

# Critical Reading

## COMPREHENSION

### Introduction:

Comprehension means the act of comprehending or the capacity of the mind to understand. In the examination papers, questions on comprehension test are included to judge the ability of the students to understand the given passage.

In the English language paper, questions on comprehension test are very important for the students appearing in the competitive examinations. Therefore, they should try to learn how to solve these questions. Practice of solving these questions will greatly help them in the examination.

### LONG PASSAGE COMPREHENSION PASSAGES WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

#### PASSAGE - 1

The Romans – for centuries is the masters of war and politics across Europe, Northern Africa, and Asia Minor – have often been criticized for producing few original thinkers outside the realm of politics. This criticism, while in many ways true, is not without its problems. It was, after all, the conquest of Greece that provided Rome with its greatest influx of educated subjects. Two of the great disasters in intellectual history – the murder of Archimedes and the burning of Alexandria's library – both occurred under Roman's watch. Nevertheless, a city that was able to conquer so much of the known world could not have been devoid of creativity that characterizes so many other ancient empires.

Engineering is one endeavour in which the Romans showed themselves capable. Their aqueducts carried water hundreds of miles along the tops of vast arcades. Roman roads built for the rapid deployment of troops, criss-cross Europe and still form the basis of numerous modern highways that provide quick access between many major European and African cities. Indeed, a large number of these cities owe their prominence to Rome's economic and political influence.

Many of those major cities lie far beyond Rome's original province, and Latin-derived languages are spoken in most Southern European nations. Again a result of military influence, the popularity of Latin and its off spring is difficult to overestimate. During the centuries of ignorance and violence that followed Rome's decline, the Latin language was the glue that held together the identity of an entire continent. While seldom spoken today, it is still studied widely, if only so that such master or rhetoric as Cicero can be read in the original.

It is Cicero and his like who are perhaps the most overlooked legacy of Rome. While far from being a democracy, Rome did leave behind useful political tool that serve the American republic today. "Republic" itself is Latin for "the people's business," a notion cherished in democracies worldwide. Senators owe their name to Rome's class of elders; Representatives owe theirs to the Tribunes who seized popular prerogatives from the Senatorial class. The veto was a Roman notion adopted by the historically aware framers of the Constitution, who often assumed pen names from the lexicon of Latin life. These accomplishments, as monumental as any highway or coliseum, remain prominent features of the Western landscape.

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. The author describes "two of the great disasters in intellectual history" in order to
  - (A) establish a point directly related to the main argument
  - (B) show that certain historical claims are inaccurate
  - (C) demonstrate the importance of certain historical data
  - (D) disprove the claims made by other with a different view
  - (E) concede the partial accuracy of an opposing view

2. According to the passage, ancient Roman roads  
 (A) connected many major cities in ancient Europe  
 (B) are engineering marvels unequalled in modern times  
 (C) are similar in some respects to modern highways  
 (D) were products of democratic political institutions  
 (E) caused the development of modern European cities
3. According to the passage, which of the following accurately describes the Latin language?  
 I. It spread in part due to Rome's military power  
 II. It is reflected in modern political concepts  
 III. It is spoken today in some parts of Europe  
 (A) I only (B) II only  
 (C) I and II only (D) I and III only  
 (E) II and III only
4. It can be inferred from the passage that the framers of the Constitution  
 (A) were familiar with certain aspects of Roman government  
 (B) were similar to the Roman elders  
 (C) embraced the veto as the hallmark of Roman democracy ✓  
 (D) overlooked Cicero's contributions to the theory of democracy  
 (E) formed a government based on world-wide democracy
5. The primary purpose of the passage is to  
 (A) reveal the indifferent attitude taken by the ancient Romans toward the fine arts  
 (B) discuss the lasting accomplishments achieved by ancient Romans ✓  
 (C) analyse the use of the Latin language by the framers of the Constitution  
 (D) show that the construction of roads and aqueducts could not have been accomplished in ancient Greece  
 (E) Compare the destruction of the library at Alexandria to the murder of Archimedes
6. Which of the following is NOT described in the passage as a part of ancient Roman life that left a lasting legacy?  
 (A) The Latin languages  
 (B) Military accomplishments  
 (C) An extensive system of roads  
 (D) A democratic system of government  
 (E) Wide-ranging economic influence

### Explanatory Answers

**Ans. 1 (E).** This specific question has a line number. Remember to read a bit above and below the cited lines. The two disasters cited are mentioned to give an example of Rome's failings, before countering with a number of Rome's successes. The best answer was choice (E).

**Ans. 2 (A).** The specific question also has a good lead phrase: "Roman roads." You'll find it in the second paragraph. Choice (C) is wrong because these roads are not just similar to modern highways – they form the basis of these highways. Choice (E) is a bit too extreme. The cities may owe their prominence to these roads, but they were not "caused" by the roads. The correct answer is choice (A).

**Ans. 3 (C).** This is a specific question with a good lead phrase: "Latin language." You'll find it in the third paragraph. The correct answer is choice (C).

**Ans. 4 (A).** The specific question also has a good lead phrase: "framers of the Constitution". You'll find it in the last paragraph. You may have been to choices (A) and (C). Choice (C) used extreme language and went a bit too far. Great as the veto is, did the founding fathers consider it the "hallmark" of democracy? The passage doesn't say so. The correct answer was choice (A).

**Ans. 5 (B).** The first paragraph puts forth the idea that, despite criticism levelled against it, ancient Rome had many lasting accomplishments. The following three paragraphs give examples of these accomplishments.

Ans. 6 (D). In the fourth paragraph, it is explicitly stated that despite its political innovations, Rome was "far from being a democracy." All of the other choices are touched upon somewhere in the passage.

PASSAGE 2

Anthropologists who study orangutans, distant cousins of the human race, find in the animals behaviour hints of how our earliest ancestors may have lived. It has long been accepted that primates originally dwelt in the treetops and only migrated to the ground as forests began to dwindle. While to a certain extent, all primates except humans spend at least some time dwelling in trees, the orangutans can grow as heavy as 330 pounds and live for decades, requiring copious amounts of fruit simply to stay alive. Thus, they become very jealous of the territory where they find their food. Compounding this territoriality are the breeding habits of orangutans, since females can only breed every few years and, like humans, give birth not to litters but single off-spring.

Consequently, orangutans are solitary, territorial animals who have difficulty foraging in any part of the forest where they were not raised. Orangutans take from poachers by customs agents undergo incredible hardship on their return to the wild. Incorrectly relocating a male orangutan is especially problematic, often ending in the animal's death at the hands of a rival who sees not only his territory but also the females of his loosely knit community under threat from an outsider. While humans, like chimpanzees, are more gregarious and resourceful than orangutans, the latter provide anthropologists with useful information about the behaviour of prehomimid primates and how apelike behaviour influenced out ancestors' search for the food and family beneath the forest's canopy.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. The primary purpose of this passage is to
  - (A) Describe some behavioural and evolutionary characteristics of orangutans
  - (B) Analyse the reasons why early primates left their forest dwellings
  - (C) Illustrate the dangers posed to orangutans by poachers
  - (D) Show how orangutan behaviour differs from that of other primates
  - (E) Criticise anthropologists who misinterpret orangutan behaviour
2. The author of the passage discusses "orangutans taken from poachers" in order to
  - (A) Stress the importance of preserving orangutans as a species
  - (B) Indicate the widespread practice of animal poaching
  - (C) Refute the theory that orangutans can live in a variety of environments
  - (D) Contrast the behaviour of orangutans with that of other apes
  - (E) Emphasize the consequences of orangutan territoriality
3. The passage indicates that it is difficult to return orangutans to the wild for which of the following reasons?
  - A. The threat posed by new comers to other orangutans' territory
  - B. The conflict between males over available females
  - C. The scarcity of available food in the orangutan's environment

(A) A only	(B) A and B only
(C) A and C only	(D) B and C only
(E) A, B, and C.	
4. Which of the following can be inferred about differences between the behaviour of orangutans and that of other ape species?
  - (A) While orangutans spend much of their time on the treetops, other apes live exclusively on the ground
  - (B) Orangutans and other types of apes are all sociable species, but orangutans are more likely to bond for life
  - (C) Apes such as chimpanzees rely less upon their size than the average orangutans do
  - (D) Orangutans spend less time in the company of their members of their species than do some other apes

- (E) Because of their stringent territoriality, orangutans are less likely to elude capture by poachers than are other apes
5. According to the author, anthropologists study the behaviour of orangutans in order to
- (A) Prevent orangutans from becoming the target of poaching  
 (B) Assist customs agents in the relocation of orangutans  
 (C) Analyse the causes and consequences of contemporary human behaviour  
 (D) Prevent larger orangutans from eliminating their weaker rivals  
 (E) Better understand the factors that influenced human evolution
6. Which of the following are factors that the author indicates contribute to the orangutan's territoriality?
- (A) The lack of available food and the antisocial nature of orangutans  
 (B) The orangutan's need for large quantities of food and the infrequency with which it mates  
 (C) The threat posed by poachers and the orangutan's inability to protest itself from them  
 (D) The difficulties that orangutans face when compelled to socialize with other species such as chimpanzees  
 (E) The constant dangers that present themselves whenever one orangutan encounters another
7. It can be inferred from the passage that one development responsible for the evolution of distinct ape species was
- (A) Early primates inability to survive in the forest  
 (B) The shrinking of the available primitive forest  
 (C) The growth of human and chimpanzee communities  
 (D) The orangutan's eventual dominance of the treetops  
 (E) The encroachment of other species into the primitive forest

### Explanatory Answers

**Ans. 1 (A).** The answer to this general question came from understanding the main idea. The passage did not analyse the reasons primates left trees (B), or devote itself to a discussion of poachers (C), or do a point-by-point comparison of orangutans with other primates (D), or criticize anthropologists (E). The correct answer is choice (A).

**Ans. 2 (E).** The specific question has a line number. Remember to read a bit above and below the cited lines. The answer to this question actually came just *below* the quote. The poacher example is simply a further illustration of orangutans' territorial nature. The correct answer is choice (E).

**Ans. 3 (B).** Both statements I and II were mentioned, statement III was not. The correct answer is choice (B).

**Ans. 4 (D).** This is a specific question with no line number, and, really, no lead word. We're looking for differences between orangutans and other types of apes. The only other types of monkey mentioned is the chimpanzee who is said to be more gregarious. The correct answer is choice (D).

**Ans. 5 (E).** The specific question also has a good lead word: "anthropologists." It is found in two places, at the very beginning and the very end of the passage. You were probably down to choices (C) and (E). Why was (C) wrong? Because anthropologists only see parallels with *early* man. *not contemporary*.

**Ans. 6 (B).** The specific question also has a good lead word: "Territoriality," you'll find it in the second half of the first paragraph, which discusses two cases: the need for large amounts of food, and breeding habits. You were probably down to (A) or (B). Why was (A) wrong? It didn't discuss both food and breeding habits. Choice (B) was correct.

**Ans. 7 (B).** The second sentence of the first paragraph ends, ... "only migrated to the ground as forests began to dwindle." That gives us choice (B).

#### NOTE

This is a science passage. Paragraph one says the orangutan, studied by scientists for its resemblance to early humans, lives in trees and is very territorial. Paragraph two describes the orangutan's solitary territorial behaviour, which resembled that of early humans.

PASSAGE 3

Though the U.S. prides itself on being a leader in the world community, a recent report shows that it lags far behind other industrialized countries in meeting the needs of its youngest and most *vulnerable* citizens. The U.S. has a higher infant mortality rate, a higher proportion of low birth weight babies, a smaller proportion of babies immunized against childhood diseases and a much higher rate of adolescent pregnancies. These findings, described as a "quiet crisis" requiring immediate and far-reaching action, appeared in a report prepared by a task force of educators, doctors, politicians and business people. According to the report, a fourth of the nation's 12 million infants and toddlers live in poverty. As many as half confront risk factors that could harm their ability to develop intellectually, physically and socially. Child immunizations are too low, more children are born into poverty, more are in *substandard* care while their parents work and more are being raised by single parents. When taken together, these and other risk factors can lead to educational and health problems that are much harder and more costly to reverse.

The crisis begins in the womb with unplanned parenthood. Women with unplanned pregnancies are less likely to seek pre-natal care. In the U.S., 80% of teenage pregnancies and 56% of all pregnancies are unplanned. The problems continue after birth where unplanned pregnancies and *unstable* partnerships often go hand in hand. Since 1950, the number of single parent families has nearly tripled. More than 25 percent of all births today are to unmarried mothers. As the number of single parent families grows and more women enter the work force, infants and toddlers are increasingly in the care of people other than their parents.

Most disturbingly, recent statistics show that American parents are increasingly neglecting or *abusing* their children. In only four years from 1987-1991, the number of children in foster care increased by over 50 percent. Babies under the age of one are the fastest growing category of children entering foster care. The crisis affects children under the age of three most *severely*, the report says. Yet, it is this period-from infancy through preschool years-that sets the stage for a child's future.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. The main focus of the passage is on the plight of
 

(A) Low birth weight babies	(B) Unwed mothers
(C) Orphaned children	(D) Teenage mothers
(E) None of these	
2. Children falling in which age group are most severely affected by the 'quiet crisis'?
 

(A) Between 2 & 3 years	(B) Between 1 & 3 years
(C) Below 1 year	(D) Below 3 years
(E) None of these	
3. Which of the following does not constitute the 'quiet crisis' in the U.S. as per the task force report?
 

(A) Lower rate of babies surviving childhood diseases
(B) Larger proportion of babies who are deprived of immunization
(C) Lower proportion of new born babies with normal weight
(D) higher incidence of adolescent girls becoming mothers
(E) Increasing cases of teenage couples getting divorced
4. Which of the following statements is not true in the context of the passage?
 

(A) In the U.S., the number of infants living in poverty is about 3 million
(B) Only 20 percent of all the pregnancies in the U.S. are planned
(C) The number of single-parent families today is approximately three times that of four decades ago
(D) The number of children in the U.S. entering foster care has decreased after 1991
(E) About 6 million infants in the U.S. are likely to develop educational and health problems
5. The number of children born to married mothers in the U.S. is approximately how many times the number of children born to unwed mothers?
 

(A) 3 times	(B) 3.5 times
(C) 1.5 times	(D) 2 times

25  
25 25 25  
Marked

- (E) Not mentioned in the passage
6. Children born out of unplanned pregnancies are highly vulnerable because
- (A) They are mostly malnourished
  - (B) They are less likely to receive parental care ✓
  - (C) They are raised by single parents
  - (D) Their parents are mostly poor
  - (E) Their parents are emotionally immature
7. Decide which of the following factors is/are responsible for the physical, intellectual and social under-development of infants in the U.S.?
- |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| (A) Illiteracy of parents | (B) Lack of parental care |
| (C) Poverty               |                           |
| (A) Only A                | (B) Only B                |
| (C) Only C                | (D) Both A & C            |
| (E) Both B & C ✓          |                           |
8. An increasing number of infants in the U.S. are in the foster care on account of
- (A) An increasing number of employed couples who are required to stay apart
  - (B) An increasing number of women getting divorced and abandoning their babies
  - (C) ✓ An increasing number of single parent families with the female member working
  - (D) An increasing number of women maintaining the status of unwed motherhood and becoming economically independent
  - (E) An increasing number of parents who lack awareness about baby-care
9. The task force report seems to be based on the data pertaining to the period
- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (A) 1987 onwards till date | (B) ✓ 1950-91              |
| (C) 1987-91                | (D) 1950 onwards till date |
| (E) 1991 onwards till date |                            |

Directions (Q 10-12): Choose the word which is most nearly the same in meaning as the given word as used in the passage.

10. Confront
- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| (A) Succumb | (B) Eliminate |
| (C) ✓ Face  | (D) Tolerate  |
| (E) Oppose  |               |
11. Vulnerable
- |                |                   |
|----------------|-------------------|
| (A) Risky      | (B) Promising     |
| (C) Insecure   | (D) Indispensable |
| (E) Delicate ✓ |                   |
12. Abusing
- |                    |              |
|--------------------|--------------|
| (A) Ill treating ✓ | (B) Accusing |
| (C) Cursing        | (D) Beating  |
| (E) Oppressing     |              |

Directions (Q. 13-15): Choose the word which is most opposite in meaning to the given word as used in the passage.

13. Severely
- |                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| (A) Minutely    | (B) Normally  |
| (C) Drastically | (D) Intensely |
| (E) Slightly ✓  |               |
14. Unstable
- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| (A) Stagnant | (B) Confined |
| (C) Changing | (D) Steady ✓ |

15. Substandard
- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| (E) Constant     |                   |
| (A) Excellent ✓  | (B) Valuable      |
| (C) Impoverished | (D) Compassionate |
| (E) Beneficial   |                   |

- ANSWERS
- |         |         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (A)  | 2. (D)  | 3. (E)  | 4. (D)  |
| 5. (A)  | 6. (B)  | 7. (E)  | 8. (C)  |
| 9. (B)  | 10. (C) | 11. (E) | 12. (A) |
| 13. (E) | 14. (D) | 15. (B) |         |

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## SHORT PASSAGE COMPREHENSION

### Learn by Example

Read the passage carefully once and detect its theme. Note what the questions are about. Answer the questions.

#### PASSAGE WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

It is difficult to reconcile the ideas of different schools of thought on the question of education. Some people maintain that pupils at school should concentrate on a narrow range of subjects which will benefit them directly in their subsequent careers. Others contend that they should study a wide range of subjects so that they have not only the specialized knowledge necessary for their chosen careers but also sound general knowledge about the world they will have to work and live in. Supporters of the first theory state that the greatest contributions to civilization are made by those who are most expert in their trade or profession. Those on the other side say that, unless they have a broad general education, the experts will be too narrow in their outlook to have sympathy with their fellows or a proper sense of responsibility towards humanity as a whole.

#### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. 'Schools of thought' can be explained as:
  - (A) Groups of people who study in a particular school thoughtfully
  - (B) Groups of people having the same ideas but with different perception on a particular subject
  - (C) Groups of people whose job is to think
  - (D) Groups of people who are schooled to think
2. Broad general knowledge is necessary because
  - (A) It teaches us about different things
  - (B) It broadens one's outlook
  - (C) Specialisation is incomplete without it
  - (D) Without it no one would get a job
3. The idea of the first school of thought in the passage is that
  - (A) Students should study all the subjects they want to
  - (B) Students should study a few subjects that will help them in their profession
  - (C) Students should concentrate on studies
  - (D) Students should not undertake any specialized work
4. Supporters of the first theory say that
  - (A) Experts have done nothing to help mankind
  - (B) People with general knowledge are more useful than experts
  - (C) Experts have contributed most to progress in the modern world
  - (D) People with general knowledge have contributed to civilization

5. According to the second school of thought, education will not be very effective if pupils
- (A) Ignore the study of fine arts
  - (B) Have nothing but general knowledge
  - (C) Have inadequate knowledge of their own work
  - (D) Do not have a wide general education

### Explanatory Answers

1. (B) 'Schools of thought' means two persons or groups having different ideas or opinions on the same subject or topic.
2. (B) The second school of thought supports the idea of having knowledge of a wide range of subjects for wider perception and outlook.
3. (B) The idea of the first school of thought is that people should focus on few subjects to benefit their career.
4. (C) The statement, 'Supporters of the first theory...expert in their trade or profession' gives the answer.
5. (D) The second school of thought opines that pupils should only concentrate on subjects of their interest to have an effective education and career.

## SHORT PASSAGES WITH EXPLANATORY ANSWERS

### PASSAGE 1

Books are, by far, the most lasting product of human effort. Temples crumble into ruin. Pictures and statues decay, but books survive. Time does not destroy the great thoughts which are as fresh today as when they first passed through their author's mind. These thoughts speak to us through the printed page. The only effect of time has been to throw out of currency the bad products. Nothing in literature which is not good can live for long. Good books have always helped man in various spheres of life. No wonder that the world keeps its books with great care.

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. Of the product of human effort, books are the most
  - (A) Permanent
  - (B) Important
  - (C) Enjoyable
  - (D) Useful
2. Time does not destroy books because they contain
  - (A) Useful material
  - (B) Subject-matter for education
  - (C) High ideals
  - (D) Great ideas
3. "To throw out of currency" means
  - (A) Destroy
  - (B) Put out of use
  - (C) Extinguish
  - (D) Forget
4. The world keeps its books with care because
  - (A) They bring great ideas to us
  - (B) They educate us
  - (C) They make us successful
  - (D) They help us in various spheres of life

### Explanatory Answers

1. (A) The phrase 'books survive' indicates that books are permanent and cannot be destroyed easily.
2. (D) 'Time does not destroy the great thoughts', provides the correct answer.
3. (B) The author implies that bad products have always been discarded or 'thrown out of currency' with time while good things like books have always withstood the test of time.



4. (D) The author says that good books have always been handled with care by the world as they have helped man in different phases of life.

**PASSAGE 2**

The low unit of gas is a real temptation to anyone choosing between gas and electrical processes. But gas-fired processes are often less efficient, require more floor space, take longer and produce more variable product quality. The drawbacks negate the savings many businesses believe they make.

By contrast, electricity harnesses a unique range of technologies unavailable with gas. And many electric processes are well over 90 percent efficient, so far less energy is wasted with benefits in terms of products quality and overall cleanliness, it can so often be the better and cheaper choice. Isn't that tempting?

*Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)*

1. The passage can be described as
  - (A) An advertisement for electricity and its efficiency
  - (B) An extract from a science journal
  - (C) An account of the growth of technology
  - (D) An appeal not to use gas
2. What does the writer mean by 'variable quality'?
  - (A) The quality of the products cannot be assessed
  - (B) Products from gas-fired processes are inefficient
  - (C) The kind of products vary from time to time
  - (D) The quality of the products is not uniform
3. "Electricity harnesses a unique range of technologies" – What does the writer mean?
 

Electricity

  - (A) Has developed new technologies
  - (B) Ensures power for electricity and its efficiency
  - (C) Depends on new kinds of technology
  - (D) Makes use of several technologies

*Explanatory Answers*

1. (B) The passage brings to attention that the 'low unit of gas' should not lead anyone to use gas processes as it has many negative factors. It serves to make aware the reader of the scientific reason for using electric processes and hence the passage looks to be an extract from a science journal.
2. (D) 'Variable quality' means quality which is not consistent or uniform.
3. (B) According to the passage, electricity provides a wide range of technologies and such processes are far more efficient and consumes less energy when compared to gas processes.

**PASSAGE 3**

There was a marked difference of quality between the personages who haunted the near bridge of brick and the personages who haunted the far one of stone. Those of lowest character preferred the former, adjoining the town; they did not mind the glare of the public eye. They had been of no account during their successes; and though they might feel dispirited, they had no sense of shame in their ruin. Instead of sighing at their adversaries they spat, and instead of saying the iron had entered into their luck. The miserables who would pause on the remoter bridge were of a politer stamp – persons who did not know how to get rid of the weary time. The eyes of this species were mostly directed over the parapet upon the running water below. While one on the townward bridge did not mind who saw him so, and kept his back to the parapet to survey the passerby, one on this never faced the road, never turned his head at coming foot-steps, but, sensitive to his

own condition, watched the current whenever a stranger approached, as if some strange fish interested him, though every finned thing had been poached out of the river years before.

*Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)*

1. The two bridges were known
  - (A) For attaching dejected people to them
  - (B) For being equi-distant from town
  - (C) For being haunted places
  - (D) For their similar design
2. People belonging to the lower strata, in their moments of distress:
  - (A) Felt ashamed of their failures
  - (B) Dressed shabbily to earn sympathy
  - (C) Visited the brick-made bridge
  - (D) Remembered their days of glory
3. The bridge of stone was frequented by
  - (A) All the sections of society
  - (B) The sophisticated but luckless
  - (C) Those fond of fishing
  - (D) None of the above
4. The attitude of the lowly and genteel towards strangers was
  - (A) Virulently hostile
  - (B) Completely indifferent
  - (C) Entirely different
  - (D) Virtually the same
5. In this passage, the author is trying to
  - (A) Explain the variety of ways in which strangers can be treated
  - (B) Describe how people of different classes behaved when unhappy
  - (C) Explain the difference between the construction of two bridges
  - (D) Describe the way different sections of people like to dress

*Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)*

1. (A) The passage talks of dispirited people standing on the bridges. Hence one can say that the two bridges were known for 'the miserables' or the dejected people be coming frequently to those bridges.
2. (D) The statement, 'they did not mind the glare of the public eye', gives the correct answer.
3. (D) The bridge of stone was frequented by mostly dispirited and miserable people. Hence the answer is (D).
4. (C) The altitude of the lonely and genteel towards strangers was entirely different. According to the passage, they pretended to inspect the river under the bridge for some strange fish, whenever a stranger came nearby.
5. (B) They author tried to explain the different kinds of behaviour of people of different classes when they were unhappy. Here he used the bridge to explain the behaviour of these different classes of people.

**PASSAGE 4**

It is to progress in the human sciences that we must look to undo the evils which have resulted from a knowledge of the physical world hastily and superficially acquired by populations unconscious of the changes in themselves that the new knowledge has made imperative. The road to a happier world than any known in the past lies open before us if atavistic destructive passions can be kept in leash while the necessary adaptations are made. Fears are inevitable in our time, but hopes are equally rational and far more likely to bear good fruit. We must learn to think rather less of the dangers to be avoided than of the good that will lie

within our grasp if we can believe in it and let it dominate our thoughts. Science, whatever unpleasant consequences it may have by the way, is in its very nature a liberator, a liberator of bondage to physical nature and in to come, a liberator from the weight of destructive passions. We are on the threshold of utter disaster or unprecedentedly glorious achievement. No previous age has been fraught with problems so momentous; and it is to science that we must look to for a happy future.

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. What does science liberate us from? It liberates us from
  - (A) Idealistic hopes of a glorious future
  - (B) Slavery to physical nature and from passions
  - (C) Bondage to physical nature
  - (D) Fears and destructive passions
2. To carve out a bright future a man should
  - (A) Cultivate a positive outlook
  - (B) Analyse dangers that lie ahead
  - (C) Try to avoid dangers
  - (D) Overcome fears and dangers
3. If man's bestial yearning is controlled
  - (A) The future will be brighter than the present
  - (B) The future will be tolerant
  - (C) The present will be brighter than the future
  - (D) The present will become tolerant
4. Fears and hopes, according to the author
  - (A) Are irrational
  - (B) Are closely linked with the life of modern man
  - (C) Can yield good results
  - (D) Can bear fruit
5. Should human sciences be developed because they will
  - (A) Make us conscious of the changing world
  - (B) Provide more knowledge of the physical world
  - (C) Eliminate the destruction caused by a superficial knowledge of the physical world
  - (D) Make us conscious of the changes in ourselves

### Explanatory Answers

1. (B) The phrase, 'liberator from the weight of destructive passions', provides the correct answer.
2. (A) According to the passage, despite problems and dangers, we must adopt an optimistic or a positive outlook and look at science as a means to secure a bright future.
3. (A) The sentence, 'The road to a happier world...adaptations are made,' provides the correct answer. [Bestial means 'beast-like' or brutal]
4. (B) Fears and hopes are bound to occur in one's life, according to the passage.
5. (C) The statement, 'Science, whatever unpleasant... passions,' provides the correct answer.

### PASSAGE 5

The Nobel Committee, in fact, a notoriously conservative body which among other things had a marked antipathy to pure science, especially to Mathematical Physics. Restrained by a clause in Alfred Nobel's will that the prize should go to the person whose 'discovery or invention' shall have conferred the greatest benefit to mankind, the committee initially ignored the great theoretical advances in Physics. Wrecked, no doubt, by guilt that he had become a merchant of death through his invention of dynamite and

smokeless powder and plagued by sadistic fantasies of destruction, the Swedish chemist, engineer and aspiring poet, Alfred Nobel, who has been described as Europe's richest vagabond, left his colossal fortune to the cause of progress in human knowledge. Five prizes were installed, one each for Literature ('to the person who shall have produced in the field of Literature, the most outstanding work of an idealistic tendency'), Physics, Chemistry, Medicine and Peace ('to the person who shall have done the most or the best work for fraternity among nations for abolition or reduction of armies, and for holding or promotion of Peace').

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. The Nobel Committee has been called a conservative body because
  - (A) Its members are old fashioned
  - (B) It awards prizes only to those people who adopt a conservative approach
  - (C) It is conservative in choice of subjects
  - (D) Its members believe in a conservative ideology
2. In the beginning, the Nobel Committee ignored the great advances in theoretical physics because
  - (A) The Committee felt that the discovery and invention in the field did not contribute to the benefit of mankind
  - (B) They proved to be merchants of death and hence dangerous to mankind
  - (C) They were different from other branches of Physics
  - (D) They were concerned with theory and did not suggest its application
3. Noble Prize would not be given to
  - (A) A composer who composed a symphony
  - (B) An author who wrote a novel
  - (C) A diplomat who negotiated a peace settlement
  - (D) A doctor who discovered a vaccine
4. Alfred Nobel left his colossal fortune to the cause of progress in human knowledge because he
  - (A) Felt guilty for having invented highly destructive things
  - (B) Felt guilty for having earned so much money
  - (C) Was 'Europe's richest vagabond'
  - (D) Was a chemist, engineer and an aspiring poet

### Explanatory Answers

1. (C) The Nobel Committee is a conservative body because it does not favour subjects like 'Mathematical Physics'.
2. (A) The statement, 'will that the prize should go to the person ... in Physics,' provides the correct answer.
3. (A) The five prizes installed for conferring 'Nobel Prize...' do not include music.
4. (A) The phrase, 'wrecked, no doubt, by guilt...', gives the correct answer.

#### PASSAGE 6

Mountaineering is now looked upon as the king of sports. But men have lived amongst the mountains since prehistoric times and in some parts of the world, as in the Andes and Himalayas, difficult mountain journeys have inevitably been part of their everyday life. However, some of the peaks were easily accessible from most of the cities of Europe. It is quite interesting that while modern mountaineers prefer difficult routes for the greater enjoyment of sport, the early climbers looked for the easiest ones, for the summit was the prize they all set their eyes on. Popular interest in mountaineering increased considerably after the ascent of the Alpine peak of Matterhorn in 1865 and Edward Whymper's dramatic account of the climb and fatal accident which occurred during the descent.

In the risky sport of mountaineering, the element of competition between either individuals or teams is totally absent. Rather one can say that the competition is between the team and the peaks themselves. The individuals making up a party must climb together as a team, for they depend upon one another for their

safety. Mountaineering can be dangerous unless reasonable precautions are taken. However, the majority of fatal accidents happen to parties which are inexperienced or not properly equipped. Since many accidents are caused by bad weather, the safe climber is the man who knows when it is time to turn back, however, tempting it may be to press on and try to reach the summit.

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

- Mountaineering is different from other sports because
  - There is no competition between individuals
  - It is most thrilling and exciting
  - It can be fatal
  - It is risky and dangerous
- People living in the Andes and the Himalayas made mountain journeys because
  - It was a kind of sport
  - They had to undertake them in their day-to-day life
  - They lived in pre-historic times
  - Of the challenge offered by the difficult journey
- Mountaineers climb as a team because
  - The height is too much for one individual
  - They have to rely on each other for safety
  - There is no competition among them
  - The competition is between the team and the peak
- ".....the summit was the prize they all set their eyes on". In the context of the passage this means
  - They chose a route from which they could see the summit clearly
  - They cared for nothing but the prize of reaching the summit
  - They kept their eyes steadily on reaching the peak
  - Reaching the top was their exclusive concern
- "to press on" in the last sentence means
  - To continue in a determined manner
  - To work fearlessly
  - To force upon others
  - To struggle in a forceful manner

### Explanatory Answers

- (D) The phrase 'In the risky sport of mountaineering...', suggests that this kind of sport is different from other sports in being more dangerous and fatal.
- (B) The statement, '...difficult mountain journeys have been part of their everyday life,' provides the correct answer.
- (B) The statement, '...climb together as a team, for they depend upon one another for their safety' provides the correct answer.
- (D) The challenge of the sport lay in reaching the peak. Hence the answer is (D).
- (A) 'To press on' means to be persistent in one's struggle to achieve the objective or in other words to continue in a determined manner.

### PASSAGE 7 °

After submitting his resignation, Albert came out and took the long narrow road leading to the railway station which was one of the busiest roads in the city. Sad and depressed and worried about looking for a new job, Albert looked around for a cigarette shop. He walked up to the end of the road but found no tobacconist. It was odd that such a busy thoroughfare with thousands of people passing through did not even have a single cigarette shop. He suddenly felt that it was no longer necessary for him to hunt for a job. He decided to open a tobacco shop himself. It was bound to be profitable, he felt.

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. After submitting his resignation, Albert came out worried about
  - (A) A job
  - (B) The next available rain
  - (C) A shelter
  - (D) Cigarettes
2. Albert was sad and depressed because
  - (A) He was not able to buy cigarettes
  - (B) He was worried about finding a job
  - (C) He had no money for the train journey
  - (D) He had to walk on a long road
3. There was no cigarette shop on that road because
  - (A) It was a very narrow road
  - (B) Cigarette-shop owners do not make any profit
  - (C) Smoking is banned in that area
  - (D) Just by chance nobody had opened one on that road
4. Albert decided not to look for a new job because
  - (A) There was no hope of finding a job
  - (B) He saw the possibility of self-employment
  - (C) The thought of having to look for a job greatly distressed him
  - (D) He did not want to work at all
5. A cigarette shop on a busy road was bound to be profitable because
  - (A) Cigarettes are inexpensive items and people buy them willingly
  - (B) A cigarette shop on a busy road would attract a large number of customers
  - (C) Cigarette shops are known to make a great deal of profit
  - (D) Any shop on a busy street would attract a large number of customers

### Explanatory Answers

1. (A) According to the author, Albert gave resignation from his job to look for a new job. Hence the answer is (A).
2. (D) Albert was worried and depressed about looking for a new job.
3. (D) According to the author, it was strange that there was not any single cigarette shop on such a busy road and hence assumed that it must be chance that nobody opened one.
4. (B) Albert thought of opening a cigarette shop on that busy road thereby indicating that he wanted to be self-employed.
5. (B) A cigarette shop on a busy road was bound to be profitable, especially when there was none there, and would be attracting many customers.

### PASSAGE 8

In this work of incessant and feverish activity, men have little time to think, much less to consider ideals and objectives. Yet how are we to act, even in the present, unless we know which way we are going and what our objectives are? It is only in the peaceful atmosphere of a University that these basic problems can be adequately considered. It is only when the young men and women, who are in the university today and on whom the burden of life's problems will fall tomorrow, learn to have clear objectives and standards of values that there is hope for the next generation. The past generation produced some great men but as a generation it led the world repeatedly to disaster. Two world wars are the price that has been paid for the lack of wisdom on man's part in this generation.

I think that there is always a close and intimate relationship between the end we aim at and the means adopted to attain it. Even if the end is right but the means are wrong, it will vitiate the end or divert us in a

wrong direction. Means and ends are thus intimately and inextricably connected and cannot be separated. That, indeed, has been the lesson of old taught us by many great men in the past, but unfortunately it is seldom remembered.

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. People have little time to consider ideals and objectives because
  - (A) They have no inclination for such things
  - (B) They are excessively engaged in their routine activities
  - (C) They consider these ideals meaningless
  - (D) They do not want to burden themselves with such ideas
2. 'The burden of life's problems' in the fourth sentence refers to
  - (A) The onerous duties of life
  - (B) The sorrows and sufferings
  - (C) The incessant and feverish activities
  - (D) The burden of family responsibilities
3. The two world wars are the price that man paid due to
  - (A) His ignoring the ideals and objectives of life
  - (B) His excessive involvement in feverish activities
  - (C) The absence of wisdom and sagacity
  - (D) His not caring to consider the life's problems
4. According to the writer the adoption of wrong means even for the right end would
  - (A) Impede our progress
  - (B) Deflect us from the right path
  - (C) Not let us attain our goal
  - (D) Bring us dishonour
5. The word 'vitate' used in the second paragraph means
 

<input type="radio"/> (A) Tarnish	<input type="radio"/> (B) Destroy
<input type="radio"/> (C) Negate	<input checked="" type="radio"/> (D) Debase

### Explanatory Answers

1. (B) The phrase, 'In this work of incessant and feverish activity' means that men are always busy with their daily work and activities.
2. (A) 'The burden of life's problems' means burdened with life's responsibilities or undertaking the onerous (burdensome) duties of life.
3. (C) The statement, 'Two world wars...has been paid for the lack of wisdom in man's part in this generation' gives the correct answer.
4. (B) The statement, 'Even if the end is right...divert us in the wrong direction', gives the correct answer. 'Deflect' means 'to divert' or to turn away from a certain direction.
5. (D) 'Vitate' means to spoil or impair. Hence it means debase meaning 'to pollute' or to contaminate.

### PASSAGE 9

In the past thirty years, drugs have been discovered that prevent and cure physical disease and reverse the disturbances that occur in certain mental illness. Excitement over what drugs can do has led people to believe that any ailment, infective or psychic, can be relieved by taking a pill. At the first sign of nervousness, they try pep-up pills. Medical journals now advertise tranquillizers, and other mood-altering drugs; doctors prescribe them; and the public expect miracles from them. In such an atmosphere, it is not surprising that drug abuse has spread.

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

- According to the author, in recent years there has been
  - Recognition of the ill-effects of medicine
  - A misplaced trust in drugs
  - A distrust of drugs
  - None of the above
- According to the passage, the medicines that have been discovered in recent times
  - Can reduce mental illnesses
  - Cannot cure mental illnesses
  - Can cure mental illnesses
  - Can help treat some symptoms of mental illnesses
- People often believe that
  - Medicines can cure all the diseases
  - Doctors cannot cure all the diseases
  - Medicines cannot cure all the diseases
  - Doctors can cure all the diseases

### Explanatory Answers

- (B) The author talks of the immense trust of people in drugs followed by the statement '...drug abuse has spread'. This indicates a misplaced trust in drugs.
- (D) The statement 'drugs...reverse the disturbances that occur in some mental illness' gives the answer.
- (A) The sentence 'Excitement...pill' gives us the answer.

#### PASSAGE 10

When we are suddenly confronted with any terrible danger, the change of nature we undergo is equally great. In some cases, fear paralyses us. Like animals, we stand still, powerless to move a step in fright or to lift a hand in defence of our lives, and sometimes we are seized with panic, and again, act more like the inferior animals than rational beings. On the other hand, frequently in cases of sudden extreme peril, which cannot be escaped by fright, and must be instantly faced, even the most timid men at once as if by miracle, become possessed of the necessary courage, sharp quick apprehension, and swift decision. This is a miracle very common in nature. Man and the inferior animals alike, when confronted with almost certain death 'gather resolution from despair' but there can really be no trace of so debilitating a feeling in the person fighting, or prepared to fight for dear life. At such times, the mind is clearer than it has ever been; the nerves are steel, there is nothing felt but a wonderful strength and daring. Looking back at certain perilous moments in my own life, I remember them with a kind of joy, not that there was any joyful excitement then; but because they brought me a new experience, a new nature, as it were and lifted me for a time above myself.

### Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

- An appropriate title for the above passage would be
  - The change of nature
  - Courage and panic
  - The will to Fight
  - The miracle of confronting danger
- The author names three different ways in which a man may react to sudden danger. What are they?
  - He may be paralysed with fear, or seized with panic, or as if by miracle, become possessed of the necessary courage, and face the danger
  - He may be paralysed with fear, run away or fight



- (C) He may flee in panic, or fight back or stand still  
(D) He may be paralysed with fear, seized with panic or act like an inferior animal
3. The distinction between 'inferior animals' and 'rational beings' is that  
(A) The latter are stronger  
(B) The latter are capable of reasoning things out whereas the former cannot do so  
(C) The former are incapable of fighting  
(D) The latter are clever
4. Explain the phrase 'gather resolution from danger'.  
(A) Not to lose hope, but fight  
(B) Find courage to face the danger  
(C) Find hope and courage  
(D) A state of utter hopelessness steels one to fight out the danger
5. The author feels happy in the recollection of danger faced and overcome because  
(A) He survived his ordeal  
(B) He was lucky to be alive  
(C) They brought him a new experience  
(D) They brought him a new experience, and lifted him above himself for a time

### Explanatory Answers

1. (D) The passage talks of the different ways in which people react when faced with any kind of danger and hence the title should be 'The miracle of confronting danger'
2. (A) In the first few lines, the author talks of fear paralyzing a person or being seized in panic when faced with danger. Then he goes on to explain that some people become amazingly courageous in times of peril and danger.
3. (B) The author while stating the different reactions of men when confronted with danger makes a comparison with animals who tend to become powerless or behave irrationally in times of danger.
4. (D) The phrase 'gather resolution from danger' means to brace oneself or assemble the strength to face danger.
5. (D) The statement, 'Looking back...joyful excitement' gives the answer.
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