

**Aptitude Advanced**

# **All about Reading Comprehension**

**eBook 01**

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## Chapter 1: Introduction & Overview

In the RC-Basic eBook, you learnt the three important aspects of RCs and they were:

1. Overview of reading comprehensions in terms of format and what it takes to read well
2. RC process: Steps to be kept in mind to understand the passages well.
3. Reading Faster and Better: approaches to read fast and methods to improve accuracy.

The passages will not always be interesting or fun to read; as a matter of fact some of them will be downright boring and difficult to understand. The language of the passages will be similar to what you are likely to see in publications such as Tribune, or any other English Daily. The problem most students face on RC is that they have to go through text from areas they aren't conversant with and answer questions based on this. The moment you see a passage from an unfamiliar area such as History or Women's Suffrage, you immediately start telling yourself that you will do badly on this passage because you have no idea about the subject area. If you start with this negative thought process, things will obviously only go downhill for you. Please keep in mind that you are not expected to have any prior knowledge of the topic in the

first place. All the information that you need to answer the questions is given to you in the passage. You just need to comprehend the passage and select the correct answer from the options provided.

Whenever we read some text, it is human tendency to focus on the facts provided. We tend to focus on specific details, numbers, and dates but in the process we end up missing out on the big picture, which provides the answer to the question 'WHY'. Why has the author provided these figures or details? This is the purpose of the author in writing this paragraph. If you concentrate on the details and miss out on this 'WHY' aspect, then you will always struggle to answer RC questions correctly.

This is because most questions will not directly ask you something that is clearly mentioned in the passage; rather the questions will be more roundabout and indirect in nature. The answer to most of the questions will not be clearly stated in the passage so it does not make sense to spend valuable time trying to absorb all the details mentioned in the passage.

As reading style of the given text varies from person to person so reading styles are subjective—there is no best method for approaching the passages. However there are few better approaches than others. You should, read somewhat faster than you normally do, but not to the point that your comprehension suffers. You will have to experiment to find your optimum pace.

One method that you may find helpful is to preview the passage by reading the first sentence of each paragraph. Usually, the topic of a paragraph is contained in the first sentence. Reading the first sentence of each paragraph will give an overview of the passage. The topic sentences act as a summary of the passage. Moreover, since each passage is only three or four paragraphs long, previewing the topic sentences will not use up an huge amount of time.

### **In nutshell:**

1. Reading styles are subjective—so no need to worry too much about your style as long as you are understanding the passage and scoring well in this section

2. Don't speed read, or skim, the passage. Instead, read at a faster than usual pace, but not to the point that your comprehension suffers.
3. Read the first sentence of each paragraph before you read the passage and you will get the idea of author's mindset towards the subject he has presented.

## Chapter 2: Types of questions

The solution to performing well on the passages is not the particular reading technique you use. Rather the answer is to become completely familiar with the question types—there are only 6-8—so that you can anticipate the questions that *might* be asked as you read the passage and answer those that *are* asked more quickly and efficiently. As you become familiar with the following question types, you will be more confident and will be able to score well.

Following are types of question you will come across in RCs:

1. Main Idea
2. Factual or description question
3. Inference question
4. Application question
5. Tone question
6. Title question
7. Structure based question
8. Vocabulary based question

## 1. What is the main idea?

The main idea of a paragraph is the *point of the passage, minus all the details*. It's the big picture - the SolarSystem vs. the planets, Football game vs. the fans, cheerleaders, quarterback, and uniforms. It's the brief, but all-encompassing summary. It covers everything the paragraph talks about, but nothing in particular.

### 1.1 How to Find the Main Idea

#### Summarize the Passage

After you've read the passage, summarize it in **one sentence** that includes the gist of every idea from the paragraph. A good way to do this is to pretend you have just ten words to tell someone what the passage was about.

You'd have to think broadly, so you could include every detail in just a short statement.

### 1.2 Main Idea Questions

- Correct answer obscured by close answer-choices
- These either overstate or understate the author's main point.
- Answer-choices that stress specifics tend to understate the main idea.



- Choices that go beyond the scope of the passage tend to overstate the main idea.

Let us try to apply the learning: what is the main idea of the given passage?

### Passage A

The health-care economy is replete with unusual and even unique economic relationships. One of the least understood involves the peculiar roles of producer or “provider” and purchaser or “consumer” in the typical doctor-patient relationship. In most sectors of the economy, it is the seller who attempts to attract a potential buyer with various inducements of price, quality, and utility, and it is the buyer who makes the decision. Where circumstances permit the buyer no choice because there is effectively (in effect: VIRTUALLY) only one seller and the product is relatively essential, government usually asserts monopoly and places the industry under price and other regulations. Neither of these conditions prevails in most of the health-care industry.

In the health-care industry, the doctor-patient relationship is the mirror image of the ordinary

relationship between producer and consumer. Once an individual has chosen to see a physician—and even then there may be no real choice—it is the physician who usually makes all significant purchasing decisions: whether the patient should return “next Wednesday,” whether X-rays are needed, whether drugs should be prescribed, etc. It is a rare and sophisticated patient who will challenge such professional decisions or raise in advance questions about price, especially when the ailment is regarded as serious.

This is particularly significant in relation to hospital care. The physician must certify the need for hospitalization, determine what procedures will be performed, and announce when the patient may be discharged. The patient may be consulted about some of these decisions, but in the main it is the doctor’s judgments that are final. Little wonder then that in the eyes of the hospital it is the physician who is the real “consumer.” As a consequence, the medical staff represents the “power center” in hospital policy and decision-making, not the administration.

Although usually there are in this situation four

identifiable participants—the physician, the hospital, the patient, and the payer (generally an insurance carrier or government)—the physician makes the essential decisions for all of them. The hospital becomes an extension of the physician; the payer generally meets most of the bona fide bills generated by the physician/hospital; and for the most part the patient plays a passive role. In routine or minor illnesses, or just plain worries, the patient's options are, of course, much greater with respect to use and price. In illnesses that are of some significance, however, such choices tend to evaporate (to pass off or away: DISAPPEAR “my despair evaporated J. F. Wharton”), and it is for these illnesses that the bulk of the health-care dollar is spent. We estimate that about 75-80 percent of health-care expenditures are determined by physicians, not patients. For this reason, economy measures directed at patients or the general publics are relatively ineffective.

1. The author's primary purpose is to
  - A. speculate about the relationship between a patient's ability to pay and the treatment received
  - B. criticize doctors for exercising too much control over patients

- C. analyze some important economic factors in health care
- D. urge hospitals to reclaim their decision-making authority
- E. inform potential patients of their health-care rights

**Solution: C**

C is the right answer because throughout the passage the author is analyzing a few important economic factors related to health care and it is clear from the first few lines of the passage.

## **2. What is the meaning of Description based questions?**

Often the questions provide a clue as to where the answer may be found (caveat when the question specifies a certain line number, be sure to check out the 5 lines preceding and following that line number) It could be in the form of some text that links up in the passage structure.

### **2.1 Description Questions**

- Description questions refer to a minor point or to incidental information, not to the author's main point.

- The answer to a description question must refer directly to a statement in the passage, not to something implied by it.
- In fact, exact quotes ('Same language' traps) are often used to bait wrong answers.
- Caution: When answering a description question, you must find the point in the passage from which the question is drawn. Don't rely on memory too many obfuscating tactics are used with these questions.

**Let us try to apply the learning**

### **Passage B**

**Directions for questions:** Read the passage given below and answer the questions that follow.

There are two major systems of criminal procedure in the modern world--the adversarial and the inquisitorial. The former is associated with common law tradition and the latter with civil law tradition. Both systems were historically preceded by the system of private vengeance in which the victim of a crime fashioned his own remedy and administered it privately, either personally or through an agent. The vengeance system was a system of self-help, the essence of which was captured in the slogan "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." The modern

adversarial system is only one historical step removed from the private vengeance system and still retains some of its characteristic features. Thus, for example, even though the right to institute criminal action has now been extended to all members of society and even though the police department has taken over the pretrial investigative functions on behalf of the prosecution, the adversarial system still leaves the defendant to conduct his own pretrial investigation. The trial is still viewed as a duel between two adversaries, refereed by a judge who, at the beginning of the trial has no knowledge of the investigative background of the case. In the final analysis the adversarial system of criminal procedure symbolizes and regularizes the punitive combat.

By contrast, the inquisitorial system begins historically where the adversarial system stopped its development. It is two historical steps removed from the system of private vengeance. Therefore, from the standpoint of legal anthropology, it is historically superior to the adversarial system. Under the inquisitorial system the public investigator has the duty to investigate not just on behalf of the prosecutor but also on behalf of the defendant. Additionally, the public prosecutor has the

duty to present to the court not only evidence that may lead to the conviction of the defendant but also evidence that may lead to his exoneration. This system mandates that both parties permit full pretrial discovery of the evidence in their possession. Finally, in an effort to make the trial less like a duel between two adversaries, the inquisitorial system mandates that the judge take an active part in the conduct of the trial, with a role that is both directive and protective.

Fact-finding is at the heart of the inquisitorial system. This system operates on the philosophical premise that in a criminal case the crucial factor is not the legal rule but the facts of the case and that the goal of the entire procedure is to experimentally recreate for the court the commission of the alleged crime.

According to the passage, the inquisitorial system differs from the adversarial system in that

- A. It does not make the defendant solely responsible for gathering evidence for his case
- B. It does not require the police department to work on behalf of the prosecution

- C. It does not allow the victim the satisfaction of private vengeance
- D. It requires the prosecution to drop a weak case
- E. A defendant who is innocent would prefer to be tried under the inquisitorial system

**Answer:** A- this is the major shift in the orientation of the inquisitorial system as opposed to the adversarial system.

B is factually incorrect.

C lies outside the logical domain.

D is secondary in terms of import.

E is a matter of inference, not directly supported by the passage.

### **3. What is an inference?**

It is a conclusion based on the given fact/facts in the passage. An inference is something that is certainly true, based on the passage. Inferences require “reading between the lines”. The author hints at certain things without explicitly stating them. So here you have to translate the information in the passage to a situation presented in the question



### 3.1 Inference questions

- They require you to go beyond what is stated in the passage, asking you to draw an inference from the passage, to make a conclusion based on the passage, or to identify one of the author's tacit assumptions.
- The correct answer must say more than what is said in the passage.
- Beware of same language traps with these questions

### 3.2 What cannot be an answer to an inference based question?

- It should not be direct line picked up as it is, from the passage.
- It should not be the restatement of one of the lines from the passage.

**Let us try to apply the learning**

#### **Passage C**

**Directions for questions:** Read the passages given below and answer the questions that follow

A few years ago, it was call centers that were outsourced to India, then came the technical and animation outsourcing phase. The last year has seen a rapid

growth in a new form of outsourcing – Education Process Outsourcing (EPO) or online tutoring.

Indian teachers are being looked upon by countries like US, UK and Australia to groom their students.

With rapid development in online learning, tutoring companies have also got a boost.

Many are investing in technologies like multimedia chat rooms, Interwise Enterprise Conferencing (IEC), Voice-over-Internet Protocol (VOIP) and so on.

Students, from anywhere, across the globe can log on to a website at a pre-determined time for a particular course. An Indian teacher logs on to the same website at the same time. The technology used in IEC, which integrates web video and voice in an IP-based software platform. While it is a one-on-one session for a student, the teacher usually attends to multiple students simultaneously on different links. The session is generally of an hour, providing sufficient times to even ask questions.

There can be three methodologies to conduct online tutoring. The most expensive but beneficial is the one-to-one session, which allows tutoring companies to create customized tutoring solutions to suit individual needs as well. The second is virtual classroom which is ideal for small group learning around the world or limited to a classroom. The third can be web seminars which are for large group presentations that aim to build awareness and transfer knowledge to a segment of students.

For online tutoring, 24 x 7 learning is now a norm, especially with learners living in practically every time-zone and having unpredictable learning habits. For teachers, apart from being competent in their fields, they need to have experience in tutoring over the web. The major subjects are Maths, English grammar, comprehension and writing, Science, Social Studies and Engineering.

1. Which of the following statements can be inferred from the passage?
  - A. There is no scope for the epos in India due to technological incompetencies.
  - B. Online tutoring is student friendly.

- C. There has been an increase in the number of internet subscribers in the country.
- D. The concept of EPO is only a fantasy and cannot be practically supported by India.

**Answer: B**

The passage clearly states that Indian teachers are being looked upon by foreign countries for grooming their students with the help of EPO. Thus, the concept of EPO cannot be said to be merely a fantasy. Also, the passage does not mention anything about technological incompetencies in India that may stop it from entering into an EPO business. Option C is outside the context of the passage.

The passage repeatedly mentions that online tutoring is extremely customized and also takes care of the unpredictable learning habits of the students. Hence B

**4. What is application question?**

The question in which one has to apply the learning/understanding of the passage to a hypothetical situation, which is relevant to the given passage

## 4.1 Application Questions

- Inference questions ask you to apply what you have learned from the passage to derive new information about the same subject,
- Whereas application questions go one step further, asking you to apply what you have learned from the passage to a different or hypothetical situation.
- To answer an application question, take the author's perspective.
- Ask yourself: What am I arguing for? What might make my argument stronger? What might make it weaker?

**Let us try to apply the learning**

### **Passage D**

There are two major systems of criminal procedure in the modern world--the adversarial and the inquisitorial. The former is associated with common law tradition and the latter with civil law tradition. Both systems were historically preceded by the system of private vengeance in which the victim of a crime fashioned his own remedy and administered it privately, either personally or through an agent. The vengeance system was a system of self-help, the essence of which was captured in the slogan

"an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." The modern adversarial system is only one historical step removed from the private vengeance system and still retains some of its characteristic features. Thus, for example, even though the right to institute criminal action has now been extended to all members of society and even though the police department has taken over the pretrial investigative functions on behalf of the prosecution, the adversarial system still leaves the defendant to conduct his own pretrial investigation. The trial is still viewed as a duel between two adversaries, refereed by a judge who, at the beginning of the trial has no knowledge of the investigative background of the case. In the final analysis the adversarial system of criminal procedure symbolizes and regularizes the punitive combat.

By contrast, the inquisitorial system begins historically where the adversarial system stopped its development. It is two historical steps removed from the system of private vengeance. Therefore, from the standpoint of legal anthropology, it is historically superior to the adversarial system. Under the inquisitorial system the public investigator has the duty to investigate not just on behalf of the prosecutor but also on behalf of the

defendant. Additionally, the public prosecutor has the duty to present to the court not only evidence that may lead to the conviction of the defendant but also evidence that may lead to his exoneration. This system mandates that both parties permit full pretrial discovery of the evidence in their possession. Finally, in an effort to make the trial less like a duel between two adversaries, the inquisitorial system mandates that the judge take an active part in the conduct of the trial, with a role that is both directive and protective.

Fact-finding is at the heart of the inquisitorial system. This system operates on the philosophical premise that in a criminal case the crucial factor is not the legal rule but the facts of the case and that the goal of the entire procedure is to experimentally recreate for the court the commission of the alleged crime.

Based on the information in the passage, it can be inferred that which one of the following would most logically begin a paragraph immediately following the passage?

- A. Because of the inquisitorial system's thoroughness in conducting its pretrial investigation, it can be concluded that a defendant who is innocent would

prefer to be tried under the inquisitorial system, whereas a defendant who is guilty would prefer to be tried under the adversarial system.

- B. As the preceding analysis shows, the legal system is in a constant state of flux. For now the inquisitorial system is ascendant, but it will probably be soon replaced by another system.
- C. The accusatorial system begins where the inquisitorial system ends. So it is three steps removed from the system of private vengeance, and therefore historically superior to it.
- D. Because in the inquisitorial system the judge must take an active role in the conduct of the trial, his competency and expertise have become critical.
- E. The criminal justice system has evolved to the point that it no longer seems to be derivative of the system of private vengeance. Modern systems of criminal justice empower all of society with the right to instigate a legal action, and the need for vengeance is satisfied through a surrogate--the public prosecutor.



Answer: A.

C is rejected because the very first line shows that the author intends to focus primarily on just two systems of criminal procedure.

D is rejected because under the inquisitorial system, it is the prosecution who assumes a very active role.

E is rejected because the need for vengeance is something that the author wants to move ahead of, not retain as the fountainhead of criminal procedure systems.

Between A and B, A is a better choice because it once again affirms the superiority of the inquisitorial system—something that the author has been striving for all along the passage.

## 5. What is Tone?

It is the attitude of the author towards the subject presented in the passage or the way the author has treated the subject/content in passage. Tone is an integral part of a work's **meaning** because it controls the reader's response which is essential to fully experiencing literature. **To misinterpret tone is to misinterpret meaning.** In order to recognize **tonal shift** and to interpret **complexities of tone**, the reader must be able to make

inferences based on an active reading of the work. The author's tone or voice is revealed by organization, choice of detail, and sentence structure, but **word choice** is probably the strongest indicator of tone.

## 5.1 Tone Question

- Tone questions ask you to identify the writer's attitude or perspective.
- Is the writer's feeling toward the subject positive, negative, or neutral? Does the writer give his own opinion, or does he objectively present the opinions of others?
- Before you read the answer-choices, decide whether the writer's tone is positive, negative, or neutral. It is best to do this without referring to the passage.
- Check the adjectives that he chooses.
- For instance, if we agree with a person who holds strong feelings about a subject, we may describe his opinions as impassioned. On the other hand, if we disagree with him, we may describe his opinions as excitable, which has the same meaning as "impassioned" but carries a negative connotation.

## 5.2 Possible tone-meaning of the word

<b>Acerbic</b>	Harsh/ severe; bitter
<b>Aggressive</b>	Forceful; tending towards unprovoked offensiveness
<b>Angry</b>	indignant
<b>Apathetic</b>	Emotionless; not interested/ concerned; indifferent; unresponsive
<b>Apologetic</b>	Expressing remorse, regret, sorrow for having failed, injured, insulted or wronged another
<b>Belligerent</b>	Aggressively hostile; bellicose
<b>Biased</b>	Favoring one thing/person/group over another for personal reasons
<b>Caustic</b>	Biting; acerbic
<b>Condescending</b>	Patronizing; showing/implying patronizing descent from dignity/ superiority
<b>Contemptuous</b>	Expressing contempt/ disdain
<b>Cynical</b>	displaying a belief that people are always self-seeking and never altruistic in their actions
<b>Derisive</b>	Unkind and displaying contempt
<b>Disparaging</b>	Speak slightly; depreciating; belittling

<b>Emotional</b>	Easily affected by feelings actuated by experiencing love, hate, fear and the like
<b>Ethical</b>	Dealing with principles of morality; honest; righteous
<b>Euphemistic</b>	Substitution of mild, indirect or vague expression for one thought to be offensive, harsh or blunt
<b>Humanistic</b>	Evincing keen interest in human affairs, nature, welfare, values
<b>Humourous</b>	Funny and amusing
<b>Introspective</b>	Consider one's own internal state of feelings
<b>Laudatory</b>	Praising; extolling; applauding
<b>Motivating</b>	Impelling; inciting
<b>Pedestrian</b>	Lacking vitality, imagination, distinction
<b>Populist</b>	Egalitarian; pertaining to the characteristics of common people/working class
<b>Provocative</b>	Inciting; stimulating; irritating; vexing
<b>Romantic</b>	Fanciful; impractical; unrealistic; extravagant; exaggerated
<b>Sarcastic</b>	Harsh, bitter derision; taunting;

	sneering; cutting remarks
<b>Satirical</b>	Ironical; taunting; human folly held up to scorn/ derision/ ridicule
<b>Speculative</b>	Theoretical rather than practical; thoughtful; reflective; hypothetical
<b>Technical</b>	Using terminology or treating subject matter in a manner peculiar to a particular field, as a writer or a book
<b>Vitriolic</b>	Full of anger and hatred

*Here are a few important tones with examples so that you have clear understanding of them and are able to identify while solving reading comprehensions*

### **Irony:**

In a general sense, irony is a rhetorical device that is characterized by incongruity in the real situation and what is expected.

### **Examples**

- I. A man looked out of the window to see the storm intensify. He turned to his friend and said “wonderful weather we’re having!”

- II. Simple phrases, usually in the form of similes, with obvious incongruities i.e. clear as mud, smooth as sandpaper, friendly as a coiled rattlesnake
- III. In Shakespeare's Oedipus Rex, the audience is aware that Oedipus's journey to find the murderer will be fruitless because he himself is the murderer

### **Sarcasm:**

Sarcasm is an ironic or satirical remark that seems to be praising someone or something but is really taunting or cutting. Sarcasm can be used to hurt or offend or can be used for comic affect.

### **Examples**

- I. When you expected something to happen, especially after warning someone about it - Well what a surprise!
- II. When someone says something that is very obvious - Really Sherlock, No! You are clever
- III. When someone does something wrong - Very good, well done, nice!

### **Satire:**

Satire is a technique employed by writers to expose and criticize foolishness and corruption of an individual or a society by using humor, irony, exaggeration or ridicule. It

intends to improve humanity by criticizing its follies and foibles. A writer in a satire uses fictional characters, which stand for real people, to expose and condemn their corruption.

A writer may point a satire toward a person, a country or even the entire world. Usually, a satire is a comical piece of writing which makes fun of an individual or a society to expose its stupidity and shortcomings. In addition, he hopes that those he criticizes will improve their characters by overcoming their weaknesses.

### **Example:**

Most political cartoons which we witness every day in newspapers and magazines are examples of satire. These cartoons criticize some recent actions of political figures in a comical way.

“If this is going to be a Christian nation that doesn’t help the poor, either we have to pretend that Jesus was just as selfish as we are, or we’ve got to acknowledge that He commanded us to love the poor and serve the needy without condition and then admit that we just don’t want to do it.”

## Example

Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* is an example of poetic satire in which he has satirized the upper middle class of eighteenth century England. It exposes the vanity of young fashionable ladies and gentlemen and the frivolity of their actions. For example, Pope says about Belinda after losing her lock of hair:

“Whether the nymph shall break Diana’s law,  
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw,  
Or stain her honor, or her new  
brocade”

The line mocks at the values of the fashionable class of that age. The trivial things were thought of as equal to significant things. For Belinda, the loss of her virtue becomes equal to a China jar being cracked.

## Concern:

When the author is showing concern about the subject or the topic he has presented.

## Example

A favorite hobby of many people for the last few decades is to bemoan the moral decay of the younger generation.



Like most topics that get a lot of people hot under the collar, this of course relates primarily to sex.

A lot of other moral issues get discussed; dishonesty, rudeness, the drug problem, and so forth. But talk to anyone who is concerned about moral decay and pretty soon they will start to focus on sex-related matters; the high teen pregnancy rate, abortion, single parenthood, and so on.

Not a lot is given as the cause for moral decay. Most so-called causes are either very nebulous or not easily definable. The closest that any commonly cited "reason" comes to being even somewhat concrete is the idea that moral decay is caused by "the media". Movies, television shows, popular novels, et cetera glorify non-marital sex, which causes the younger generation (anyone more than twenty years younger than yourself) to act in a like manner.

Here the author is showing his concern for the moral decay in the society.

### **Analytical writing:**

Analytical writing is commonly required in academic writing to show relationships between pieces of

information. It is used to compare and contrast, assess or evaluate (for example, a number of approaches, theories, methodologies or outcomes). It has a structure based on the ordering of main ideas in relation to each other and uses evidence from various sources. However, analytical writing does not present a position to be argued.

### Example

Australian mothers from a low-income background were less likely to utilise preventative services . . . but they were more likely to be hospitalised and visit the out-patient clinic. It seems these families put off . . . seeking medical treatment for their children until their condition was much progressed. Similarly, report that ...” Learning how to ‘fit in’ seemed to capture the overall theme of this discussion and that the struggle was about navigating a relationship around the presences of an invisible barrier”

(In the novel, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Myrtle Wilson demonstrates how members of the lower class cannot achieve the American Dream. Myrtle, a working class citizen, associates herself with the wealthy in order to appear rich demonstrates how simply

associating with the wealthy is not enough for Myrtle to actually obtain the American Dream. Her attempt to transcend class structures ultimately leads to her death, which reveals that the working class cannot grasp the American Dream. )

### Conjectural:

In this tone, the author gives an opinion or a judgment based on inconclusive or incomplete evidence; guesswork. This style is used when Author has no knowledge of the subject he is writing about.

### Examples

The commentators made various conjectures about the outcome of the next election.

To judge or conclude by conjecture; guess: "From the comparative silence below ... I conjectured that Mr. Rochester was now at liberty"

## 6. Title question

### 6.1 What is title?

A title, in effect, is the main idea summed up in a brief, catchy way.

## 6.2 Tips to find the most appropriate title

Be sure not to go with a choice that aptly describes only the latter half of the passage. A valid title, like a main idea, must cover the entire passage. The title has to be catchy, short, and should be able to capture the essence of the content of the passage.

**Let us try to apply the learning**

### **Passage E**

Through the thin haze of my cigar-smoke I noted the details of a face which was already familiar to me from many photographs – the strongly-curved nose, the hollow, worn cheeks, the dark, ruddy hair, thin tuft upon his projecting chin. Something there was of Napoleon III, something of Don Quixote, and yet again something which was the essence of the English country gentleman-the keen, alert, open-air lover of dogs and of horses.

His skin was of a rich flower-pot red from sun and wind. His eyebrows were tufted and over-hanging, which gave those naturally cold eyes, an almost ferocious aspect, an impression which was increased by his strong and furrowed brow. In figure he was spare, but very strongly

built indeed; he had often proved that there were few men in England capable of such sustained exertions. His height was a little over six feet, but he seemed shorter on account of a peculiar rounding of the shoulders. Such was the famous Lord John Roxton as he sat opposite to me, biting hard upon his cigar and watching me steadily in a long and embarrassing silence.

Lord John Roxton has some points in common with Professor Summerlee, and others in which they are the very antithesis to each the same spare, scraggy physique. As to his appearance, I have, as I recollect, described it in that portion of my narrative which I have left behind me in London. He is exceedingly neat and prim in his ways, dresses always with great care in white drill suits and high brown mosquito-boots, and shaves at least once a day. Like most men of action, he is laconic in speech, and sinks readily into his own thoughts, but he is always quick to answer a question or join in a conversation, talking in a queer, jerky, half-humorous fashion. His knowledge of the world, and very especially of South America, is surprising, and he has a whole hearted belief in the possibilities of our journey which is not to be dashed by the sneers of Professor Summerlee.

He has a gentle voice and a quiet manner, but behind his twinkling blue eyes there lurks a capacity for furious wrath and implacable resolution, the more dangerous because they are held in leash. He spoke little of his own exploits in Brazil and Peru, but it was a revelation to me to find the excitement which was caused by his presence among the riverine natives, who looked upon him as their Champion and Protector.

Q. What would be a suitable title for the passage?

- A. Lord John Roxton
- B. Lord John Roxton in South America
- C. Lord John Roxton and I
- D. The exploits of Lord John Roxton.

**ANSWER: A**

The passage is all about Lord John Roxton and his personality.

## **7. Structure based question**

### **7.1 What is the structure of the passage?**

The term “structure” refers to how information is organized in a passage.

## Commonly used patterns of organization

- **Cause and Effect:** The results of something are explained.
- **Chronological:** information in the passage is organized in order of time.
- **Compare and Contrast:** two or more things are described. Their similarities and differences are discussed.
- **Order of Importance:** information is expressed as a hierarchy or in priority.
- **Problem and Solution:** a problem is described and a response or solution is proposed or explained.
- **Sequence / Process Writing:** information is organized in steps or a process is explained in the order in which it occurs.
- **Social Science structures:** - Make comparisons; Describe cause and effect relationships; opionate or reason
- **Science:** Problem solving, cause and effect, classification of things and events; experimentation
- **Literature:** Create moods, Narrate events and describe settings and characters.

- **Possible ways are:** A hypothesis is stated and then analyzed; a proposal is evaluated and alternatives are explored; a viewpoint is set forth and then subsequently defended.

## **8. Vocabulary based question:**

These questions are based on the meaning of the vocabulary or the phrase within the context of the passage. Sometimes these questions test your understanding of the meaning of a complicated sentence or an important comment or idea expressed in a paragraph.

### **8.1 Tips to solve vocabulary based questions**

Use context clue to guess the meaning of the words or phrases tested in the reading comprehension passages.

- From the four answer choices given, choose the word or the phrase that is closest in meaning, or is a synonym, to the vocabulary or the phrase. Some of the choices might have similar meanings, but only one will be the most appropriate meaning within the context.



- If you do not know the meaning of a word or a phrase, read the entire sentence because the sentence may provide additional clues. The sentences used before or after the sentence in which the word or phrase appears often supply clues to the meaning of the word or phrase.

## Let us try to apply the learning

### Passage F

**Directions for the question:** Read the passage and answer the question based on it.

It is undeniable that some very useful analogies can be drawn between the relational systems of computer mechanism and the relational systems of brain mechanism. The comparison does not depend upon any close resemblance between the actual mechanical links which occur in brains and computers; it depends on what the machines do. Furthermore, brains and computers can both be organized so as to solve problems. The mode of communication is very similar in both the cases, so much so that computers can now be designed to generate artificial human speech and even, by accident, to produce sequences of words which human beings recognize as poetry. The implication is not that machines

are gradually assuming human forms, but that there is no sharp break of continuity between what is human, what is mechanical.

- Q. The author uses the word 'recognize' in relation to computer poetry to convey a
- A. Sense of sorrow at the reluctant admission of the superiority of machines by mankind.
  - B. feeling that computers have yet to conquer the emotional heights that man is capable of attaining.
  - C. feeling of derision for the popular faith in the omnipotence of the computer
  - D. feeling of a fatalistic acceptance of the computer's encroachment upon human bastions

**Answer Key: B**

The author implies that computers are not yet capable of producing poetry.

## Chapter 3- Golden Rules of RC

### 1. Pay attention

When you read one should read as if it really matters. Most people read in the same in which they watch television, i.e. in an inattentive, passive way. Reading requires effort and you must make the effort.

There are some simple methods that you can use to pay better attention and get more out of your textbook reading time. Different authors call it different things, but many researchers say that you will improve your comprehension if you somehow "preview" the passage before you actually sit down and read every word.

#### To do a preview you:

- Take 30 to 60 seconds.
- Look over the title of the chapter.
- Look at all the headings, subheadings marked, italic or dark print.
- Look at any pictures or illustrations, charts or graphs.
- Quickly skim over the passage, reading the first and last paragraph and glancing at the first sentence of every other paragraph.
- Close the book and ask yourself:  
--What is the main idea?

--What kind of writing is it?

--What is the author's purpose?

You might think that you could possibly answer these questions with so little exposure to the material, but if you do the preview correctly, you should have some very good general ideas. If you have a general idea of what the passage is about before you really read it, you will be able to understand and remember the passage better.

When you finally get to the point where you are actually slowly reading the passage, read in a **'questioning'** manner -as if you were 'Searching for something'. It sometimes helps if you take the heading or title of a chapter and turn it to a question.

For example, if the heading of a section in the text is "The Causes of the Civil War", take that title and switch it into a question like: "What are the causes of the Civil War?". Now you have a goal; something to look for; something to find out. When you are goal-oriented, you are more likely to reach the goal. At least you'll remember one thing about the text which you have just read.

## 2. Stop talking to yourself when you read

People talk to themselves in 2 ways, by:

1. Vocalizing, which is the actual moving of your lips as you read, and
2. Sub-vocalizing, which is talking to yourself in your head as you silently read.

Both of these will slow you down to the point in which you find that you can't read any faster than you can speak. Speech is a relatively slow activity; for most, the average speed is about 250 WPM (words per minute).

Reading should be an activity which involves only the eyes and the brain. Vocalization ties reading to actual speaking. Try to think of reading as if you were looking at a landscape, a panorama of ideas, rather than looking at the rocks at your feet.

## 3. Read in thought groups

Studies have shown that when we read, our eyes must make small stops along the line. Poor readers make many, many more fixations (eye-stops) than good readers. Not only does this slow you down, but it inhibits comprehension because meaning is easier to grasp from groups of words rather than from individual words or even single letters. Try to read in phrases of three or four

words, especially in complete clauses and prepositional phrases. Your mind may internalize them as if the whole phrase is like one big meaning-rich word.

#### **4. Don't keep re-reading the same phrases**

Poor readers habitually read and re-read the same phrase over and over again. This habit of making "regressions" doubles or triples reading time and often does not result in better comprehension. A single careful, attentive reading may not be enough for full comprehension, but is often more effective than constant regressions in the middle of reading. It is best to work on paying closer attention the first time though. Do a preview first before careful reading and try the tips. You'll remember better without rereading.

#### **5. Vary your reading rate**

Vary your reading speed accordingly to suit the difficulty and type of writing of the text. Poor readers always read at the same slow rate. An efficient reader speeds up for easier material and slows down for the difficult. Some things were not meant to be read quickly at all. Legal material and very difficult text should be read slowly. Easier material and magazines and newspapers can be read quickly. Poetry and plays were meant to be

performed, and if not acted out, then at least, spoken out aloud. This obviously will conflict with good speed reading method which forbids vocalization. Religious writings and scripture were originally written to be recited and listened to by an audience which was likely to be intelligent, but illiterate. The "fun" of poetry, plays, or prayer is not really experienced if you '**Speed Read**' the text.

### **Overall Strategy**

- I. Answer passages with familiar subject matter first.
- II. Attack the key sentences of the passage first; viz: The first sentence of every paragraph, the last sentence of the last paragraph.
- III. Skim through the rest.
- IV. Attempt questions in an efficient order - The thematic first, then the factual, save the inferential for the last. Read the question, and not the answer alternatives, then read the passage and try to frame an answer. Reading the passage is time consuming. If you skip questions and move on to another passage, you'll spend a lot of time in re-reading it. So answer all the questions that you want to answer without leaving anything for later – take those educated guesses right away.