

MCAT CARS 3 Homework

Passage 1 (Questions 1-5)

This humanities passage is spotted with vocabulary that you have probably not seen since the SAT. You also likely have never taken a philosophy class, but that is OK! A lot of information is repeated, like in many other passages that contain complex language, and many unfamiliar terms are discernable in context. Make sure to focus on the big picture, instead of being uncomfortable with not understanding minute details. These types of passages typically invoke anxiety, and you should work to quell this anxiety by emphasizing focus to a cloaking, overall purpose.

Passage Outline

Paragraph 1: Happiness/Fulfillment - two views; utilitarian (desires satisfied externally), stoics/buddhists (renouncing desires/cultivating attitude internally)

Paragraph 2: JH (Happ Hyp) both true, mix of internal+external.

Paragraph 3: JH - ideas from diff cultures + eras. Adversity evidence contrasted.

Paragraph 4: JH - Atheist, Divinity opinion = distanced. Common ground sought.

Paragraph 5: RS - mentor, 3 dimensions to social space from certain ethics; ethic of autonomy (prevention of harm -> closeness (horizontal) dimension), community (protect kin -> heirarchy (vertical)), and divinity (something larger).

Goal: To describe the development of theories of social happiness.

Question 1: C

This question deals with the opinion of the author. Already, you should have ideas swimming in your head relevant to the goal of this passage, to describe (a neutral tone) the theories of social development. Anything along these lines to this will be the correct answer.

(A): This answer is too extreme. The author is not necessary “extolling” the virtues of the author, the tone is rather neutral.

(B): Only two of these philosophers are directly discussed in this passage, thus making this a weak choice.

(C): This answer fits. It follows the neutral tone we discerned, and it covers the idea that social theories on happiness extended from earlier theories (as was discussed throughout the passage).

(D): Like answer A, this choice is implicit on the assumption that the author has a particular stance (in this case argumentative). We cannot glean this tone from the passage and thus can preclude this answer.

Question 2: C

This question deals with the philosophies of other individuals mentioned in the passage and how they would add to the argument. These individuals were mentioned in Paragraph 4, and are mentioned because it was clear that Haidt had a distant reverence for religion. Thus these individuals, likely also atheists, would also be in accord that religion is something that may be useful, but in a skeptical manner. In addition, these other philosophers are mentioned and subsequently supported by Haidt without “dismissing” their claims of a product of mass delusion. This implies that they believe in something along those lines.

(A): These individuals are skeptics/atheists and would be unable to provide empirical evidence for the subject of religion.

(B): It does not appear from the argument that these individuals, or JH even, benefitted from a religious experience. They do not deny the data on happiness from religion, according to para 4, but they themselves appear to have a different agenda than the author.

(C): This is implicit in the argument that the author precluded their claims on this matter to “find common ground”. Thus making this choice correct.

(D): This was not mentioned in the passage and would be out of scope.

Question 3: B

This is a tone question, and should be in accordance with our idea that the author had a neutral tone and did not favor any one particular theory mentioned. However a careful reader should also be able to discern that there are mentions of evidences in support of these theories and thus a minute acceptance of this subject matter as evidenced by words such as “landmark” and “fascinating” when describing his works.

(A): The author is in agreement but is there a reluctant tone? Unlikely.

(B): There appears to be some admiration of the subject matter in terms of its evidences and applications in real world subject matter. You may be thrown off by the word effusive, which happens to mean expressing feelings of approval. This choice seems plausible.

(C): The word dispassionate should be recognized as meaning without passion or emotion. Based on the author’s descriptions of Haidt’s works there seems to be a minute expression of emotion toward the subject matter. This makes this a weak choice.

(D): The author is not contemptuous or dismissive. Answer choice D is wrong.

Question 4: B

In mention to his mentor’s works it seems Haidt argues along specific social dimensions such as the ethic of divinity which means that there is a “connection to something larger”. An answer choice must agree with this statement.

(A): Altruism is not explicitly mentioned in this passage making this choice OOS.

(B): A spiritual connection may not be something that Haidt in particular would associate with a deity, but it is in accordance with his belief that it is beneficial. This fits our prediction.

(C): Acceptance within community is another dimension not guided by divinity. This is a faulty use of detail.

(D): This may seem plausible in connection with “something larger” but this appears to be closer to the community dimension described in the last paragraph.

Question 5: D

The utilitarian view theorizes that external events can satisfy our happiness. We must find an individual who agrees with this statement.

(A): The author maintains that both internal and external events satisfy our happiness and would not hold to these views alone.

(B): Haidt, like the author, seems to be in accordance and thus cannot hold to the utilitarian view alone.

(C): Stoics do not believe in the utilitarian view (See Para 1).

(D): Based on our analysis thus far, this choice would be correct. We can confirm this by referring to Para 4 where Dawkins is mentioned in support of the mass delusion theory (an external factor) which could influence individuals in a utilitarian way.

Passage 2 (Questions 1-7)

This is a fairly complex philosophical passage that utilizes several instances of rhetorical questions. Because of this density it is important to reinforce the idea that broader analysis will save time in this passage, it is not in your best interest to understand each and every rhetorical question.

Passage Outline

Paragraph 1: Traditionally: responsible for voluntary actions, indirectly responsible for experiences.

Paragraph 2: Perception \neq passive.

Paragraph 3: Unmoved mover, active self = Filled gaps in our knowledge

Paragraph 4: Example of active self filling in

Paragraph 5: Decision making done by active self, involuntarily.

Goal: To describe how we are not entirely in control of our decisions, the active self fills in gaps.

Question 1: A

The passage is ripe with rhetorical questions and this question in particular is throwing even more vocabulary on top of it (e.g. Post hoc rationalization). You should recognize

that the question is asking what the author is most likely to use this new idea in support of. It should be in line with the goal of the paragraph.

(A): This idea agrees with the goal of the passage that decision making is not entirely within our control (conscious processes).

(B): While this may be true, the author would not use this new evidence in support of this claim.

(C): This is out of scope.

(D): While this may be true it is not the answer to this particular question, post hoc rationalization is used to justify irrational decisions.

Question 2: C

Recall the goal of the passage, to show that we are not entirely in control of our decision making, and often times details are filled in by the “active self”. The answer choice must agree with the author.

(A): We do not have full responsibility for all of our actions according to the author.

(B): We may possess free will but a decision in the past is not exactly proof of it, at least according to the author. This is OOS.

(C): This agrees with the goal of the passage and is correct.

(D): The author argues that we are aware a decision was made, but we are mostly unaware of HOW it was made in its entirety.

Question 3: A

This question is hard to make a prediction for, so we should keep the goal of the passage in mind when reading off the answer choices.

(A): This seems to be in line, since according to the passage we are generally unaware.

(B): Length of decision making is OOS.

(C): Scientific vs Philosophical analysis is OOS.

(D): The author may be implying that this is an issue with our decision making process but they do not seem to agree with putting more careful thought into the decision making (Would we be able to fill in all of the possible details? Likely not, the active self is still at play).

Question 4: C

This is a detail question which points you to the paragraph in question. Remember that choices must be in line with the author's arguments.

(A): The author does not necessarily define it as a divine being, and certainly it does not guide our actions (it merely fills in the blanks in our understandings of prospective actions).

(B): This is an extreme answer choice, this is not an inherent argument presented.

(C): This is in line with the argument and is the safest choice.

(D): This is OOS.

Question 5: B

Another detail question with a paragraph reference.

(A): The author does not discuss individuals' willpower differences. This is OOS.

(B): This is possible, the active self can sometimes fill in the details of our decision making but our willpower can fail to act on it.

(C): Difficulty in decision making is OOS.

(D): This is an extreme answer choice, the author is careful not to make such broad generalizations. This idea MAY apply in real life, but we are not sure.

Question 6: B

We are tasked with comparing another person's theory and incorporating it into the author's argument and seeing how it is affected.

(A): This is not an extreme statement based on a detail in the passage and is thus incorrect. Beware of extreme words like "only".

(B): This is plausible, the author balances voluntary and involuntary forces in the argument.

(C): This is another extreme statement, there MAY be a conscious judgment but we are not sure.

(D): According to the author this is untrue, the external mover is present but it is generally outside of our understanding.

Question 7: C

Three statements must be evaluated for their alignment to a voluntary element. The author defined a voluntary element as one with which we can use our experiences to evaluate. Begin evaluating statements found within most of the choices, that would be the first statement.

Perceiving that water is hot because of the stove requires us to have prior knowledge about heat transfer. This would be a voluntary element that requires conscious thought. Thus statement 1 is true. And choice B can be excluded from further consideration.

Next consider the second statement which is next common in the remaining choices. The kettle's composition being steel requires us to have knowledge of what steel feels like or looks like based on comparison with other elements' or a chemists understanding of properties of matter. Both of these instances requires a voluntary element of conscious thought. Statement 2 is correct and thus choice A can be excluded.

Normally this far into the process would elucidate the final answer but in this case we have a choice which contains the third statement as well. The last statement describes

a reflex, if we touch hot water (or anything scalding for that matter) you should recognize that the limb in question is immediately jerked away. Without a conscious processing of the pain we can exclude this as a voluntary element.

(A): True but not the only true statement.

(B): Not the only true statement.

(C): Match.

(D): Statement III is not voluntary.

Passage 3 (Questions 1-6)

This is a straightforward social sciences passage describing a practice across historical time periods. That is very well organized, and easy to follow. When there are obvious topical paragraphs, it is not necessary to read through the entire paragraph; it is better, rather, to understand what is being explained, and go back and read more in depth about a certain topic if need be.

Passage Outline

Paragraph 1: Farming practices (1950s) led to specialization/genetic engineering. Issues arose.

Paragraph 2: Sustainable ag = possible solution. Less chem dependent

Paragraph 3: Issues to acceptance; financial (long term profitability). Current system = short term profit. Alternative tech needed to make it more appealing.

Goal: To describe differences in past and modern farming practices and make a case for sustainable agriculture.

Question 1: A

The author speaks of the sustainable agriculture significantly as an alternative to modern practice. They cite several resources in support of sustainability and present some evidences against the current system.

(A): The author follows this stance throughout the passage. This is the correct choice.

(B): This is plausible but this is not the main idea of the whole passage, this was just a single detail used faultily.

(C): On the contrary this is opposite to what the author says.

(D): This is something the author implies at parts, but is not the overall idea of the passage.

Question 2: C

All except questions can be difficult without a thorough reading. Even if you were running out of time when you approached this question you need to remain level headed and rule out ideas that are true to better your odds of getting the question right.

- (A): This is cited in support, not the correct choice.
- (B): This is cited in support, not the correct choice.
- (C): Feeding methods were not cited in support, this is the correct choice.
- (D): This is cited in support, not the correct choice.

Question 3: D

We need to understand the characteristics of sustainable agriculture to identify the answer choice.

- (A): According to the author the process should be chemical free, thus this is not correct.
- (B): The author is against monocropping, they insist that sustainability requires crop rotations.
- (C): According to the author the process should be chemical free, thus this is not correct.
- (D): This is the correct choice.

Question 4: B

This is a weaken question, a question like this requires thorough understanding of the goal and content of the passage. Be sure to stick in line with the author's arguments.

- (A): This would strengthen the author's arguments presented in the last passage. Currently farmers consider short term profit as a reason against sustainability.
- (B): This would in fact weaken the author's argument because people would be more inclined to be against sustainability if current machines have to be altered.
- (C): This would strengthen the author's arguments because people would be more inclined to switch to a method that would lower pest damage since it is affecting profitability.
- (D): This is a bit OOS, based on its talk about acreage, but in a way this would strengthen the author's argument. The total number of farmed acres is constant, meaning less people are farming more land and will thus be making more profit (especially in the short-term). No reason to switch to sustainable methods.

Question 5: C

Another three statement question. The most common statement in answer choices is 2, begin with that and then work to less common statements.

Statement 2 is a barrier and needs to be in an answer choice. Rule out Choice A.

Statement 1 is also plausible according to the argument of the passage. Rule out choice B.

Statement 3 is incorrect, farmers seem to agree that it is an okay method but avoid it because of economics, not environmental policy. Rule out choice D

(A): Incorrect.

(B): Incorrect.

(C): Match!

(D): Incorrect.

Question 6: D

All except question. Rule out correct ones.

(A): This is a sustainable practice. Incorrect.

(B): This is a sustainable practice. Incorrect.

(C): This is a sustainable practice. Incorrect.

(D): We are left with this but we also find that is not a sustainable practice. It must be correct.

Passage 4 (Questions 1-5)

Like the first passage, this humanities passage of moderate length relies on lots of names and dates. While the language is not difficult, the sheer number of references to individuals and time periods would make any critical reader prone to error. As with the previous passages, emphasize looking at the **big picture** for this passage.

Passage Outline

Paragraph 1: Incidents; once regarded as fiction, Yellin shown that it is a true account written by a former slave named Jacobs.

Paragraph 2: Reasons why the book was thought of as a work of fiction.

Paragraph 3: Cont. of Para 2, two biggest reasons presented; Sufferer writing, black women not educated enough

Paragraph 4: Yellin \neq 1st person to believe Jacobs was true author. Was first to look Child's papers.

Paragraph 5: Add'l support for Jacobs as author. Primary objection; blacks would not have been capable of writing so well.

Goal: To show evidence in support of Yellin's theory that Jacobs is the author (and book \neq fiction)

Question 1: C

Uncle Tom's Cabin is an example of a novel written as "a thinly-veiled political tract in the Abolitionist cause." Readers of Incidents were led by circumstances to see it as the same type of book. Thus, Uncle Tom's Cabin provided precedence for Incidents. Thus Uncle Tom's Cabin is given as an example of a book that was similar to Incidents and was in fact a work of fiction.

(A): This is an extreme choice about the author's opinion that readers held racial stereotypes.

(B): This is OOS.

(C): Match.

(D): This is wrong on two points. Uncle Tom's Cabin was not confused with nonfiction, and Incidents is not a novel.

Question 2: D

The author's main purpose should be reflected here. The best prediction here is to simply say the author would agree with everything she wrote in the passage. In other words, we want the same ideas but in different words. The first paragraph discusses the book's value as a powerful argument against slavery, even though people thought it was a novel. It must then be true that novels can give insights into an era.

(A): OOS. This claim would be attributed to society in general in 1861; it is not the author's claim.

(B): OOS, not a claim in the passage.

(C): OOS, not a claim in the passage.

(D): Match.

Question 3: B

Scattered detail questions are difficult because they typically must be solved means tracking down where the three incorrect answer choices are supported in the passage. This is not mentally challenging so much as it is time-consuming. We should focus our attention for this question on Para 4 and 5. The correct choice is not relevant to Yellin.

(A): Opposite. See Paragraph 5.

(B): Match!

(C): Opposite. See Paragraph 5.

(D): Opposite. See Paragraph 4.

Question 4: D

Initially, Incidents was believed to be fiction but is later recognized as fact. We are looking for a situation where something is first thought of to be fiction but later shown to be authentic.

(A): This uses the same topic of authorship but there is no hint of mistaking the actual author here.

(B): OOS. Technology and changed land use are unrelated to mistaking fact or fiction.

(C): OOS. Focuses on how a scientists' reputation increased after his death. Jacobs may have been unknown during her lifetime, but we have no idea whether she was poorly regarded or if her reputation grew after her death.

(D): Match. This fits this scenario best; a painting thought to be a forgery (similar to a fiction) turns out to be "the real thing," just as Incidents turns out to be fact.

Question 5: B

This new fact relates to the misgivings some had about believing a black woman was able to write so competently. If it turns out that Jacobs dictated Incidents to a white person who then edited it for content, it would explain how the book is so well written—from a grammatical standpoint. It is important to keep in mind that when someone dictates a writing, she is still considered the author even though she was not the one holding the pen and paper. If it were common for slaves to dictate their memoirs to whites, who then edited them, it would strengthen Yellin's argument.

(A): Opposite. The new information is weakening the argument.

(B): Match!

(C): Just because Yellin asserts that Jacobs wrote the book doesn't mean that Jacobs had to have done it alone.

(D): Way OOS. The author's credibility is irrelevant to the question and passage.

Passage 5 (Questions 1-5)

While at parts it appears as a natural science passage this is more of a social science passage. It is of moderate length with fairly simple language. The topic is also fairly simple to glance from the get go; archaeology.

Passage Outline

Paragraph 1: Background on underwater archaeology possible via SCUBA gear. Divers need to be educated in proper archaeological techniques.

Paragraph 2: Archaeology def. Shipwrecks useful for study in context.

Paragraph 3: Artifacts preserved in sediment, extraction skills req. Time consuming but necessary.

Paragraph 4: Artifacts + context necessary, but extraction removes context (can be observed during extraction). Diligence in note-taking needed.

Goal: To describe the process of underwater archaeology and the reasons for diligent care and skill required of excavators.

Question 1: A

This is a global question asking about the topic and purpose of the passage. Stick to the goal of the outline.

(A): Match, broad and inclusive enough about the goal.

(B): Not too much historical context or chronicling of the field of study, and a distinction is made between treasure hunting and archaeology. This is a poor choice.

(C): Not too much advocating occurring, unlikely to be best choice.

(D): The author does not want amateurs to be doing this work, careful skill and study is necessary for proper excavation.

Question 2: B

The question is asking for a reason why the scope of archaeology was expanded.

(A): Techniques may have been expanded but this is not the most important reason.

(B): SCUBA was highlighted as a particularly useful in situ technique for excavation which very quickly expanded the discipline. This is the best choice.

(C): Record-keeping was not a new thing, despite it being critical according to the author.

(D): This is too broad to be a reason for expanding the scope. There has always been a desire to study underwater wreckage by archaeologists but there were other reasons, primarily site access, that limited their scope.

Question 3: A

A detail question with a paragraph reference.

(A): This is a very appealing choice supported in the context of the paragraph. Match!

(B): While true, this very limits the reason why the author is discussing underwater archaeology in the passage. These tools would have spurred the need to recover underwater records of the past.

(C): OOS, not discussed in any particular length.

(D): OOS, not discussed in any particular length.

Question 4: B

The author discusses how underwater archaeology is a very rigorously trained discipline to preserve in situ analysis.

(A): This is a faulty use of detail, all archaeologists need to be understand this.

(B): This is a balanced choice that covers the majority of the reasons the passage discusses the content. Match!

(C): Another faulty use of detail, this is a necessity of any archaeologists' job.

(D): Extreme, unlikely that this is any archaeologists' particular fixation.

Question 5: C

This is an application question relying on the roles of an archaeologist as described in the passage.

(A): This is a very narrow niche, these archaeologists have more to consider.

(B): Profit is not a primary motivator.

(C): This utilizes the context and the artifacts that the author desires in underwater archaeology, match!

(D): While possibly useful they have more than bones to consider, context is required.