

PARAJUMBLES

AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

A QUICK REVISION

What Are PJs?

Parajumbles are among the most common constituents of any Aptitude test. In a Parajumble, we are given a paragraph (which is generally an extract of an article) with jumbled sentences. We have to rearrange the sentences in the right order so that the paragraph makes sense. PJs are one of the few areas in VA that even non-frequent readers can master.

Framing of The Question

~~"Choose the most logical order of sentences from among the given choices to construct a coherent paragraph"~~

Are there any sure shot strategies of getting PJs correct every single time?
NO!

Can you be sure of improving your accuracy just by practicing a large number of questions?
Also NO!

WHAT TO DO THEN!

1. Firstly, read the sentences and try to comprehend what the central idea or theme of the paragraph is.
2. More often than not, the opening sentence is a vague generalization. The easiest method to solve PJs is to identify the opening statement and eliminate the options.
3. Another way of making the job easier is to identify Mandatory Pairs. There will be various ways in which two sentences are inter-connected. We have to identify these and proceed with the elimination of irrelevant options. The most common links are:
 - Lists
 - Examples and other follow-ups.
 - Connecting words such as 'hence', 'therefore', 'thus' etc.
 - Continuation of an idea.



WHAT TO DO THEN!

1. The next step is to identify the last statement. Generally, identifying the last sentence is easier because we can apply the strategies of solving a para-completion to identify these. The last statement should conclude the paragraph, must be logically connected to the entire paragraph and should not be abrupt.
2. The fastest way of solving any problem is to use logic and smart work. Eliminate the options, work on the statements. There is no alternative of focus. If you can understand the paragraph, you are bound to get it right.

SOME STRATEGIES!

STRATEGY 1: THE 5W APPROACH

STRATEGY 2: THE BEGINNING AND THE END

STRATEGY 3: STRUCTURE

STRATEGY 4: THE FLOW OF IDEAS

STRATEGY 5: CHRONOLOGY

STRATEGY 6: YOUR BRAIN AND LOGIC

STRATEGY 7: LOOKING OUT FOR THE CLUES IN A PARAGRAPH

STRATEGY 8: ACRONYMS

STRATEGY 9: THE MANDATORY PAIRING

STRATEGY 10: DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

S1: The 5Ws!

- What: what is the main idea?
- Why: Why does this order make sense?
- When: When did the event mentioned in the paragraph happen?
- Who: Who is that He, She, They, etc in the paragraph?
- Where: Where do the events take place?
Where do these acronyms come from?

If you can answer these, you finally have the gist of the paragraph and you don't even need the options to mark the right answer.

PRACTICE TIME!

So, let's try a beginner level question:

1. The problem with Dell was
2. Michael Dell was a legend.
3. However, there were some issues with his personality.
4. That he was too big a perfectionist.



S2: THE BEGINNING AND THE END

- A PJ is as good as the structure it fits. If you can identify the appropriate beginning and the conclusion or ending, in most of the cases you will either end up solving the question or eliminate most of the options, if available.
- As mentioned earlier, the beginning of any paragraph is generally smooth. It will present a vague or general idea or problem without any specific case.
- Yes, there will be exceptions but identifying the appropriate introductory statement will never hurt. Same goes with the ending statement – it will either end up with a contrasting statement to the solution provided or a specific case of the problem introduced.



S3: THE STRUCTURES

Comprehending the structure helps a long way to crack the parajumbles.
A few common structures are:

1. General Problem to specific, case-based problem, and it's solution
2. Cause and effect relationship.
3. An idea, its details, a contrasting idea, and the latter's details.
4. A generalization and its argument with examples
5. An idea and it's examples with a counter argument
6. A general problem with a course of action.
7. An act and its counter citing examples.

PRACTICE TIME!!

- A. Events intervened, and in the late 1930s and 1940s, Germany suffered from "over-branding".
- B. The British used to be fascinated by the home of Romanticism.
- C. But reunification and the federal government's move to Berlin have prompted Germany to think again about its image.
- D. The first foreign package holiday was a tour of Germany organized by Thomas Cook in 1855.
- E. Since then, Germany has been understandably nervous about promoting itself abroad.



S4: THE FLOW OF IDEAS

also, again, as well as, besides, furthermore, in addition, likewise, moreover, similarly, consequently, hence, otherwise, subsequently, therefore, thus, as a rule, generally, for instance, for example, for one thing, above all, aside from, barring, besides, on one hand, on the other hand, rather, similarly, yet, but, however, still, nevertheless, first of all, to begin with, at the same time, for now, for the time being, in time, later on, meanwhile, next, then, soon, the meantime, later, while, earlier, simultaneously, afterward, in conclusion, with this in mind, after all, all in all, to sum up Etc,
... are examples of words that smoothen up the flow of ideas.

1. They organize and connect the sentences logically.
2. Identifying and Connecting these words can reduce the time taken to find mandatory pairs significantly.

PRACTICE TIME!!!

An example from CAT 2001 - Flow Of Ideas:

- A. Passivity is not, of course, universal.
- B. In areas where there are no lords or laws, or in frontier zones where all men go armed, the attitude of the peasantry may well be different.
- C. So indeed it may be on the fringe of the un-submissive.
- D. However, for most of the soil-bound peasants the problem is not whether to be normally passive or active, but when to pass from one state to another.
- E. This depends on an assessment of the political situation.



S5: THE CHRONOLOGY

Dates, time periods or events are also a very good way of cracking PJs. The chronology should be right.

- Before
- After
- Later
- When, etc

are the words you should look for.



S6: YOUR BRAIN AND LOGIC

- As mentioned in almost all my posts, there is no alternative of applying logic to questions.
- You should have common sense to figure out how and why a sentence should be placed to structure the paragraph.
- For example, if one writes an article on human anatomy, it is evident that one would generally start from the brain and move to other parts in a logical sequence.
- An author will not place toes immediately after explaining synapses and muscles.

PRACTICE TIME!!!!

LOGIC BASED QUESTION:

1. Arrived here on **Sunday** by an early morning flight.
2. Dubai-based Win Gautam who is the
3. Accused in the Rs 50 crore Bofors guns kickback case.
4. He is scheduled to appear in the trial court By **Wednesday**.

S7: LOOKING OUT FOR CLUES IN A PARA

There can be many types

1. Personal or demonstrative pronouns
2. Acronyms
3. hints
4. transition phrases

How is this useful?

1. Sentence A mentions a person, say Balram Okaka, and sentence B states that "HE is managing White House efficiently.
2. Hence we can conclude that A should come before B.
Again, this is common sense.

S8: ACRONYMS

1. Also dubbed as the Chhota Rajan approach, this strategy aims at looking for the acronyms.
2. It relies on the assumption that if a para has any acronyms, then any sentence containing the extended form or full name of the acronym should be generally placed before that sentence.

Example:

Sentence A contains the acronym EG, and sentence B has the text Elites Grid (EG), then it's safe to assume that BA is the correct order.

PRACTICE TIME!!!!

1. If you are used to having your stimulation come in from outside, your mind never develops its own habits of thinking and reflecting
2. Marx thought that religion was the opiate, because it soothed people's pain and suffering and prevented them from rising in rebellion
3. If Karl Marx was alive today, he would say that television is the opiate of the people.
4. Television and similar entertainments are even more of an opiate because of their addictive tendencies.

S9: DEMONSTRATIVE PRONOUNS

- This, That, These, Those etc, are demonstrative pronouns.
- And we know This and that refer to singular nouns and "these" and "those" refer to plural nouns.
- Just like Personal Pronouns, Demonstrative pronouns can also be used to identify mandatory pairs.
- If a sentence uses these, we can easily infer that generally, the preceding sentence should explain what these refer to.

S10: MANDATORY PAIRS

- Finding MPs are probably the most used approach to crack PJs.
- MPs are the Pair of PJ sentences that always go together and can be easily identified.
- Apart from the methods already discussed, you can also rely on certain keywords. Always look out for any word or words that might give you a hint on how to proceed further.

Some examples are:

Accordingly, in order to, because, so...that, consequently, therefore, given, thus, hence, when...then, if...then, Premise, Conclusion, Support, Example, Continuation, Furthermore, Additionally, Also, And, Too, as well, besides, indeed, likewise, moreover etc..

S11: STRUCTURAL SIMILARITIES

Always look for similarities and contrasts presented in the paragraph. Generally, a paragraph is structured as:

1. Argument/ Idea
2. Similarity/ Example
3. Contrast/ difference
4. Conclusion

1. Look for conjunctions, sentence adverbs, etc. that indicate a relationship two ideas.

2. Words such as:
Albeit, Nevertheless, Although, Nonetheless, But, Notwithstanding, Despite, on the contrary, even though, on the other hand, however, rather than, In contrast, Still, In spite of, While, Instead of, yet.

PRACTICE TIME!!!!!! – 34152

1. He is like a Kantian listening to consequentialist arguments: he refuses to think that way.
2. But on the other hand, that is "not what they should say, given their position as a whole".
3. Suppose Jones has a religious conviction that he should base his political views on his religious convictions.
4. Jones listens to the arguments and objections of others with different views, but is unconvinced.
5. On the one hand, public reason liberals might seem to tell Jones to refrain from public discussion and voting.



THANK YOU
BY ELITES GRID

