

## **Tones of Writing**

By now, you must be aware of the various types of RC passages as well the different writing styles. Close to the writing style, comes the tone of passage. As you would know, tone-based questions frequently accompany CAT RC passages. So, what is really meant by ‘tone of the passage’?

The tone of the passage represents the author’s sentiment or attitude towards the subject being discussed. In other words, it’s the predominant emotion the author displays towards the subject. You probably react differently to different people in same or different situations. You may speak the same sentence in harsh or polite or sarcastic tone depending upon the context and people. Similarly, RC tones vary in different contexts with same or different subjects.

Learning to identify the tone will help you in multiple ways: answering the direct tone based questions as well as figuring out the implicit information and inferences. Tone of the passage is indicative of the message that the author wants to convey to the reader. The same set of words change their meaning if you speak them in a different tone.

Broadly, the tones used are *subjective* or *objective*. As you would guess, the objective tone is used when the author chooses to remain neutral and detached. On the other hand, a subjective tone reveals the attitude and emotions of the author with respect to the issue. Generally, CAT RCs feature in the following types of tones:

### **Acerbic/harsh/severe/bitter/caustic/vitrolitic:**

How would you express your dislike or disapproval for something or someone in a harsh way? Here comes the role of acerbic tone. The author reveals his disagreement with a particular theory or may express his disdain towards a person in an acerbic tone. Once you identify this tone, you will be able to answer the ‘author agree/disagree’ questions that follow the RC passage.

### **Angry/indignant:**

Similar to the above type, this kind of tone shows the author’s anger towards the subject in a justified way. How do you justify your anger towards any unfair system? You may do so by some arguments, facts and examples regarding the subject. Similarly, the author intends to justify his anger by stating various reasons related to the issue.

Such RC passages revolve around biased systems or policies followed by the authorities. Questions based on such passages are generally direct and easy to answer.

### **Apologetic**

As the name states, this kind of tone is used to express remorse or guilt regarding the mishaps or tragedies that may have occurred in the past. RC passages based on this tone generally talk of theories related to world wars, natural disasters or other such catastrophes that have impacted mankind adversely. Such passages may also include a lot of facts and figures.

### **Belligerent/bellicose**

In which tone do you think two warring parties talk to each other? As you would guess, they are aggressively hostile towards each other. This is when author adopts belligerent tone of writing. Think of the feelings that Allies and Axis powers had towards each other. RC passages based on this kind of tone are easily to understand and let you easily predict the answers to inference-based questions.

### **Biased**

While favouring one thing/person/group over the other, we tend to use a biased tone to display our inclination towards it. Similarly, the author uses a biased tone and presents arguments in favour of a particular thing/theory in the passage. Once you identify the author's stand, you will be able to figure out the answers to the required questions.

### **Commiserating**

This type of tone is used to express grief or show sympathy for a person or a group of people suffering from prejudiced practices or cultural norms. The author intends to familiarize the reader with the trauma undergone by the sufferers.

### **Condescending/Patronizing**

A condescending tone implies an attitude of patronizing superiority of a particular thing/person/group. As you would expect, such RC passages may display snobbish or scornful tones with regard to things considered inferior in the author's view.

### **Contemptuous/derisive/disparaging**

This kind of tone exhibits author's disdain or contempt towards the subject. You will often find such passages treating the subject in a scornful and ridiculous way.

### **Cynical**

How do tend to speak about people you find distrustful? Here comes the role of cynical tone. Passages written in cynical tone reveal author's view of society being driven purely by self-interest.

### **Dogmatic**

You must have some firm beliefs and perspective regarding particular aspects of life. In what kind of tone will you speak about them? This is where dogmatic tone comes into play. When the author is assertive regarding his opinions, he uses a dogmatic tone to convey his viewpoint.

### **Emotional**

While narrating an incident/event/story, the author uses an emotional tone of writing in order to portray the feelings regarding the same. Such RC passages may appear complex and need to be reread to arrive at the right answer.

### **Ethical**

As you would know, the issues of ethics in business have assumed greater relevance in the growing corporate culture. Such RC passages commonly feature in CAT exam. The author employs an ethical tone to depict the issues of morality, righteousness, honesty, etc.

### **Euphemistic**

How do you express your disliking or disagreement without being offensive or blunt? In such a case, euphemistic tone comes to your rescue. RC passages in this kind of tone make use of indirect and implicit statements.

### **Grandiose**

As the name suggests, this type of tone is adopted by passages written in a descriptive or abstract style. The passage may appear more elaborative than necessary. Also, sometimes abstract passages utilize a grandiose tone of writing.

### **Humanistic**

As you would guess, a humanistic tone of writing is most suitable to issues related to welfare, values and other such human affairs. A good idea for such passages would be to glance at the questions before reading the passage. This way, you will be able to grasp the essence of the given passage/theory.

### **Humorous**

One of the most interesting tones of writing, a humorous tone is witty and amusing at the same time. All you need to do is spot the message that that author wants to convey in a light-hearted manner.

### **Introspective**

How would you talk about analysing your feelings or contemplate your actions? Well, an introspective tone is employed in the passage so as to self-examine and reflect upon one's actions and feelings.

### **Incendiary/ provocative**

You may have come across some famous speeches by great orators and found their words moving or soul-stirring. Well, that's an incendiary tone into play. It's the tone of speech utilized by revolutionaries and politicians as well. In other words, an incendiary tone is meant to incite people in a negative or positive direction.

### **Laudatory**

How have you praised something or someone you admired? That's what laudatory tone sounds like. Often, descriptive passages adopt this kind of tone so as to discuss a particular subject along with certain justifications.

### **Motivating**

Another interesting kind of tone, a motivating tone of writing aims to inspire and propel you by the use of influential quotes and examples. Such passages may present examples of some popular personalities and incidents from their lives.

### **Pedestrian**

When a passage appears neither interesting nor complex to you, probably it has a pedestrian tone of writing. In other words, this kind of tone is used when the RC passage talks about commonplace things and ideas.

### **Populist**

As the name says, a populist tone is used to discuss theories and characteristics exhibited by general populace. The author of the passage utilizes a populist tone to explain features and behavior of common people.

### **Romantic**

As you would expect, this kind of tone is fanciful and exaggerated. Such passages may appear interesting to read but contains unrealistic content. This tone is mostly used for abstract RC passages.

### **Sarcastic/satirical/ironical/taunting**

Try expressing your disliking indirectly and without sounding too serious? Well, most of us have spoken in this way at one time or the other. When the author states a negative opinion about something in a taunting or ironic way, he uses a sarcastic tone in the passage.

### **Speculative**

We do read about various speculations in newspapers- economic, political, etc. Similarly, RC passages explaining any such theories adopt a speculative tone of writing. Putting it other ways, such passages revolve around hypothetical things and expert opinions.

### **Technical**

As the name states, the author of the passages tends to use technical jargons while using this tone of writing. This type of tone is generally used to discuss the core ideas of particular fields of study. Such passages are generally accompanied by a lot of facts and figures.

By now, you are aware of the various tones of writing. So, now how can you be sure of a particular tone being used for the passage? Well, you can look for the clues in the following ways:

- Look at the adjectives and adverbs used in the passage and their connotations. The ***choice of words*** provides a strong hint of the author's tone.
- Another clue is given by the ***style of writing***— whether it is narrative, descriptive, etc.
- Also, give a broad overview to the structure and organization of ideas in the passage.

The bottom-line: *read and practice* as much as you can. This will help you identify the tone accurately and in a lesser time.

Very often, in entrance exams like CAT, there are questions in Reading Comprehension based on the "style" of the passage. Such questions can appear in various forms. Some of the forms of such questions are:

- "Which of the following best describes the tone of the passage?"
- "The tone of the passage is..... "
- "The author's approach/tone/style of writing in this passage can be termed/described as....."

Such questions should not be attempted unless you have read the entire passage (unlike certain other categories of questions which can be attempted without reading the entire passage). Once you read the entire passage ask yourself what the basic approach/style of the author is (without looking at the answer choices). Then locate the answer choices and select the one which comes closest to what you thought of in you mind.

For your understanding a list of words that you should be familiar to answer questions on "tone" is given below. Please make sure that you understand meanings of the words given in the following table.

### Possible Tones and Meanings

Possible Tone	Meaning of The Word
Acerbic	Harsh/ severe; bitter
Aggressive	Forceful; tending towards unprovoked offensiveness
Angry/indignant	-
Apathetic	Emotionless; not interested/ concerned; indifferent; unresponsive
Apologetic	Expressing remorse, regret, sorrow for having failed, injured, insulted or wronged another
Belligerent	Aggressively hostile; bellicose
Biased	Favouring one thing/person/group over another for personal reasons.
Caustic	Biting; acerbic
Commiserating	Feeling/ expressing sorrow for; empathizing with; pity
Condescending	Patronizing; showing/implying 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
Dogmatic	Asserting opinions in an arrogant manner; imperious; dictatorial
Emotional	Easily affected by feelings actuated by experiencing love, hate, fear and the like
Ethical	Dealing with principles of morality; honest; righteous
Euphemistic	Substitution of mild, indirect or vague expression for one thought to be offensive, harsh or blunt
Grandiose	More complicated/ elaborated than necessary; pompous
Humanistic	Evinced keen interest in human affairs, nature, welfare, values
Humorous	Funny and amusing

Possible Tone	Meaning of The Word
Introspective	Consider one's own internal state of feelings
Incendiary	Causing strong feelings
Laudatory	Praising; extolling; applauding
Motivating	Impelling; inciting
Obsequious	Fawning; showing servile complaisance; flattering; deferent
Pedestrian	Lacking vitality, imagination, distinction
Populist	Egalitarian; pertaining to the characteristics of common people/ working class
Provocative	Inciting; stimulating; irritating; vexing
Romantic	Fanciful; impractical; unrealistic; extravagant; exaggerated
Sarcastic	Harsh, bitter derision; taunting; sneering; cutting remarks
Satirical	Ironical; taunting; human folly held up to scorn/ derision/ ridicule
Speculative	Theoretical rather than practical; thoughtful; reflective; hypothetical
Technical	Using terminology or treating subject matter in a manner peculiar to a particular field, as a writer or a book
Vitriolic	Full of anger and hatred
Vituperative	Cruel and angry criticism

Every author adopts a certain attitude towards the issue he is talking about. Some wish to highlight the facts about a matter (thereby adopting a ‘factual’ tone); some wish to explore the pros and cons of a decision (thereby adopting a ‘critical’ tone); some wish to explore each and every facet, cause, effect and so on with regards to a certain topic (thereby adopting an ‘analytical’ tone); some wish to narrate an instance from their life (thereby adopting a ‘sentimental/narrative’ tone); some wish to express their emotions, happy or sad (thereby adopting ‘emotional/happy/grief-stricken’ tones).

These different reasons/methods of expressing themselves actually become the tone of the author. Now that you have a basic understanding of tones, the next step is: how do you identify the author’s tone.

### **Things to consider while identifying tone of the author**

### **1. Identify the nature of the passage:**

The first classification for the passage is that you understand whether the passage is highlighting facts or does it reflect the opinions of the author. This is an important classification. Classify all tones that you know of into these two categories. For example, the objective tone is a factual one, and criticizing someone is only possible with the help of opinions.

### **2. Identify passage sentiment:**

The second thing that you need to do is understand the sentiment of the passage i.e. whether the passage can be classified as:

- *Positive: the author is appreciating something*
- *Negative: the author is criticizing something*
- *Neutral: the passage does not fall into any of the above categories*

Classify all tones that you know of into these three categories. For example: being appreciative reflects a positive approach, being sarcastic reflects a negative approach and being objective is neutral in nature.

### **3. Identify the adjectives/adverbs used in the passage:**

Make a mental note of the language used by the author, and what kind of adjectives he is using. Adjectives reflect the mood and emotions of the author.

### **4. Make a note of conflicting attitudes**

Understand and identify where the author changes his attitude and starts to move along different lines. It is important to understand these mood changes, and from this understanding, try to infer the most dominant sentiment in the passage. A common mistake committed by students is that they focus on one particular sentiment only, whereas the author has displayed multiple ones in the passage. Remember, you need to pick the sentiment which dominates the passage and co-related with the central idea of the passage.

### **5. Make a list of all relevant adjectives you discover: make your own 'tone' list**

It is easy to find a list of common RC tones but you are advised to make your own list of tones, and put in all the relevant adjectives that you discover in tests, mocks and so on. Having your own list will gel with your vocabulary levels and ensure that all bases are covered for you.

## **RC: Concepts & Strategies**

- Basics of RC
- RC Title/Main Idea Question
- RC Contextual Questions
- RC Inference Questions
- Tips for long RC passages
- Speed Reading

- RC Practice
- Types of RC Questions
- RC Tone Question
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- RC Tips & Tricks
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- Reading Tips

### How do we reach at the final answer?

1. Identify the nature of the passage (facts or opinion), and eliminate the options that do not match with your analysis.
2. Identify the passage sentiment and again eliminate options that do not match with your analysis.
3. Identify the main idea of the passage, and co-relate it with the tone of the passage (there should be synergy between the two).
4. Keep 3 and 4 in mind while marking your answer.
5. Also, you should try to label the tone of the passage in your own words, and see which one co-relates with the author of the passage.
6. Eliminate options. Do not select an answer, always eliminate options and be sure why you are rejecting a particular option.

The above form some of the basic things that you should be doing for a Reading Comprehension tone question. Using these tips and strategies is surely going to help you master this question type.

### Title of the passage RC questions

A common question seen in CAT and other MBA entrances in the RC section is the choice of an appropriate title. Questions that ask you to provide a title for the passage require you to assume the role of the author & to experience what he or she may have felt or wanted to convey when writing the passage. In order to do that, you'll need to read the passage carefully and pick up on key words and specific writing styles, only then will you be able to ascertain whether the author is frustrated, annoyed, perplexed, supportive, etc., and from that information you'll be able to quickly predict what the author might say next and what an appropriate title may be.

For questions that ask you to provide a title of a reading passage, be sure to look at the passage as a whole. Most importantly, don't choose an answer choice just because it reiterates a single fact explicitly stated in the passage. A title is meant to encompass the entire meaning of a reading passage, and not just a single point.



**5 things to note before choosing TITLE of a passage:**

1. Remember that you have been asked to choose the “most appropriate” title among the given options, not what you may consider to be the “best” or “perfect” title for the passage. What this also indicates is that if you can eliminate some options as inappropriate for one reason or another, you could possibly arrive at the correct answer.
2. Title must not only cover the core idea (the content) of the passage, but should also express the author’s tone. For example, consider a title that says “The dismal state of Indian hockey”. From this, you immediately not only realize that the passage will talk about the sport of hockey, but also know what the author’s feelings or tone would be towards the current state of affairs. This is due to the usage of the adjective “dismal”.
3. The title you mark as the correct option should be neither too broad nor too narrow in scope. Too ‘narrow’ titles may focus on only a couple of paragraphs of the passage and not the passage as a whole.
4. Remember that a title is like a common theme that runs through the passage i.e. it integrates the various ideas or issues discussed.
5. A Title is not a conclusion. This is a mistake that students commonly make. The title is not meant to reflect the conclusion (inference) rather, a title summarizes the author’s ideas or points succinctly & must come from what is directly stated in the passage.

RC is a lot like the data interpretation section – you have strategies but there are no fixed and limited concepts as such. To fine-tune your strategy, it is important that you do rigorous practice. Do not overdo the RCs if you are not scoring well. Instead, rework your strategies, see if you are analysing the passage correctly and look where you are going wrong.

Pay attention to the details, and make a habit of trying to identify the author’s main idea; also, try to think of the author’s motive for writing the passage. As newspaper reporters do, ask the questions, “Who? What? When? Where? How? and Why?” Is the author’s purpose to inform you of facts, persuade you of something, or simply to entertain you?

Cat Winners generally have very good Reading Skills. The more active a reader you are, the more likely that you will understand and fully enjoy what you read.

THE MORE YOU PRACTICE THE BETTER YOU GET AT IT..

**PRACTICE PASSAGES:****PASSAGE1:**

The Woodstock Music and Art Fair—better known to its participants and to history simply as “Woodstock”—should have been a colossal failure. Just a month prior to its August 15, 1969 opening, the fair’s organizers were informed by the council of Walkill, New York, that permission to hold the festival was withdrawn. Amazingly, not only was a new site found, but word spread to the public of the fair’s new location. At the new site, fences that were supposed to facilitate ticket collection never materialized, and all attempts at gathering tickets were abandoned. Crowd estimates of 30,000 kept rising; by the end of the three days, some estimated the crowd at 500,000. Then, on opening night, it began to rain. Off and on, throughout all three days, huge summer storms rolled over the gathering. In spite of these problems, most people think of Woodstock not only as a fond memory but as the defining moment for an entire generation.

Which of the following would be the most appropriate title for this passage?

- a. Backstage at Woodstock
- b. Woodstock: From The Band to The Who
- c. Remembering Woodstock
- d. Woodstock: The Untold Story

**CORRECT ANSWER:** c. The titles in choices a, b, and d all imply that the passage will provide information, which it does not. Choice c is the most accurate choice because the passage deals mainly with remembering the fair.

**PASSAGE2:**

Use of electronic mail (e-mail) has been widespread for more than a decade. E-mail simplifies the flow of ideas, connects people from distant offices, eliminates the need for meetings, and often boosts productivity. However, e-mail should be carefully managed to avoid unclear and inappropriate communication. E-mail messages should be concise and limited to one topic. When complex issues need to be addressed, phone calls are still best.

Which of the following would be the most appropriate title for the passage?

- a. Appropriate Use of E-Mail
- b. E-Mail's Popularity
- c. E-Mail: The Ideal Form of Communication
- d. Why Phone Calls Are Better Than E-Mail

CORRECT ANSWER:a. The title should express the main idea of the passage. The passage, as a whole, focuses on appropriate and inappropriate uses of e-mail. The other choices address more specific ideas expressed in the passage but are not its main idea.

**PASSAGE3:**

Mental and physical health professionals may consider referring clients and patients to a music therapist for a number of reasons. It seems a particularly good choice for the social worker who is coordinating a client's case. Music therapists use music to establish a relationship with the patient and to improve the patient's health, using highly structured musical interactions. Patients and therapists may sing, play instruments, dance, compose, or simply listen to music. The course of training for music therapists is comprehensive. In addition to formal musical and therapy training, music therapists are taught to discern what kinds of interventions will be most beneficial for each individual patient. Because each patient is different and has different goals, the music therapist must be able to understand the patient's situation and choose the music and activities that will do the most toward helping the patient achieve his or her goals. The referring social worker can help this process by clearly communicating each client's history. Although patients may develop their musical skills, that is not the main goal of music therapy. Any client who needs particular work on communication or on academic, emotional, and social skills, and who is not responding to traditional therapy, is an excellent candidate for music therapy.

Which of the following would be the most appropriate title for this passage?

- a. How to Use Music to Combat Depression
- b. What Social Workers Need to Know about Music Therapy
- c. Training for a Career in Music Therapy
- d. The Social Worker as Music Therapist

CORRECT ANSWER:b. This passage provides information to social workers about music therapy, as the title in choice b indicates. Choice d is incorrect because b. This passage provides information to social workers about music therapy, as the title in choice b indicates. Choice d is incorrect because the first sentence speaks of mental- and physical health professionals referring their clients and patients to music therapists; the second sentence indicates that it (meaning a referral) seems a particularly good choice for the social worker. Choice c is possible, but does not summarize the passage as well as choice b. Choice a refers to a topic not covered in the passage.

*What are 'titles' exactly?*

Titles refer to the most appropriate headings given to the passages (like the headings given to the newspaper/magazine/journal articles). These titles have the following qualities:

1. They are brief and precise.
2. They contain the subject of the passage and refer to the central idea/theme of the passage directly or indirectly.

Mostly, books/academic journals' articles have more direct titles than newspaper articles.

*Types of titles:*

**Basically, we come across two types of titles:**

- **Explicit:** These state the subject directly. You are able to identify such titles easily.
- **Implicit:** These state the subject indirectly. You need to be careful with this title type.  
They may be given in form of metaphors/idioms that imply the main idea of the passage.

These questions are asked in the following forms

- The most apt title for the passage is:
- Select the most suitable title for the passage from the following?

**Strategy to answer the title questions correctly:**

- **Identify the subject/central idea:** Identify the subject of the passage and make sure it reflects in the answer options (implicitly/explicitly), as done in case of 'main idea' question. This is the topic around which the whole passage is built.
- **Donot be misled by minor details; focus on the key ideas:** Pay attention to the central ideas only. Details are irrelevant here. Donot obsess over single points/ideas. They may be stated directly but donot convey the main idea or theme of the passage. Always keep the whole picture in mind as single points cannot form the answer.
- **'Title' is not a 'conclusion':** This is a common mistake committed by the students. The title is meant to summarize the ideas/points enlisted in the passage and not to recommend subsequent action or deduce judgments. One important tip: summarize individual paragraphs of the passage. Look at the main idea question as one where you need to reach the final destination. How do you do so? Well, you take one step at a time- pausing at important junctions. Consume the information one paragraph at a time, summarize and make a mental roadmap of the passage flow. Once you have identified the flow of the passage, try to outline that one central idea the author of the passage is aiming at.
- **Focus on the structure:** The structure and organization of the passage indicates the message/idea the author intends to convey. The tone and attitude adopted by the author, the way he presents his ideas- all signal towards the theme of the passage.

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- **Assume the role of author:** You are required to think from author's point of view- the core ideas he intends to convey to the reader and the feeling/experience he is going through. It basically means that if you were the author, what title would you choose for your passage?
- **Strengthen your vocab base:** Building your vocabulary will help you identify the correct title for the given passage, even if stated implicitly. Apart from this, this works like a long-term approach in honing your language skills. Be sure to learn 10-20 words daily and revise them frequently (use flash cards, mobile apps, books like Word power made easy by Norman Lewis etc.).
- **Sharpen your knowledge of idioms and metaphors:** The options may be given in form of idioms/metaphors. Without a good knowledge of these, you will not be able to identify the correct title for the passage.
- **Be mindful of the scope-trap:** It is not uncommon to fall in the scope-trap. Some of the options may refer to the central idea directly but are outside the required scope. We tend to pick such answer options, misguided by their construction and donot realize these options are about another subject or vaguely related to the passage, thus rendering it outside the scope of the passage. Eg. If the passage talks about unemployment issue in India, the answer options related to unemployment on global level cannot be the answer. Be sure that you do not fall into this 'scope trap' to perform well in this question type.
- **Develop reading habit:** Lastly, inculcate the habit of daily reading. It benefits you in multiple ways - enhances your concentration, improves vocabulary etc. and thus helps you to identify the central theme faster than a non-reader. Reading here means reading good articles and books(The Hindu editorials and other such good newspapers' articles, magazines like Reader's Digest, Journals/their websites, Novels etc.)

### How do we reach at the final answer?

Use the important guidelines provided above, match your 'central idea' with the answer options and eliminate the incorrect answer options. Remember the objective of this exercise is to follow the process of identifying the main idea in an analytical and objective manner. Follow the steps and you are on your way to scoring really well in the exam.

One of the most confusing question-types in the reading comprehension for CAT section is the “**title-based**” questions. In such questions, the candidates are required to identify the subject and theme of the passage and choose the aptest heading for that from a given set of choices.

## Types of Titles in CAT RC Passages

To be able to solve title questions, one must be well acquainted with the types of titles. Below-given are the two types of titles that the candidates might face in the examination. They are explained below:

- **Explicit Titles**

Questions based on explicit titles are easily identifiable and are scoring. In this type, the title states the subject and information in the passage **directly**. So, these are also known as **direct titles**.

- **Implicit Titles**

These are a bit tricky and require the candidates to understand the passage completely to be able to answer. These titles state the subject **indirectly**, sometimes, using idioms and metaphors. Thus, these titles are also called **indirect titles**.

### Properties of RC Titles

Understanding the passage and identifying the theme is not as easy as it sounds. Especially for implicit titles, candidates need to analyze the options thoroughly and then come to a conclusion. To be effective in analyzing and identifying the titles, one needs to understand the basics properties of titles. Some of the important properties of titles are:

- Titles always include the **subject** of the given passage.
- In case of academic and technical passages, the titles are generally **direct**. In case of opinion-based passages, the nature of titles is mostly **indirect**.
- Titles always give a concise **summary** of the passage and the issues it covers.

It is always suggested to check for these properties in the given answer choices and then deduce the correct option.

### Tips to Answer RC Title Questions Easily

Though the title based questions are tricky and confusing, they are one of the easiest to score questions in the entire verbal section. So, some crucial tips to solve title-based questions are given here to help the CAT candidates attempt the related questions with ease.

- **Subject Identification**

It is of utmost importance to identify the subject of the passage clearly. Identify whether the title will be direct or indirect and then check for the answer options which represent the subject or the central idea of the passage aptly.

- **Always Focus on the Main Theme**

It is always suggested to keep all the key ideas in mind while checking the answer options. Then, identify the option which states the theme and idea of the message clearly. It is suggested to analyze the theme of each paragraph properly and then deduce the whole idea of the passage before going through the answer choices.

- **Be Wary of the Passage's Scope**

Often, some answer choices are given that reflects the idea which is not within the scope of the passage. For example, if a passage is about "India's economy", a title focusing on "Global economy" is out of scope and will never be the correct choice. So, always check the subject of the passage and the relatedness of the title before answering.

- **Focus on Vocabulary, Idioms and Metaphors**

In many cases, the answer options are given in the form of idioms or metaphors. To be able to answer such questions correctly, one needs to be properly acquainted with idioms and metaphors. Also, one needs to have proper vocabulary skills to understand the answer options correctly and relate them to the subject's passage.

- **Have a Good Reading Habit**

Having a good reading habit is extremely crucial to attempt reading comprehension questions. Candidates who have a proper reading habit can easily read and comprehend the central idea of the passage quickly and effectively. Also, by reading, individuals can easily enhance their vocabulary skills.

These were some of the crucial tips that can help a candidate attempt the title-based questions easily and effectively. Also, it should always be remembered that title is not a conclusion and hence should not be confused. Another best way to attempt these questions is by taking the role of the author and then analyze the title accordingly.

Visit [reading comprehension tips](#) to get more important tips and strategies to attempt the CAT RC section more effectively. Stay tuned with BYJU'S for complete assistance on CAT preparation. Get various sample papers, mock tests, questions papers and study material at BYJU'S.

## Types of CAT RC Title Questions

The first thing that you need to understand is the types of titles that you can encounter for this question type.

Primarily, there are two types:

**1. Direct or explicit:** these are the titles that are directly based on the information provided in the passage and connect with the central subject of the passage.

**2. Indirect or implicit:** these are the tricky ones. These make an indirect reference to the passage and can even use language devices such as metaphors, idioms, etc.

## Core Concept for handling these questions

The core concept for handling the two types of titles questions remains the same: you need to identify the subject and central idea of the passage and then match it with the answer options. The option closest to the subject and central idea combine is your correct answer. Easier said than done, right? This is where it comes in handy to analyse the nature of titles and see what defines them.

## Properties of titles

In general, titles of passages and articles can be said to have the following properties:

1. They, in some way or the other, represent succinct summaries of the issue at hand.
2. Most titles contain a reference to the subject of the passage, and this is your biggest clue to solve these questions.
3. For technical papers and academic journals, titles are more direct in nature. In comparison, general newspaper editorials and opinion articles can adopt any form or structure for their article titles.

## Steps to identify the correct answers for RC Title Questions

### 1. Identify the subject

The first step to identify the correct answer is to identify the subject of the passage. The subject is the key topic around which the passage is built.

### 2. Don't focus on the minor details; key ideas drive this question

It is easy to be misled by options that focus on single points or minor details of the passage. These options might be somewhat direct in nature, but the very fact that they do not talk the key idea of the passage helps us rule them out.

### 3. Identify the central theme of the passage

Make sure you identify the central theme of the passage. The best way to do so is to build a mental map of the passage while reading it. How do you do so? While reading every paragraph of the passage, just ask yourself two things: what are the main subject and main idea of this paragraph? By taking it down to the paragraph level, you effectively build a roadmap for the passage and therefore, have a clear picture in mind by the time you end the passage.

### 4. Make sure you brush up your knowledge of idioms and metaphors

This is a long-term step that involves focus on building language skills. Remember, the only way to answer questions that feature idioms/metaphors as answer options is to know the meanings of these options. You can only do so by building your knowledge of the language.

### 5. Be careful of the scope trap

All RC big picture questions (questions based on the overall theme, structure, purpose, tone, attitude, and title) feature a common trap in the answer options: they change the scope of the passage. What do I mean by scope? Scope refers to the general set of ideas the passage refers to. Mostly, passages have a defined scope. For example, a passage might be based on liberalization of the economy in India. Now if the answer option talks about global liberalization, this should be a marker for you: the scope of the passage has been changed. So make sure you are super careful about these scope changes and stick to core ideas of the passage.

With this, the set of tips, tricks, and advice for RC articles is complete. Hope you derive value from this article.