation. Vision is a socially and a biologically constructed operation, depending on the design of the human body and how it engages the interpretive devices developed by a culture to see intelligibly. Seeing operates on the foundation of covenants with images that establish the conditions for a meaningful visual experience.

Finally, the scholar of visual culture seeks to regard images as evidence for an explanation, not as epiphenomena.

- Which one of the following best describes the word ‘epiphenomena’ in the last sentence of the passage?
  - Phenomena amenable to analysis.
  - Phenomena supplemental to the evidence.
  - Overarching collections of images.
  - Visual phenomena of epic proportions.

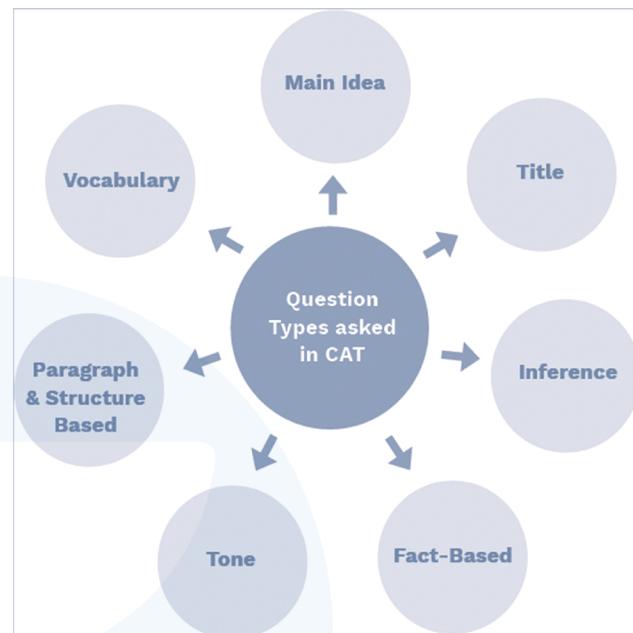
**Solution: (B)**

Carefully read the context in which the word has been used

‘The scholar of visual culture seeks to regard images as evidence for an explanation, not as epiphenomena’.

The best way to solve such a question is by substituting the word from the given words in the options.

Epiphenomena meaning: phenomena supplemental to the evidence



**CAT Mantra**



**Activate the Schema**

Prior information of a topic in our minds gets activated at the time of reading something related to the same topic.

This makes our understanding of the topic relatively easy. The information takes less time to be processed by our brains.



## Summary

An essential step in developing a strategy to solve reading comprehension is to be able to write a summary of the passage. A summary is a shortened form of the original version of the passage. It takes into account all the important details and sticks to the essence of the passage.

Think of a man standing in front of a small mirror. The small mirror will not reflect the entire image but will reflect only certain parts of the man. The man sees the reflected part of the image that he wishes to see.

This is how a summary works.

A good summary should be crisp; it should be to the point; it should keep the main idea, flow, and tone in mind; and it should be neither too broad nor too narrow.

While eliminating your options, you should watch out for options that are too short or verbatim. A good summary has to include the nitty-gritty in its length, and it should be a rephrased version.

Note down the following steps for writing an effective summary.

1. Read the paragraph once, paying extra attention to transition words, and change of tone.
2. Map the paragraph either mentally or on a scribbling sheet.
3. Try to identify the much-talked-about thing/the main idea.
4. Keep out examples.
5. Connect the dots and come up with a crisp summary that should encapsulate the main points.

## Question

1. Which of the following is the most accurate summary of the below excerpt?

There is some cause for hope. Vicious attacks by the president and his cronies have failed to curb a vibrant media environment,

cow the courts or silence critics in civil society. His disastrous handling of Covid-19 appears to be prompting second thoughts among the economic elite that previously embraced him. Some parts of the military apparently share that unease. The possibility of Lula's return is enough to concentrate right-wing minds on finding an alternative, less extremist candidate than Mr Bolsonaro. It might be galling to see those who assisted his rise position themselves as the guardians of democracy, rather than of their own interests. But his departure would nonetheless be welcome, for Brazil's sake and the rest of the planet's.

- (A) While the economic elite and some quarters of the military have lost their faith in Mr Bolsonaro, institutions like judiciary, media and civil have resisted giving in to his dictatorial regime. While it is in the best interests of all that he leaves, what is interesting to see is that the political right might look for a more acceptable candidate and the turn-coat behaviour of those who supported his ascent to the office of the President.
- (B) The people have decided to throw away the Brazilian government for a more conservative candidate, Lula, who would curb the freedom of the vocal media, the courts and civil society.
- (C) The army and the giant business owners are together in supporting a political revolution that was initially imagined in the citadels of freedom and democracy, the judiciary, the press and civil society.
- (D) The right-wing will desperately look for Mr Bolsonaro replacement who is considered to be too dictatorial for a democratic country such as Brazil. It might be galling to see those who assisted his rise position themselves as the guardians of democracy, rather than of their own interests. But his departure would nonetheless be welcome, for Brazil's sake and the rest of the planet's.

### Solution: (A)

- The first option captures all the points mentioned in the excerpt. Hence, it is the correct answer.
- The second option is factually incorrect if one takes into account the following lines of the excerpt “The possibility of Lula’s return is enough to concentrate rightwing minds on finding an alternative, less extremist candidate than Mr Bolsonaro”.
- The third option is incorrect because it talks about a political revolution, an idea that is not mentioned in the excerpt.
- The fourth option captures only half of the ideas mentioned in the passage. Also, a summary can never be a verbatim copy of the original excerpt. Hence, the fourth option is incorrect.)

To improve the power of eclectic reading and strengthen the summary writing skill, a few passages have been given below.

### History and Politics (Social Science)

#### Read the passage and write a suitable summary.

The assassination of President Moïse on July 7, 2021, marked the culmination of a series of challenges to his authority as president and the capacity of his administration to lead the country. His death surfaced a power struggle between political rivals, Claude Joseph and Ariel Henry, both of whom claimed the office of prime minister. This dispute was resolved on July 19 when Joseph resigned and Henry was confirmed as prime minister. But the crisis of responding to a major earthquake poses a major test to Henry’s leadership, coming just a few weeks after he stepped into the role.

The demands on the government for strong, decisive action in response to the earthquake are immediate. The damaged cities in southwestern Haiti have limited capacity for medical services, search and rescue efforts and infrastructure repair following years of underfunding and neglect. Aid and

assistance will need to come from outside the small cities hit hardest by the quake—either from the capital of Port-au-Prince, from other nations in the Caribbean region or the larger international community.

Can you write a summary of the article mentioned above?

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### Business, Economics, and Banking

#### Read the passage and write a suitable summary.

Two big takeover battles in the UK are a sign of the times: supermarket chain Wm Morrisons and respiratory medicines group Vectura are both the subject of bids in the billions of pounds by private equity firms. In the case of Vectura, Carlyle Group is battling it out with Marlboro cigarettes giant Altria, while different private equity suitors are competing to land Morrisons.

It comes as private-equity buyouts of London-listed companies are their highest in 20 years, contributing to takeover deals worth £156 billion in 2021 to date. Big deals include aerospace firm Meggitt (bought by Parker-Hannifin for £6.3 billion), Signature Aviation (bought by a consortium led by Blackstone for £3.5 billion), and another supermarket chain: Asda (TDR Capital and the English billionaire Issa brothers for £7 billion).

Private equity firms have also bought motor-ing support group the AA in recent months, marking its second stint in private-equity ownership; and a 10% stake in Liverpool football club (whose majority owner, Fenway Sports Group, is essentially a specialist pri-  
vate equity firm anyway). With the exception



of Asda's private-equity owner, which is based in London, these buyers are all American.

Private equity firms are investment vehicles that are not listed on the stock market. Their objectives are no different to listed investment companies, namely increasing profitability by making businesses more efficient. But private equity has long had a reputation for cost-cutting, job losses, hiking product prices and loading acquisitions with heavy debts, so a big influx of takeovers is always going to raise eyebrows. So why the surge, and what are the implications?

### **Understanding the model**

Private-equity deals are a bit like a corporate version of buy-to-lets. Where a landlord would buy a property and get the tenants to pay the mortgage in the hope that the property goes up in value and can be sold at a profit, private equity does this with companies.

They take control of an 'undervalued' publicly listed firm using their own money and substantial borrowings from financial institutions. The aim is for the acquisition to pay back the takeover price and all the interest payments on the loans. The remaining profits then compensate the private-equity owners for their risk, as well as being reinvested in the business. Most private-equity firms expect to sell acquisitions within three to five years, whether by public listing or a resale.

The current popularity of these buyouts has been ascribed to the effects of Brexit fears and COVID-19 on UK share prices ('bargain valuations', according to *The Times*). Since the 12-month lows at the end of October 2020, the FTSE 100's gain of 29% lags behind that of the Dow Jones (33%) and the DAX (38%).

Yet the appreciation of sterling against the US dollar and euro has negated this difference to some extent, particularly for

US-based investors. Rather than UK listed companies being undervalued overall, it is more that some businesses look cheap—particularly given the UK economic recovery, which is expected to be the fastest of the major economies.

Private-equity firms and institutional investors, which accumulated substantial cash during the worst of the pandemic because they saw deal-making as riskier than usual, aim to seize on these opportunities by taking advantage of historically low borrowing rates.

Most attractive are businesses with relatively stable income streams. Morrisons fits this profile well. Its pre-tax profits fell 50% in 2020, softening the share price. But grocery revenues are resilient and Morrisons has a £6 billion property portfolio, including most of its supermarkets.

Can you write a summary of the article mentioned above?

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### **Philosophy and Psychology**

#### **Read the passage and write a suitable summary.**

Someone's probably told you before that something you thought, felt or feared was 'all in your mind'. I'm here to tell you something else: there's no such thing as the mind and nothing is mental. I call this the 'no mind thesis'. The no-mind thesis is entirely compatible with the idea that people are conscious, and that they think, feel, believe, desire and so on. What it's not compatible with is the notion that being conscious, thinking, feeling, believing, desiring and so on are mental, part of the mind, or done by the mind.

The no-mind thesis doesn't mean that people are 'merely bodies'. Instead, it means that, when faced with a whole person, we shouldn't think that they can be divided into a 'mind' and a 'body', or that their properties can be neatly carved up between the 'mental' and the 'non-mental'. It's notable that Homeric Greek lacks terms that can be consistently translated as 'mind' and 'body'. In Homer, we find a view of people as a coherent collection of communicating parts—the spirit inside my breast drives me'; 'my legs and arms are willing'. A similar view of human beings, as a big bundle of overlapping, intelligent systems in near-constant communication, is increasingly defended in cognitive science and biology.

The terms mind and mental are used in so many ways and have such a chequered history that they carry more baggage than meaning. Ideas of the mind and the mental are simultaneously ambiguous and misleading, especially in various important areas of science and medicine. When people talk of 'the mind' and 'the mental', the no-mind thesis doesn't deny that they're talking about something—on the contrary, they're often talking about too many things at once. Sometimes, when speaking of 'the mind', people really mean agency; other times, cognition; still others, consciousness; some uses of 'mental' really mean psychiatric; others psychological; others still immaterial; and yet others, something else.

This conceptual blurriness is fatal to the usefulness of the idea of 'the mind'. To be fair, many concepts build bridges: they exhibit a specific, generally harmless kind of ambiguity called polysemy, with slightly different meanings in different contexts. The flexibility and elasticity of polysemy binds disparate areas of research and practice together, priming people to recognise their similarities and interrelatedness. For example, if a computer scientist talks about 'computation', they normally mean something

slightly different than an engineer, a cognitive scientist or someone chatting with a friend means. The overarching concept of computation links all these conversations together, helping us to spot the commonalities between them.

The problem is that making links like this isn't always a good idea. Sometimes it spurs creative interactions between different areas of expertise, and offers helpful analogies that would otherwise be hard to spot. But other instances of polysemy lead to harmful conflations and damaging analogies. They make people talk past each other, or become invested in defending or attacking certain concepts rather than identifying their shared goals. This can cement misunderstandings and stigma.

You've got to give it to mind and mental: they're among the most polysemous concepts going around. Lawyers talk of 'mental' capacity, psychiatrists talk of 'mental illness', cognitive scientists claim to study 'the mind', as do psychologists, and as do some philosophers; many people talk of a 'mind-body problem', and many people wonder whether it's OK to eat animals depending on whether they 'have a mind'. These are only a few of many more examples. In each case, mind and mental mean something different: sometimes subtly different, sometimes not-so-subtly.

In such high-stakes domains, it's vital to be clear. Many people are all too ready to believe that the problems of the 'mentally ill' are 'all in their mind'. I've never heard anyone doubt that a heart problem can lead to problems outside the heart, but I've regularly had to explain to friends and family that 'mental' illnesses can have physiological effects outside 'the mind'. Why do people so often find one more mysterious and apparently surprising than the other? It's because many of the bridges built by mind and mental are bridges that it's time to burn, once and for all.



Can you write a summary of the article mentioned above?

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## Literature and Linguistics

### Read the passage and write a suitable summary.

It was a bright cold day in April, and the clocks were striking thirteen. Winston Smith, his chin nuzzled into his breast in an effort to escape the vile wind, slipped quickly through the glass doors of Victory Mansions, though not quickly enough to prevent a swirl of gritty dust from entering along with him.

The hallway smelt of boiled cabbage and old rag mats. At one end of it a coloured poster, too large for indoor display, had been tacked to the wall. It depicted simply an enormous face, more than a metre wide: the face of a man of about forty-five, with a heavy black moustache and ruggedly handsome features. Winston made for the stairs. It was no use trying the lift. Even at the best of times, it was seldom working, and at present, the electric current was cut off during daylight hours. It was part of the economic drive-in preparation for Hate Week. The flat was seven flights up, and Winston, who was thirty-nine and had a varicose ulcer above his right ankle, went slowly, resting several times on the way. On each landing, opposite the lift shaft, the poster with the enormous face gazed from the wall. It was one of those pictures which are so contrived that the eyes follow you when you move. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption beneath it ran.

Inside the flat, a fruity voice was reading out a list of figures which had something to do with the production of pig iron. The voice came from an oblong metal plaque like a dulled mirror which formed part of

the surface of the right-hand wall. Winston turned a switch and the voice sank somewhat, though the words were still distinguishable. The instrument (the telescreen, it was called) could be dimmed, but there was no way of shutting it off completely. He moved over to the window: a smallish, frail figure, the meagreness of his body merely emphasised by the blue overalls which were the uniform of the party. His hair was very fair, his face naturally sanguine, his skin roughened by coarse soap and blunt razor blades and the cold of the winter that had just ended.

Outside, even through the shut window pane, the world looked cold. Down in the street little eddies of wind were whirling dust and torn paper into spirals, and though the sun was shining and the sky a harsh blue, there seemed to be no colour in anything, except the posters that were plastered everywhere. The black moustachioed face gazed down from every commanding corner. There was one on the house front immediately opposite. BIG BROTHER IS WATCHING YOU, the caption said, while the dark eyes looked deep into Winston's own. Down at street level another poster, torn at one corner, flapped fitfully in the wind, alternately covering and uncovering the single word INGSOC. In the far distance, a helicopter skimmed down between the roofs, hovered for an instant like a blue-bottle, and darted away again with a curving flight. It was the police patrol, swooping into people's windows. The patrols did not matter, however. Only the Thought Police mattered.

Behind Winston's back, the voice from the telescreen was still babbling away about pig-iron and the over fulfilment of the Ninth Three-Year Plan. The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it, moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision that the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard. There was

of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate, they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to. You had to live – did live, from habit that became instinct – in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinised.

- Can you write a summary of the article mentioned above?
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## Science and Technology

### Read the passage and write a suitable summary.

One afternoon in February 2016, I watched in rapt attention as a team of scientists unveiled the first definitive evidence for the existence of gravitational waves—ripples in space and time, produced by a pair of massive black holes crashing together 1.3 billion light-years away from Earth. These ripples had been predicted 100 years earlier by Albert Einstein, the inventor of the theory of general relativity, but remained impossible to detect throughout the 20th century. Their discovery was a feat of both technical prowess and human ingenuity, pitting the far-sighted physicists who first came up with the idea for a detector against the initial scepticism of the wider scientific community.

Just a few years before, in 2012, I'd witnessed an equally profound and long-awaited event—the finding of the Higgs boson. Since the mid-1960s, physicists had posited that a fundamental particle ought to exist

that would complete the Standard Model of particle physics, the roadmap to the subatomic world. The Higgs would explain why leptons, another fundamental particle, have mass. A machine costing billions of dollars, the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), had been painstakingly assembled near Geneva in Switzerland to look for it. In that case, too, compelling evidence was found, producing an excitement that reverberated around the world.

These discoveries share a common theme. They suggest that fundamental physics is on a roll and that the foundational theories cemented by the end of the 1970s are perfectly consistent with the data we're now seeing. The measurements aren't throwing up anything new or unexpected; all the pieces fit together and more or less confirm our pre-existing hunches and hypotheses.

But I'm not being entirely honest when I say everything is working out so well. While physicists have been busily verifying ideas devised in the past century, we've made almost no progress in figuring out where to go in this one. In fact, we're at a complete loss at how to explain some of the most fundamental but baffling observations of how our universe behaves. There is a tremendous, even cosmic, chasm between the physics we know and love, and some of the phenomena that we observe, but simply can't make head nor tail of. We have no idea how to bridge this chasm—yet we are proceeding, at pace, to construct ever more expensive experiments and observatories in the hope that we will.

Can you write a summary of the article mentioned above?

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## Trivia



Steps to follow to ace reading comprehensions in CAT:

- Read the questions first to get an idea of the difficulty level. However, do not read the options in the beginning.
- Do not read the entire reading comprehension as there is not enough time. Adopt a mix of scan, skim and skip to save time.
- Identify keywords while reading questions. This strategy makes it easier to locate their answers while reading the passage.
- Select your battles wisely. Passages should be selected with due care as familiar topics are easier to solve.
- Use process of elimination to arrive at your answer. Attempt questions about which you are absolutely sure, as negative marking adversely affects the score.
- Time management is the key to ace CAT. Make a strategy while practising mocks and follow the same in CAT.

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31	Midnight's Children by Salman Rushdie			1981
42	Beating plastic pollution: On Plastic Waste Management	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/ecmx4yk">https://tinyurl.com/ecmx4yk</a>	The Hindu	August 17, 2021
44	Eye in the sky: The Hindu Editorial on ISRO's hits and	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/777vyu7d">https://tinyurl.com/777vyu7d</a>	The Hindu	August 13, 2021
46	AI revolution and strategic competition with China.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/cpsptpar">https://tinyurl.com/cpsptpar</a>	Gulf Times	September 02, 2021
49	India is indeed walking the green talk	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/4zbfnt5u">https://tinyurl.com/4zbfnt5u</a>	The Hindu	August 31, 2021
60 Ex. 1	For the record: Novak Djokovic and the 21st Grand Slam	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/5e3ut8zz">https://tinyurl.com/5e3ut8zz</a>	The Hindu	September 01, 2021
60 Ex. 2	Tigray's woes: On the conflict in Ethiopia's north	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/fj7cr7nk">https://tinyurl.com/fj7cr7nk</a>	The Hindu	August 05, 2021
61	Tigray's woes: On the conflict in Ethiopia's north	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/fj7cr7nk">https://tinyurl.com/fj7cr7nk</a>	The Hindu	August 05, 2021



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62	All Central employees must attend office on all working days	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/yucb8m8b">https://tinyurl.com/yucb8m8b</a>	The Hindu	February 14, 2021
64	Solo woman traveller on India tour -	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/s4ndzf7p">https://tinyurl.com/s4ndzf7p</a>	The Hindu	February 15, 2021
65	Insights into Editorial: Troubled mountains: On Uttarakhand glacier disaster	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/338kyndk">https://tinyurl.com/338kyndk</a>	Insights IAS	February 10, 2021
69	HISTORY OF THE SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE COPYRIGHTS.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/ma3u5rxb">https://tinyurl.com/ma3u5rxb</a>	Arthur Conan Doyle	
72	3,000-year-old 'lost golden city' of ancient Egypt	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/fd9m4vz3">https://tinyurl.com/fd9m4vz3</a>	The Guardian	April 09, 2021
76	BR Ambedkar isn't just an icon of democratic politics. He's also a folk icon	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/ym4vez9p">https://tinyurl.com/ym4vez9p</a>	The Indian Express	April 15, 2021
80	Heiko Maas writes: Why the Indo-Pacific has assumed	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/wcdx7a98">https://tinyurl.com/wcdx7a98</a>	The Indian Express	April 12, 2021
84	Fisheries News   FISHBIO: Fisheries research, monitoring	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/3r386u2e">https://tinyurl.com/3r386u2e</a>	Fishbio	April 6, 2021
85	What India's farm crisis really needs   Technology For You.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/6xa4dhat">https://tinyurl.com/6xa4dhat</a>	Technology For You	March 16, 2021
86	From housing to vaccine passports, politicians act as if	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/34vcrw4d">https://tinyurl.com/34vcrw4d</a>	The Guardian	April 06, 2021
87	Halloween: Origins, Meaning & Traditions - HISTORY.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/87t4cdfc">https://tinyurl.com/87t4cdfc</a>	History	
92	A mathematician, a philosopher and a gambler walk into a	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/2abc9924">https://tinyurl.com/2abc9924</a>	Aeon	April 20, 2021
93	The Hermit And The Mouse	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/h682xnxc">https://tinyurl.com/h682xnxc</a>	The Awakening Digest	



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93	25 Best Tales Of Panchatantra For Kids	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/r73pecxc">https://tinyurl.com/r73pecxc</a>	Mom Junction	August 8, 2019
98	Virtual, yet open: on nationwide lockdown	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/7hknh2cc">https://tinyurl.com/7hknh2cc</a>	The Hindu	April 27, 2020
106	Kahle, Dave. "Are You Part of the Problem or Part of the Solution?"	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/4snnh5at">https://tinyurl.com/4snnh5at</a>	Scopulus	August 2016
108	A Modernist Perspective: the Concept of Gender Identity in Woolf's Orlando, from the Viewpoint of S.D. Beauvoir	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/3zu773pv">https://tinyurl.com/3zu773pv</a>	Tandf Online	17 October, 2017
109	The pied piper of Hamelin - Book by Robert Browning	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/459z3wws">https://tinyurl.com/459z3wws</a>	Public Domain	
109	The Highwayman by Alfred Noyes	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/2knk248n">https://tinyurl.com/2knk248n</a>	Public Domain	August 2006
111	Over-50s want climate crisis addressed 'even if it leads	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/hsvjbw55">https://tinyurl.com/hsvjbw55</a>	The Guardian	August 2021
112	New Zealand flash floods force evacuations in Auckland	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/4ev8ua95">https://tinyurl.com/4ev8ua95</a>	The Guardian	August 31, 2021
113	What is C.1.2, the new Covid variant in South Africa, and	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/5dh7p3ec">https://tinyurl.com/5dh7p3ec</a>	The Guardian	August 31, 2021
117	The Guardian view on Jair Bolsonaro: a danger to Brazil	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/25arn7ey">https://tinyurl.com/25arn7ey</a>	The Guardian	August 31, 2021
118	Will recent political instability affect Haiti's	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/2rndra5r">https://tinyurl.com/2rndra5r</a>	The Conversation	
119	Record numbers of UK firms are being swallowed by private	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/2ey63jub">https://tinyurl.com/2ey63jub</a>	The Conversation	August 09, 2021
120	Are Private Equity Buyouts Concerning?.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/y9f36xnd">https://tinyurl.com/y9f36xnd</a>	Harvard Business Review	September 2007



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122	The Mind Does Not Exist - 3 Quarks Daily.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/mfswmkdf">https://tinyurl.com/mfswmkdf</a>	3 Quarks Daily	September 11, 2021
124	George Orwell—Nineteen Eighty-Four (Book 1, Chapter 1 ....)	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	June 8, 1949
125	We are at a crossroads in the search for a new physics .... physics	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/k3hd66dv">https://tinyurl.com/k3hd66dv</a>	Aeon	