

Reading Comprehension

Reading Comprehension: The word comprehension means understanding. In English grammar, our comprehension skills are tested by reading text, understanding its meaning and interpreting a passage and answering the related question. So let us learn how to effectively grasp and interpret a comprehension and other such reading comprehension skills required in exams. Access it in offline without Internet. These reading comprehension strategies have research-based evidence for improving text comprehension.

- Skim once as rapidly as possible to determine the main idea before you look at the questions. Don't worry about words you don't know at this stage.
- Underline the words that you do not understand to facilitate a complete understanding of the passage. This will enable you to solve the vocabulary questions quicker.
- Look through questions carefully. You are advised to keep to the order in which the questions appear in the test paper. Read intensively the portion relevant to the answers.
- Concentrate on the vocabulary items and puzzle out the meaning of any words you don't know from the context.

Most passages require at least two readings

- Before writing the answer, check the questions again to be sure you've really understood them.
- You must write complete sentences as answers.
- Answers must be relevant and to the point. If the question is for one mark given one point. If it is for two marks give at least two points unless specified differently in the paper.

Steps to Follow Skimming for the Main Ideas

- Read the title of the passage / poem carefully. Determine what clues it gives you as to what the passage / poem is about.
- Watch for key words like 'causes, 'results, 'effects, 'etc. Do not overlook signal words such as those suggesting controversy (e.g., 'versus, 'pros and cons'), which indicate that the author is planning to present but sides of an argument.
- Concentrate on the main ideas and ignore the details.

How to Approach Reading Comprehension Questions

The 'why' question

In the 'why' question you are required to give reasons, provide explanations and give evidence for an answer. It is essential therefore, to look out for word that show cause, effect and purpose in order to arrive at the answer. These words are:

(i) Cause word; Cause words signal the cause or reason for an event or an action. These include:

(ii) Effect words; effect words signal the result of an event or an action. These include:

(iii) Purpose words ; purpose words indicate the reason for an event or an action. These include :

The inference question

In the inference question you are required to make a deduction or draw a conclusion based on the information given in the passage. Since these are not straightforward questions, it is essential therefore, to read between the lines for clues or hidden meanings. This can be done by understanding certain key words and phrases. At times, you can draw an inference only after reading the entire poem / passage.

The rephrasing question

At times you are required to explain a word/phrase in your own words or substitute a word/phrase in the

passage without altering its meaning. To do so it is essential to understand the word/phrase in its context.

So it is essential to read carefully what comes before and after it

Vocabulary

When you read a passage or a poem, you will come across words that are unfamiliar. However, you don't

need to look up the meaning of every new word or expression that you come across. When you have

finished reading the passage, try to understand the overall meaning of the passage. Try to guess the

meaning of unfamiliar words/ expressions from the context. For this you need to look for clues in the text

itself.

English Comprehension Passages with Questions

Direction (1-5): What, one wonders, is the lowest common denominator of Indian culture today? The attractive Hema Malini? The songs of Vinidh Barati? The attractive Hema Malini? The sons of Vinidh Barati?

Or the mouth-watering Masala Dosa? Delectable as these may be, each yield pride of place to that false (?) symbol of a new era-the synthetic fibre. In less than twenty years the nylon sari and the terylene shirt have swept the countryside, penetrated to the farthest corners of the land and persuaded every common man, woman and child that the key to success in the present-day world lie in artificial fibers: glass nylon, crepe nylon, tery mixes, polyesters and what have you. More than the bicycles, the wristwatch or the transistor radio, synthetic clothes have come to represent the first step away from the village square. The village lass treasures the flashy nylon sari in her trousseau most dearly; the village youth gets a great kick out of his cheap terrycot shirt and trousers, the nearest he can approximate to the expensive synthetic sported by his wealthy citybred contemporaries. And the Neo-rich craze for 'phoren' is nowhere more apparent than in the price that people will pay for smuggled, stolen, begged borrowed second hand or thrown away synthetics. Alas, even the uniformity of nylon.

Q.1. 'The lowest common denominator' of the Indian culture today is –

- (A) Hema Malini
- (B) Songs of Vividh Barati
- (C) Masala Dosa
- (D) Synthetic fibre

Answer

Ans . A

Q.2.The synthetic fibre has –

- (A) Always been popular in India
- (B) Become popular during the last twenty years
- (C) Never been popular the last twenty years
- (D) Been as popular as other kinds of fibre

Answer

Ans . B

Q.3. The latest symbol of modernity for the rural people is –

- (A) The bicycle
- (B) The wristwatch
- (C) The transistor
- (D) The synthetic cloth

Answer

Ans . D

Q.4. The tern 'Neo-rich' means –

- (A) The aristocracy
- (B) The industrialists
- (C) The newly rich people
- (D) The common people

Answer

Ans . C

Q.5. The tone of the passage is –

- (A) Tragic
- (B) Ironic
- (C) Sombre
- (D) Satiric

Answer

Ans . C

Direction (6-10): Most people who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it. Our civilization is decadent and our language-so the argument runs-must inevitably share in the general collapse. It follows that any struggle against the abuse of language is a sentimental archaism, like preferring candles to electric light or hansom cabs to aeroplanes. Underneath this lies the half-conscious belief that language is natural growth and not an instrument which we shape for our own purposes.

Now it is clear that the decline of a language must ultimately have political and economic causes it is not due simply to the bad influence of this or that individual writer. But an effect can become a cause, reinforcing the original cause and producing the same effect in an intensified form, and so on indefinitely. A man may take to drink because he feels himself to be a failure, and then fail all the more completely because he drinks. It is rather the same thing that is happening to the English language. It becomes ugly and inaccurate because our thoughts are foolish, but the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts. The point is that the process is reversible. Modern English, especially written English, is full of bad habits which spread by imitation and which can be avoided if one is willing to take the necessary trouble. If one gets rid of these habits, one can think more clearly, and to think clearly is a necessary first step towards political regeneration: so that the fight against bad English is not frivolous and is not the exclusive concern of professional writers.

Q.6. Many people believe that nothing can be done about the English language because –

- (A) Bad habits spread by imitation
- (B) We live in a decadent civilization
- (C) There are too many bad writers
- (D) People are too lazy to change their bad habits

Answer Ans . B

Q.7. The author believes that –

- (A) It's now too late to do anything about the problem
- (B) Language is a natural growth and cannot be shaped for our own purpose
- (C) The decline in the language can be stopped
- (D) The process of an increasingly bad language cannot be stopped

Answer

Ans . D

Q.8. The author believes that the first stage towards the political regeneration of the language would be –

- (A) Taking the necessary trouble to avoid bad habits
- (B) Avoiding being frivolous about it
- (C) Clear thinking
- (D) For professional writers to help

Answer

Ans . C

Q.9. The author believes that –

- (A) English is become ugly
- (B) Bad language
- (C) Our thoughts are becoming uglier because we ae making the language uglier
- (D) Our civilization is decadent so nothing can be done to stop the decile of the language

Answer

Ans . C

Q.10. What causes bad language in the end?

- (A) The bad influence of individual writers
- (B) The imitation of bad language habits
- (C) Political and economic causes.
- (D) An assumption that nothing can be done about

Answer

Ans . C

Direction (11-15): A vexed problem facing us is the clamour to open more colleges and to reserve more seats for backward classes. But it will be a sheer folly to expand such facilities recklessly without giving

any thought to the quality of education imparted. If admissions are made far more selective, it will automatically reduced the number of entrants. This should apply particularly colleges, many of which are little more than degree factories. Only then can the authorities hope to bring down the teacher-student ratio to manageable proportion. What is more, teachers should be given refresher courses, every summer to brush up their knowledge. Besides, if college managements increase their library budget it will help both the staff and the to new students a great deal.

At the same time, however, it will be unfair to deny college education to thousands of young men and women, unless employers stop insisting on degrees even for clerical jobs. For a start, why can't the Government disqualify graduates from securing certain jobs, say class III and IV posts? Once the link between degrees and jobs is severed at least in some important departments, in will make young people think twice before joining college.

Q.11. What can automatically help to reduce admission:

- (A) Though entrance tests
- (B) Discouragement to open new colleges
- (C) Selective admissions
- (D) Abolishing reservation

Answer Ans . C

Q.12. Many of the new college are –

- (A) Centres of advanced learning
- (B) Research institutions
- (C) Factories producing degree holders
- (D) Knowns for their academic excellence

Answer Ans . C

Q.13. How can teachers are –

- (A) By arranging refresher courses
- (B) By providing monetary help/incentive
- (C) By providing better library facilities
- (D) By sending them abroad

Answer Ans . A

Q.14. The author is in favor of restricting college admissions –

- (A) Only when degrees are delinked form jobs
- (B) When alternative avenues are open for the students
- (C) When the teacher student ratio is reduced
- (D) Only when parents think gtvice before sending their children

Answer Ans . A

Q.15. The phrase “Vexed problem” means

- (A) A serious problem
- (B) A debatable problem
- (C) A difficult problem
- (D) An irritating problem

Answer

Ans . D

Direction(16-20): There are three main groups of oils-animal, vegetable and mineral. Great quantities of animal oil come from whales, creatures of the sea, which are the largest of the animals remaining in the world. To protect the whales from the cold of the Artic seas, nature has provided them with a thick covering of fat, called blubber. When the whale is killed, the blubber is stripped off and boiled down. It produces a great quantity of oil which can be made into food for human consumption. A few other creatures yield oil, but none so much as the whale. The livers of the cod and halibut, two kinds of fish, yield nourishing oil. Both cod liver oil and halibut oil are given to sick children and other invalids who need certain vitamins.

Vegetable oil has been known from very old times. No household can get on without it, for it is used in cooking. Perfumes may be made from the oils of certain flowers. Soaps are made from eatable and animal products and the oils of certain flowers.

Q.16. The main source of animal oil, is –

- (A) fish
- (B) whale
- (C) seaweeds
- (D) plants

Answer

Ans . B

Q.17. Vegetable oil is mainly used for –

- (A) eating
- (B) cooking
- (C) frying
- (D) lubricating

Answer

Ans . B

Q.18. The.....of fish yields nourishing oil.

(A) liver

(B) stomach

(C) eyes

(D) head

Answer

Ans . A

Q.19. The thick protective covering of fat on a whale is called a –

(A) skin

(B) cell

(C) blubber

(D) fins

Answer

Ans . C

Q.20. are made from vegetable, animal products and the oils of certain flowers.

(A) Perfumes

(B) Cosmetics

(C) Cooking medium

(D) Soaps

Answer

Ans . D