

CAT VARC Slot 2 2018 Question Paper With Solutions

Time Allowed :3 Hours	Maximum Marks :60	Total questions :24
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General Instructions

Read the following instructions very carefully and strictly follow them:

1. Please check that this question paper contains 19 printed pages.
2. Please check that this question paper contains 24 questions.
3. Q.P. Code given on the right hand side of the question paper should be written on the title page of the answer-book by the candidate.
4. Please write down the Serial Number of the question in the answer- book at the given place before attempting it.
5. This Question Paper has 24 questions. All questions are compulsory.
6. Adhere to the prescribed word limit while answering the questions.

Passage: E-Governance

Will a day come when India's poor can access government services as easily as drawing cash from an ATM?

No country in the world has made accessing education or health or policing or dispute resolution as easy as an ATM,

because the nature of these activities requires individuals to use their discretion in a positive way.

Technology can certainly facilitate this in a variety of ways if it is seen as one part of an overall approach,

but the evidence so far in education, for instance, is that just adding computers alone doesn't make education any better.

The dangerous illusion of technology is that it can create stronger, top down accountability of service providers

in implementation-intensive services within existing public sector organisations.

One notion is that electronic management information systems (EMIS) keep better track of inputs and those aspects of personnel

that are 'EMIS visible' can lead to better services.

A recent study examined attempts to increase attendance of Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANMs) at clinics in Rajasthan,

which involved high-tech time clocks to monitor attendance.

The study's title says it all: **Band-Aids on a Corpse.**

E-governance can be just as bad as any other governance when the real issue is people and their motivation.

For services to improve, the people providing the services have to want to do a better job with the skills they have.

A study of medical care in Delhi found that even though providers in the public sector had much better skills

than private sector providers, their provision of care in actual practice was much worse.

In implementation-intensive services the key to success is face-to-face interactions between a teacher, a nurse, a policeman, an extension agent and a citizen.

This relationship is about power. Amartya Sen's report on education in West Bengal had a

supremely telling anecdote

in which the villagers forced the teacher to attend school, but then, when the parents went off to work,

the teacher did not teach, but forced the children to massage his feet.

As long as the system empowers providers over citizens, technology is irrelevant.

The answer to successfully providing basic services is to create systems that provide both autonomy and accountability.

In basic education for instance, the answer to poor teaching is not controlling teachers more.

The key is to hire teachers who want to teach and let them teach, expressing their professionalism and vocation

as a teacher through autonomy in the classroom.

This autonomy has to be matched with accountability for results—

not just narrowly measured through test scores,

but broadly for the quality of the education they provide.

A recent study in Uttar Pradesh showed that if, somehow, all civil service teachers could be replaced with contract teachers,

the state could save a billion dollars a year in revenue and double student learning.

Just the additional autonomy and accountability of contracts through local groups—even without complementary system changes in information and empowerment—led to that much improvement. The first step to being part of the solution is to create performance information accessible to those outside of the government.

Q1. In the context of the passage, we can infer that the title “Band Aids on a Corpse” (in paragraph 2) suggests that:

(A) the nurses who attended the clinics were too poorly trained to provide appropriate medical care.

(B) the electronic monitoring system was a superficial solution to a serious problem.

(C) the nurses attended the clinics, but the clinics were ill-equipped.

(D) the clinics were better funded, but performance monitoring did not result in any improvement.

Correct Answer: (B) the electronic monitoring system was a superficial solution to a serious problem.

Solution:

The phrase “Band Aids on a Corpse” is metaphorical and implies applying a superficial or cosmetic fix to a problem that is fundamentally broken or “dead.”

In the passage, the author discusses a study where high-tech attendance monitoring systems were used to track Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (ANM) attendance at clinics.

The criticism is that while the technology might be functioning, it doesn’t address the deeper, systemic issue—such as lack of motivation or human accountability.

Option (A) talks about nurses being poorly trained. However, the passage does not question their training, but rather the effectiveness of technological solutions to attendance.

Option (B) accurately reflects the idea that using electronic monitoring is a superficial remedy.

The author calls out the illusion that such systems ensure better services, thereby making Option B correct.

Option (C) focuses on clinic infrastructure, which is not the issue being highlighted.

Option (D) mentions funding and monitoring, but the text doesn’t mention increased funding—only performance tracking.

Thus, the phrase refers to the futility of using technology to solve a deeper systemic issue that remains unaddressed.

Quick Tip

When interpreting metaphors or titles like “Band Aids on a Corpse,” look for symbolic meaning in the passage—usually indicating a shallow solution to a deep-rooted problem.

Q2. According to the author, service delivery in Indian education can be improved in all of the following ways **EXCEPT** through:

- (A) use of technology.
- (B) recruitment of motivated teachers.
- (C) access to information on the quality of teaching.
- (D) elimination of government involvement.

Correct Answer: (D) elimination of government involvement.

Solution:

The passage repeatedly emphasizes that while technology can help, it is not a substitute for human intent and motivation in public service.

In education, the author argues for systems that empower teachers, provide them with autonomy, and hold them accountable—not eliminate government control altogether.

Option (A) – Technology is mentioned, but it is not dismissed entirely. The passage states that it can facilitate service if seen as one part of a broader strategy.

Option (B) – Hiring teachers who want to teach is directly suggested by the author. The need for motivation is central.

Option (C) – Access to information and accountability is emphasized, including quality measurement beyond just test scores.

Option (D) – Nowhere does the author suggest removing government altogether. In fact, local group involvement and public sector reform are discussed—not privatization or elimination of governance.

Hence, option D is the only one that contradicts the ideas presented in the passage.

Quick Tip

When solving "EXCEPT" questions, make sure to confirm which option is not supported by the text. Focus on eliminating the clearly supported ones first.

Q3. Which of the following, IF TRUE, would undermine the passage's main argument?

(A) If absolute instead of moderate technological surveillance is exercised over the performance of service providers.

(B) Empowerment of service providers leads to increased complacency and rigged performance results.

(C) If it were proven that increase in autonomy of service providers leads to an exponential increase in their work ethic and sense of responsibility.

(D) If it were proven that service providers in the private sector have better skills than those in the public sector.

Correct Answer: (B) Empowerment of service providers leads to increased complacency

and rigged performance results.

Solution:

The central argument of the passage emphasizes the importance of empowering service providers through autonomy and balancing it with accountability.

The author suggests that real change comes from motivation, autonomy, and professionalism rather than merely imposing monitoring systems or technological solutions.

Option (A) – This talks about absolute vs. moderate surveillance.

While the author criticizes technological overdependence, this does not directly negate the main argument, which supports autonomy.

Option (B) – This directly undermines the passage’s key claim that autonomy leads to better performance and motivation.

If, instead, empowerment caused complacency and manipulation of results, then the author’s suggestion to give providers more autonomy would fall apart.

Hence, this option contradicts the foundational belief in the positive impact of autonomy.

Option (C) – This supports the main argument by confirming the author’s view that autonomy increases work ethic.

Option (D) – This doesn’t directly contradict the passage.

The author acknowledges that public sector providers had better skills but performed poorly due to lack of motivation.

So proving private providers had better skills would not undermine the overall argument about systemic and motivational issues.

Thus, Option (B) is the only one that fundamentally weakens the main claim of the passage.

Quick Tip

When a question asks what would “undermine” an argument, look for the statement that contradicts the author’s core belief or recommendation.

Q4. The author questions the use of monitoring systems in services that involve face-to-face interaction between service providers and clients because such systems:

(A) do not improve services that need committed service providers.

(B) are not as effective in the public sector as they are in the private sector.

(C) improve the skills but do not increase the motivation of service providers.

(D) are ineffective because they are managed by the government.

Correct Answer: (A) do not improve services that need committed service providers.

Solution:

The author emphasizes that monitoring systems such as EMIS or attendance trackers often fail in implementation-intensive sectors

like health and education because success here depends more on the motivation and commitment of the service providers

than on top-down technological oversight.

Option (A) – This reflects the central concern in the passage.

The author clearly points out that systems needing face-to-face services (like teaching, nursing, etc.) require dedication

which monitoring systems cannot ensure.

This is most aligned with the critique in the paragraph discussing EMIS and attendance monitoring in Rajasthan.

Option (B) – The passage doesn't contrast effectiveness between public and private sectors with respect to monitoring systems.

So this is not the reason why the author questions their use.

Option (C) – The passage never claims that monitoring systems improve skills.

It focuses on motivation and face-to-face accountability, not skill development.

Option (D) – The problem is not that the systems are government-managed, but that they are insufficient for the nature of the services involved.

Therefore, Option (A) is the best answer as it accurately captures the core criticism.

Quick Tip

When analyzing why something is criticized in a passage, focus on the key limitations discussed—not general assumptions like public vs. private sector.

Q5. The main purpose of the passage is to:

- (A) critique the government’s involvement in educational activities and other implementation-intensive services.
- (B) argue that some types of services can be improved by providing independence and requiring accountability.
- (C) analyse the shortcomings of government-appointed nurses and their management through technology.
- (D) find a solution to the problem of poor service delivery in education by examining different strategies.

Correct Answer: (B) argue that some types of services can be improved by providing independence and requiring accountability.

Solution:

To determine the main purpose of the passage, we need to consider the central argument that flows throughout all the paragraphs.

The author discusses multiple examples from sectors like health and education to make a broader point about improving service delivery.

The key message is that **autonomy (independence)** and **accountability** are more effective in improving the quality of implementation-intensive services than superficial technological fixes or top-down monitoring systems.

Let’s evaluate each option:

Option (A) – While the author does question the role of government systems, the critique is not aimed solely at the government’s involvement.

Instead, the focus is on the mechanisms used—like EMIS or attendance monitors—and their ineffectiveness without human motivation and accountability.

Hence, this option is too narrow.

Option (B) – This is the most accurate.

The author consistently emphasizes that improvements in services like education and healthcare come from giving providers more independence (e.g., letting teachers teach freely) while ensuring accountability (e.g., measuring quality of outcomes, not just test scores).

The mention of contract teachers, Amartya Sen’s anecdote, and ANMs all support this thesis.

Option (C) – This focuses too specifically on the example of nurses and misses the overall intent of the passage.

The ANM example is only one part of the broader argument and is used to critique technological over-reliance—not nurses in general.

Option (D) – This is partially correct but limited to education only.

The author also discusses healthcare and uses general language to apply the point across several public services, not just education.

Thus, Option (B) is the best representation of the passage’s overall purpose.

Quick Tip

When identifying the main purpose of a passage, always look for the idea that is repeated or supported across all paragraphs—not just examples or one section.

Passage: White-lipped Grove Snails

Grove snails as a whole are distributed all over Europe, but a specific variety of the snail, with a distinctive white-lipped shell, is found exclusively in Ireland and in the Pyrenees mountains that lie on the border between France and Spain.

The researchers sampled a total of 423 snail specimens from 36 sites distributed across Europe,

with an emphasis on gathering large numbers of the white-lipped variety.

When they sequenced genes from the mitochondrial DNA of each of these snails and used algorithms

to analyze the genetic diversity between them, they found that a distinct lineage (the snails with the white-lipped shells) was indeed endemic to the two very specific and distant places in question.

Explaining this is tricky.

Previously, some had speculated that the strange distributions of creatures such as the white-lipped grove snails

could be explained by convergent evolution—in which two populations evolve the same trait

by coincidence—

but the underlying genetic similarities between the two groups rules that out.

Alternately, some scientists had suggested that the white-lipped variety had simply spread over the whole continent,

then been wiped out everywhere besides Ireland and the Pyrenees,

but the researchers say their sampling and subsequent DNA analysis eliminate that possibility too.

“If the snails naturally colonized Ireland, you would expect to find some of the same genetic type

in other areas of Europe, especially Britain. We just don’t find them,”

Davidson, the lead author, said in a press statement.

Moreover, if they’d gradually spread across the continent,

there would be some genetic variation within the white-lipped type,

because evolution would introduce variety over the thousands of years

it would have taken them to spread from the Pyrenees to Ireland.

That variation doesn’t exist, at least in the genes sampled.

This means that rather than the organism gradually expanding its range,

large populations instead were somehow moved en masse to the other location

within the space of a few dozen generations, ensuring a lack of genetic variety.

“There is a very clear pattern, which is difficult to explain except by involving humans,”

Davidson said.

Humans, after all, colonized Ireland roughly 9,000 years ago,

and the oldest fossil evidence of grove snails in Ireland dates to roughly the same era.

Additionally, there is archaeological evidence of early sea trade between the ancient peoples of Spain and Ireland via the Atlantic

and even evidence that humans routinely ate these types of snails before the advent of agriculture,

as their burnt shells have been found in Stone Age trash heaps.

The simplest explanation? **Boats.**

These snails may have inadvertently traveled on the floor of the small, coast-hugging skiffs these early humans used for travel,

or they may have been intentionally carried to Ireland by the seafarers as a food source.

“*The highways of the past were rivers and the ocean*—as the river that flanks the Pyrenees was an ancient trade route to the Atlantic, what we’re actually seeing might be the long lasting legacy of snails that hitched a ride as humans travelled from the South of France to Ireland 8,000 years ago,” Davidson said.”

Q6. All of the following evidence supports the passage’s explanation of sea travel/trade EXCEPT:

(A) the coincidental existence of similar traits in the white-lipped grove snails of Ireland and the Pyrenees because of convergent evolution.

(B) the oldest fossil evidence of white-lipped grove snails in Ireland dates back to roughly 9,000 years ago, the time when humans colonised Ireland.

(C) absence of genetic variation within the white-lipped grove snails of Ireland and the Pyrenees, whose genes were sampled.

(D) archaeological evidence of early sea trade between the ancient peoples of Spain and Ireland via the Atlantic Ocean.

Correct Answer: (A) the coincidental existence of similar traits in the white-lipped grove snails of Ireland and the Pyrenees because of convergent evolution.

Solution:

This is an EXCEPT question. So we are looking for the option that does **not** support the sea travel/trade hypothesis.

Option (A) – Convergent evolution refers to two populations developing similar traits independently.

However, the passage explicitly rejects this idea by noting that genetic evidence rules it out. Therefore, this explanation does **not** support sea travel—it is actually an alternative hypothesis that the passage disproves.

Option (B) – Fossil evidence of grove snails dating back to the same period as early human colonization of Ireland supports the theory that humans could have transported them.

Option (C) – The absence of genetic variation suggests that the population was transported en masse rather than gradually evolving, which supports a sudden movement like sea travel.

Option (D) – Archaeological evidence of early trade between Spain and Ireland aligns

directly with the passage's claim about possible snail transport via boats.

Thus, Option (A) is the only one that does **not** support the sea travel/trade theory.

Quick Tip

In EXCEPT questions, carefully eliminate the options that clearly support the main theory, then select the one that does not align with it.

Q7. The passage outlines several hypotheses and evidence related to white-lipped grove snails to arrive at the most convincing explanation for:

(A) why the white-lipped variety of grove snails were wiped out everywhere except in Ireland and the Pyrenees.

(B) how the white-lipped variety of grove snails independently evolved in Ireland and the Pyrenees.

(C) why the white-lipped variety of grove snails are found only in Ireland and the Pyrenees.

(D) how the white-lipped variety of grove snails independently evolved in Ireland and the Pyrenees.

Correct Answer: (C) why the white-lipped variety of grove snails are found only in Ireland and the Pyrenees.

Solution:

The passage explores a peculiar biological mystery:

Why is a genetically distinct variety of grove snail found only in two distant European regions—Ireland and the Pyrenees?

Several explanations are discussed and rejected:

- **Convergent evolution** (rejected due to genetic similarity).
- **Extinction everywhere else** (rejected due to absence of matching genes in other regions).
- **Gradual spread** (rejected due to lack of genetic variation).

The final explanation supported by evidence—such as fossil dating, archaeological trade links, and genetic consistency—is that humans likely transported the snails by boat.

Option (A) – This was a rejected hypothesis in the passage.

Option (B) – This is convergent evolution, which is again ruled out.

Option (C) – This aligns perfectly with the passage’s purpose: to explain the unique presence of white-lipped grove snails in only two places.

Option (D) – This repeats (B) and also describes a hypothesis the passage rejects.

Hence, the correct answer is Option (C).

Quick Tip

When identifying the passage’s purpose or conclusion, focus on what is ultimately accepted—not on the hypotheses that were explored and rejected.

Q8. Which one of the following makes the author eliminate convergent evolution as a probable explanation for why white-lipped grove snails are found in Ireland and the Pyrenees?

(A) The absence of genetic variation between white-lipped grove snails of Ireland and the Pyrenees.

(B) The absence of genetic similarities between white-lipped grove snails of Ireland and snails from other parts of Europe, especially Britain.

(C) The coincidental evolution of similar traits (white-lipped shell) in the grove snails of Ireland and the Pyrenees.

(D) The distinct lineage of white-lipped grove snails found specifically in Ireland and the Pyrenees.

Correct Answer: (D) The distinct lineage of white-lipped grove snails found specifically in Ireland and the Pyrenees.

Solution:

The passage discusses how convergent evolution (where two species independently evolve similar traits)

was ruled out by researchers due to the underlying genetic evidence.

Convergent evolution would suggest that the white-lipped trait evolved separately in two populations,

but genetic analysis showed that the snails in Ireland and the Pyrenees shared the same mitochondrial DNA lineage.

This proves they originated from a common ancestor and were not separately evolved cases.

Option (A) – While this supports rapid transfer, it refers to lack of variation—not what disproves convergence.

Option (B) – This refers to comparison with other parts of Europe, not to the key argument against convergence.

Option (C) – This just defines convergent evolution but does not give the reason it was eliminated.

Option (D) – This is the most accurate because the passage directly says that the discovery of a distinct lineage was the reason for dismissing convergent evolution.

Hence, Option (D) correctly identifies the evidence used to eliminate convergent evolution.

Quick Tip

Always connect what the author is “ruling out” to the specific reason or data presented as contradictory in the passage.

Q9. In paragraph 4, the evidence that “humans routinely ate these types of snails before the advent of agriculture” can be used to conclude that:

(A) white-lipped grove snails may have inadvertently traveled from the Pyrenees to Ireland on the floor of the small, coast-hugging skiffs that early seafarers used for travel.

(B) the seafarers who traveled from the Pyrenees to Ireland might have carried white-lipped grove snails with them as edibles.

(C) rivers and oceans in the Stone Age facilitated trade in white-lipped grove snails.

(D) 9,000 years ago, during the Stone Age, humans traveled from the South of France to Ireland via the Atlantic Ocean.

Correct Answer: (B) the seafarers who traveled from the Pyrenees to Ireland might have carried white-lipped grove snails with them as edibles.

Solution:

The line in paragraph 4 says that “humans routinely ate these types of snails before the advent of agriculture”

and also that burnt snail shells were found in ancient trash heaps, indicating human consumption.

This supports the conclusion that these snails may have been intentionally carried by humans—particularly by seafarers—as a food source while traveling or migrating.

Option (A) – While the passage mentions this as a possible explanation in paragraph 5, it is linked to accidental transport, not the point about eating them before agriculture.

Option (B) – This best fits the conclusion we can draw from the idea that people ate these snails before agriculture.

It directly links the eating behavior to the possibility of snails being intentionally carried.

Option (C) – This talks about trade routes in general but does not connect directly to eating behavior.

Option (D) – While true and supported elsewhere, it does not relate to the eating of snails as the basis for conclusion.

Therefore, Option (B) is the most appropriate inference.

Quick Tip

When asked to draw a conclusion based on a specific detail, make sure your choice directly stems from that exact fact—not from general context.

Passage: Meritocracy

The complexity of modern problems often precludes any one person from fully understanding them.

Factors contributing to rising obesity levels, for example, include transportation systems and infrastructure,

media, convenience foods, changing social norms, human biology and psychological factors.

The multidimensional or layered character of complex problems also undermines the principle of meritocracy:

the idea that the ‘best person’ should be hired. There is no best person.

When putting together an oncological research team, a biotech company such as Gilead or

Genentech

would not construct a multiple-choice test and hire the top scorers, or hire people whose resumes score highest

according to some performance criteria.

Instead, they would seek diversity. They would build a team of people who bring diverse knowledge bases,

tools and analytic skills.

Believers in a meritocracy might grant that teams ought to be diverse

but then argue that meritocratic principles should apply within each category.

Thus the team should consist of the 'best' mathematicians, the 'best' oncologists, and the 'best' biostatisticians from within the pool. That position suffers from a similar flaw.

Even with a knowledge domain, no test or criteria applied to individuals will produce the best team.

Each of these domains possesses such depth and breadth, that no test can exist.

Consider the field of neuroscience.

Upwards of 50,000 papers were published last year covering various techniques, domains of enquiry and levels of analysis,

ranging from molecules and synapses up through networks of neurons.

Given that complexity, any attempt to rank a collection of neuroscientists from best to worst, as if they were competitors in the 50-metre butterfly, must fail.

What could be true is that given a specific task and the composition of a particular team, one scientist would be more likely to contribute than another.

Optimal hiring depends on context. Optimal teams will be diverse.

Evidence for this claim can be seen in the way that papers and patents that combine diverse ideas tend to rank as high-impact.

It can also be found in the structure of the so-called random decision forest, a state-of-the-art machine-learning algorithm.

Random forests consist of ensembles of decision trees.

If classifying pictures, each tree makes a vote: is that a picture of a fox or a dog?

A weighted majority rules. Random forests can serve many ends.

They can identify bank fraud and diseases, recommend ceiling fans and predict online dating

behaviour.

When building a forest, you do not select the best trees as they tend to make similar classifications.

You want diversity. Programmers achieve that diversity by training each tree on different data,

a technique known as bagging.

They also boost the forest 'cognitively' by training trees on the hardest cases — those that the current forest gets wrong.

This ensures even more diversity and accurate forests.

Yet the fallacy of meritocracy persists. Corporations, non-profits, governments, universities and even preschools test, score and hire the 'best'. This all but guarantees not creating the best team. Ranking people by common criteria produces homogeneity. That's not likely to lead to breakthroughs.

Q10. The author critiques meritocracy for all the following reasons EXCEPT that:

- (a) modern problems are multifaceted and require varied skill-sets to be solved.
- (b) diversity and context-specificity are important for making major advances in any field.
- (c) criteria designed to assess merit are insufficient to test expertise in any field of knowledge.
- (d) an ideal team comprises of best individuals from diverse fields of knowledge.

Correct Answer: (d) an ideal team comprises of best individuals from diverse fields of knowledge.

Solution:

This is an EXCEPT question, so we need to identify the option that does **not** represent a critique made by the author.

Option (a) – This is true. The author states that modern problems like obesity involve multiple complex factors

which no single person can fully understand, hence requiring multiple skill sets.

Option (b) – This is also true. The author argues that diverse, context-specific knowledge is key to solving major problems,

such as when assembling a scientific research team.

Option (c) – The passage points out that merit-based tests cannot sufficiently rank

individuals

in complex domains like neuroscience because of the depth and volume of knowledge involved.

Option (d) – This is the **incorrect** statement. The author explicitly rejects the idea of hiring the “best” individuals,

even within a domain. Instead, they argue for diversity over rankings.

The author believes the best team is not a set of top individuals but a diverse, complementary group.

Hence, Option (d) is the correct answer to the EXCEPT question.

Quick Tip

For EXCEPT questions, eliminate all the points directly supported by the passage and pick the one that contradicts the main idea.

Q11. Which of the following conditions would weaken the efficacy of a random decision forest?

(A) If a large number of decision trees in the ensemble were trained on data derived from easy cases.

(B) If a large number of decision trees in the ensemble were trained on data derived from easy and hard cases.

(C) If the types of ensembles of decision trees in the forest were doubled.

(D) If the types of decision trees in each ensemble of the forest were doubled.

Correct Answer: (A) If a large number of decision trees in the ensemble were trained on data derived from easy cases.

Solution:

The passage describes how random forests work: they rely on ensembles of decision trees that are trained on diverse data.

One method used to enhance accuracy is to expose trees to the hardest cases—examples that other trees in the forest misclassified.

Option (A) – If trees are trained only on easy cases, they won’t learn how to handle complex

or ambiguous inputs.

This leads to uniform and less accurate predictions, directly weakening the power of the ensemble.

Option (B) – This aligns with the passage. Including hard cases improves the forest by promoting diversity and accuracy.

Option (C) – Increasing the number of ensembles could increase computational load but not necessarily reduce accuracy.

Option (D) – Doubling the diversity among decision trees would likely improve the model, not weaken it.

Therefore, Option (A) would most clearly reduce the efficacy of the random forest by limiting learning to only simple scenarios.

Quick Tip

Random forests rely on variety and exposure to difficult data to become accurate. Training only on easy cases reduces their predictive strength.

Q12. Which of the following conditions, if true, would invalidate the passage’s main argument?

(A) If assessment tests were made more extensive and rigorous.

(B) If top-scorers possessed multidisciplinary knowledge that enabled them to look at a problem from several perspectives.

(C) If it were proven that teams characterised by diversity end up being conflicted about problems and take a long time to arrive at a solution.

(D) If a new machine-learning algorithm were developed that proved to be more effective than the random decision forest.

Correct Answer: (C) If it were proven that teams characterised by diversity end up being conflicted about problems and take a long time to arrive at a solution.

Solution:

The core argument of the passage is that diversity—not individual merit—is key to solving complex, modern problems.

The author repeatedly argues that diversity in knowledge bases, perspectives, and methods increases problem-solving capability.

Option (A) – Making tests more rigorous doesn't address the main issue, which is that no test can capture the complexity of domains like neuroscience.

Even the most refined tests wouldn't replace the value of diverse contributions.

Option (B) – If top-scorers had multidisciplinary knowledge, it might help, but it still wouldn't replicate the diversity of perspectives from multiple individuals with varied backgrounds.

This alone wouldn't invalidate the overall argument.

Option (C) – This directly contradicts the main claim.

If diverse teams were proven to be inefficient or conflicted, then the justification for hiring based on diversity would weaken.

Thus, this condition would fundamentally challenge the passage's core thesis.

Option (D) – The example of random forests is used as an analogy to support the argument, but the argument doesn't hinge on it. A better algorithm wouldn't invalidate the value of diversity in teams.

Therefore, Option (C) is the correct answer.

Quick Tip

To invalidate an argument, the condition must directly contradict the main idea or assumption the argument depends on.

Q13. On the basis of the passage, which of the following teams is likely to be most effective in solving the problem of rising obesity levels?

(A) A team comprised of nutritionists, psychologists, urban planners and media personnel, who have each scored a distinction in their respective subject tests.

(B) A team comprised of nutritionists, psychologists, urban planners and media personnel, who have each performed well in their respective subject tests.

(C) A specialised team of nutritionists from various countries, who are also trained in the machine-learning algorithm of random decision forest.

(D) A specialised team of top nutritionists from various countries, who also possess some knowledge of psychology.

Correct Answer: (B) A team comprised of nutritionists, psychologists, urban planners and media personnel, who have each performed well in their respective subject tests.

Solution:

According to the passage, solving modern issues like obesity requires diverse expertise. Obesity is described as a multidimensional problem that involves psychology, nutrition, media, transportation, and infrastructure.

Option (A) – While it includes a diverse team, the emphasis on scoring distinction goes against the author’s stance.

The author criticizes meritocratic measures such as test performance as ineffective in forming great teams.

Option (B) – This is the best choice. It features a diverse team with relevant domain knowledge.

The mention that they performed well—not necessarily ranked the best—aligns with the author’s argument that context and diversity matter more than rank.

Option (C) – This team is too narrowly focused on nutrition and machine learning. It lacks the multidimensional diversity needed for addressing obesity from multiple angles.

Option (D) – Similar to (C), this team is too narrowly focused on nutrition and lacks enough diversity in domain perspectives.

Hence, Option (B) is most in line with the passage’s view on solving complex, interdisciplinary issues like obesity.

Quick Tip

When the passage advocates diversity, choose the answer with varied expertise, not just high individual performance in a single field.

Q14. Which of the following best describes the purpose of the example of neuroscience?

(A) In the modern age, every field of knowledge is so vast that a meaningful assessment of merit is impossible.

(B) Unlike other fields of knowledge, neuroscience is an exceptionally complex field, making a meaningful assessment of neuroscientists impossible.

(C) In narrow fields of knowledge, a meaningful assessment of expertise has always been possible.

(D) Neuroscience is an advanced field of science because of its connections with other branches of science like oncology and biostatistics.

Correct Answer: (A) In the modern age, every field of knowledge is so vast that a meaningful assessment of merit is impossible.

Solution:

The example of neuroscience is used in the passage to illustrate the idea that within any complex field,

the sheer volume and diversity of research make it impossible to meaningfully rank individuals by merit.

The author states that over 50,000 neuroscience papers were published in a single year covering diverse topics—from molecules and synapses to neural networks—making a single test or ranking method invalid.

The point is not that neuroscience is uniquely complex, but that it is **representative** of most modern domains

where depth and breadth prevent objective assessment of individual excellence.

Option (A) – This matches the author’s reasoning. The neuroscience example supports the broader claim

that assessment of merit is nearly impossible in modern, complex fields due to volume and variability.

Option (B) – This wrongly implies that neuroscience is an exception, whereas the author uses it as an example of a general trend.

Option (C) – The passage does not claim assessment is possible in narrow fields; it challenges the very idea of ranking individuals.

Option (D) – The point isn’t about neuroscience being advanced or multidisciplinary—it’s about its complexity making merit assessment difficult.

Therefore, Option (A) best explains why the author included the example of neuroscience.

Quick Tip

Look for the role the example plays in the argument—whether it’s an illustration, exception, or evidence. Neuroscience is an illustration of a general point.

Passage: Metric Fixation

More and more companies, government agencies, educational institutions and philanthropic organisations

are today in the grip of a new phenomenon: ‘metric fixation’.

The key components of metric fixation are the belief that it is possible – and desirable – to replace professional judgment (acquired through personal experience and talent) with numerical indicators of comparative performance based upon standardised data (metrics);

and that the best way to motivate people within these organisations is by attaching rewards and penalties

to their measured performance.

The rewards can be monetary, in the form of pay for performance, say,

or reputational, in the form of college rankings, hospital ratings, surgical report cards and so on.

But the most dramatic negative effect of metric fixation is its propensity to incentivise gaming:

that is, encouraging professionals to maximise the metrics in ways that are at odds with the larger purpose of the organisation.

If the rate of major crimes in a district becomes the metric according to which police officers are promoted,

then some officers will respond by simply not recording crimes or downgrading them from major offences to misdemeanours.

Or take the case of surgeons.

When the metrics of success and failure are made public – affecting their reputation and income –

some surgeons will improve their metric scores by refusing to operate on patients with more

complex problems,

whose surgical outcomes are more likely to be negative.

Who suffers? The patients who don't get operated upon.

When reward is tied to measured performance, metric fixation invites just this sort of gaming.

But metric fixation also leads to a variety of more subtle unintended negative consequences.

These include goal displacement, which comes in many varieties:

when performance is judged by a few measures, and the stakes are high (keeping one's job, getting a pay rise or raising the stock price

at the time that stock options are vested), people focus on satisfying those measures –

often at the expense of other, more important organisational goals that are not measured.

The best-known example is 'teaching to the test', a widespread phenomenon

that has distorted primary and secondary education in the United States

since the adoption of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Short-termism is another negative.

Measured performance encourages what the US sociologist Robert K Merton in 1936 called "the imperious immediacy of interests" where the actor's paramount concern with the foreseen immediate consequences excludes consideration of further or other consequences'.

In short, advancing short-term goals at the expense of long-range considerations. This

problem is endemic to publicly traded corporations that sacrifice long-term research and

development, and the development of their staff, to the perceived imperatives of the quarterly report.

Q15. Of the following, which would have added the least depth to the author's argument?

(A) An analysis of the reasons why metrics fixation is becoming popular despite its drawbacks.

(B) A comparative case study of metrics- and non-metrics-based evaluation, and its impact on the main goals of an organisation.

(C) More real-life illustrations of the consequences of employees and professionals gaming metrics-based performance measurement systems.

(D) Assessment of the pros and cons of a professional judgment-based evaluation system.

Correct Answer: (D) Assessment of the pros and cons of a professional judgment-based

evaluation system.

Solution:

The author's main argument criticizes metric fixation and highlights its unintended negative consequences,

such as incentivising gaming, distorting organisational goals, and promoting short-termism.

Option (A) – An analysis of the reasons for its popularity would enhance the discussion by providing context and rationale.

Option (B) – A case study comparing metric and non-metric systems would offer concrete evidence, which strengthens the argument.

Option (C) – More real-life examples would give further weight to the critique by showing actual harm caused.

Option (D) – Evaluating the pros and cons of professional judgment would shift focus to an alternative model,

but it doesn't directly deepen the critique of metric fixation itself.

It would be a tangent rather than a deeper exploration of the existing argument.

Hence, Option (D) adds the least depth to the author's primary line of reasoning.

Quick Tip

When asked about "least depth," choose the option that goes off-topic or adds the least relevance to the author's main concern.

Q16. Which of the following is **NOT** a consequence of the 'metric fixation' phenomenon mentioned in the passage?

(A) Short-term orientation induced by frequent measurement of performance.

(B) Finding a way to show better results without actually improving performance.

(C) Improving cooperation among employees leading to increased organisational effectiveness in the long run.

(D) Deviating from organisationally important objectives to measurable yet less important objectives.

Correct Answer: (C) Improving cooperation among employees leading to increased organisational effectiveness in the long run.

Solution:

The passage outlines several problems caused by metric fixation:

gaming the system, goal displacement, short-termism, and neglecting broader organisational goals.

Option (A) – Short-term orientation is explicitly discussed as a negative consequence.

Option (B) – This is the essence of “gaming the metrics,” like surgeons avoiding high-risk patients.

Option (D) – Goal displacement is mentioned, where measurable goals replace more important, unmeasured ones.

Option (C) – This is **not** mentioned anywhere in the passage.

In fact, the passage highlights negative consequences, not improved cooperation or long-term organisational success.

Therefore, Option (C) is the correct answer as it is **not** a stated consequence.

Quick Tip

For “NOT” questions, verify each option directly against the passage content and eliminate clearly stated consequences.

Q17. What main point does the author want to convey through the examples of the police officer and the surgeon?

(A) Some professionals are likely to be significantly influenced by the design of performance measurement systems.

(B) Metrics-linked rewards may encourage unethical behaviour among some professionals.

(C) The actions of police officers and surgeons have a significantly impact on society.

(D) Critical public roles should not be evaluated on metrics-based performance measures.

Correct Answer: (B) Metrics-linked rewards may encourage unethical behaviour among some professionals.

Solution:

The passage uses the examples of police officers and surgeons to demonstrate how tying rewards or reputation to metrics

can lead professionals to manipulate outcomes in unethical or harmful ways.

For example, police officers may downgrade major crimes to misdemeanours or avoid reporting them altogether

to improve performance statistics that influence promotions.

Similarly, surgeons may refuse to operate on complex patients to avoid bad outcomes that would negatively affect their ratings.

Option (A) – While technically true, this is too vague and broad. It doesn't emphasize the moral consequences.

Option (B) – This is the best answer because it directly captures the author's critique: the link between metrics and rewards may drive unethical practices.

Option (C) – Although public roles do impact society, this is not the core message of these examples.

Option (D) – This is more of an opinion or policy proposal than a summary of the examples. Thus, Option (B) accurately reflects the author's intended point.

Quick Tip

Focus on the ethical and behavioural consequences described in the passage when interpreting illustrative examples.

Q18. All of the following can be a possible feature of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, **EXCEPT:**

(A) school funding and sanctions are tied to yearly improvement shown on tests.

(B) standardised test scores can be critical in determining a student's educational future.

(C) the focus is more on test-taking skills than on higher order thinking and problem-solving.

(D) assessment is dependent on the teacher's subjective evaluation of students' class participation.

Correct Answer: (D) assessment is dependent on the teacher's subjective evaluation of students' class participation.

Solution:

The passage refers to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 in the context of how metric

fixation

has distorted education through “teaching to the test.”

This suggests an emphasis on measurable, standardised performance rather than subjective evaluation.

Option (A) – True. It fits with the idea of using test improvement as a metric for school funding or sanctions.

Option (B) – Likely true. Standardised scores become significant in education under such policy frameworks.

Option (C) – Correct. The author mentions that test-focused systems can undermine broader educational goals, like critical thinking.

Option (D) – This is the **EXCEPT** case. Subjective, teacher-based assessments are not part of metric fixation;

they are actually opposed to it. The author criticises reliance on rigid data and external metrics,

which exclude teacher discretion.

Hence, Option (D) does not align with the characteristics of the No Child Left Behind Act as portrayed.

Quick Tip

When asked for the “EXCEPT” option, identify the one choice that contradicts the main theme or mechanism described in the passage.

Q19. What is the main idea that the author is trying to highlight in the passage?

(A) Long-term organisational goals should not be ignored for short-term measures of organisational success.

(B) All kinds of organisations are now relying on metrics to measure performance and to give rewards and punishments.

(C) Evaluating performance by using measurable performance metrics may misguide organisational goal achievement.

(D) Performance measurement needs to be precise and cost-effective to be useful for evaluating organisational performance.

Correct Answer: (C) Evaluating performance by using measurable performance metrics may misguide organisational goal achievement.

Solution:

The main argument of the passage is a critique of “metric fixation.”

The author highlights that the practice of tying rewards and punishments to performance metrics can backfire

by encouraging gaming, distorting priorities, and displacing more important but less measurable goals.

The entire passage explains how overemphasis on measurable data—such as test scores, crime stats, or surgical outcomes—

can misrepresent actual performance and steer organisations away from their real objectives.

Option (A) – This is mentioned, but it reflects only a secondary point about short-termism, not the core idea.

Option (B) – This is a statement of fact and context, not the main idea. It describes what is happening but not why it’s problematic.

Option (C) – This best captures the author’s purpose.

The focus is on how metric-based evaluation can mislead and hinder genuine organisational success.

Option (D) – This option focuses on accuracy and cost-efficiency, which are not concerns raised in the passage.

Thus, Option (C) is the most accurate expression of the main idea.

Quick Tip

When identifying the main idea, prioritize the author’s central argument or concern—especially the one supported by multiple examples.

Passage: Rings of Saturn

NOT everything looks lovelier the longer and closer its inspection. But Saturn does.

It is gorgeous through Earthly telescopes. However, the 13 years of close observation provided by Cassini,

an American spacecraft, showed the planet, its moons and its remarkable rings off better and better,

revealing finer structures, striking novelties and greater drama.

By and large the big things in the solar system—planets and moons—are thought of as having been around since the beginning.

The suggestion that rings and moons are new is, though, made even more interesting by the fact that one of those moons, Enceladus,

is widely considered the most promising site in the solar system on which to look for alien life.

If Enceladus is both young and bears life, that life must have come into being quickly.

This is also believed to have been the case on Earth.

Were it true on Enceladus, that would encourage the idea that life evolves easily when conditions are right.

One reason for thinking Saturn's rings are young is that they are bright.

The solar system is suffused with comet dust, and comet dust is dark.

Leaving Saturn's ring system (which Cassini has shown to be more than 90% water ice) out in such a mist

is like leaving laundry hanging on a line downwind from a smokestack: it will get dirty.

The lighter the rings are, the faster this will happen, for the less mass they contain, the less celestial pollution they can absorb before they start to discolour.

Jeff Cuzzi, a scientist at America's space agency, NASA, who helped run Cassini, told the Lunar and Planetary Science Conference in Houston that combining the mass estimates

with Cassini's measurements of the density of comet-dust near Saturn suggests the rings are no older than the first dinosaurs, nor younger than the last of them—that is, they are somewhere between 200m and 70m years old.

That timing fits well with a theory put forward in 2016, by Matija Cuk of the SETI Institute,

in California and his colleagues.

They suggest that at around the same time as the rings came into being an old set of moons orbiting Saturn destroyed themselves, and from their remains emerged not only the rings but also the planet's current suite of inner moons—

Rhea, Dione, Tethys, Enceladus and Mimas.

Dr Cuk and his colleagues used computer simulations of Saturn's moons' orbits as a sort of time machine.

Looking at the rate at which tidal friction is causing these orbits to lengthen, they extrapolated backwards to find out what those orbits would have looked like in the past. They discovered that about 100m years ago the orbits of two of them, Tethys and Dione, would have interacted in a way that left the planes in which they orbit markedly tilted.

But their orbits are untilted.

The obvious, if unsettling, conclusion was that this interaction never happened—and thus that at the time when it should have happened, Dione and Tethys were simply not there.

They must have come into being later.

Q20. The phrase “leaving laundry hanging on a line downwind from a smokestack” is used to explain how the ringed planet's:

- (A) atmosphere absorbs comet dust.
- (B) moons create a gap between the rings.
- (C) rings discolour and darken over time.
- (D) rings lose mass over time.

Correct Answer: (C) rings discolour and darken over time.

Solution:

The passage compares Saturn's rings, made mostly of water ice, to clean laundry and the solar system's comet dust to pollution coming from a smokestack.

Just like laundry would become dirty if hung downwind from a smokestack, Saturn's bright rings would darken

when exposed to the constant mist of dark comet dust in space.

This analogy is specifically used to explain how Saturn’s rings, if old, should appear darker than they are.

Since they are still bright, scientists infer that they must be relatively young.

Option (A) – Incorrect. The atmosphere of Saturn is not being discussed in this context.

Option (B) – Irrelevant. Moons creating gaps is not related to the “smokestack” analogy.

Option (C) – Correct. The analogy clearly illustrates how the rings would become discoloured over time.

Option (D) – Not the focus of the analogy. Mass loss is discussed elsewhere but not here.

Therefore, Option (C) is the best interpretation of the comparison.

Quick Tip

When interpreting a metaphor or analogy, identify the specific physical process being illustrated in context.

Q21. Data provided by Cassini challenged the assumption that:

(A) all big things in the solar system have been around since the beginning.

(B) new celestial bodies can form from the destruction of old celestial bodies.

(C) Saturn’s ring system is composed mostly of water ice.

(D) there was life on earth when Saturn’s rings were being formed.

Correct Answer: (A) all big things in the solar system have been around since the beginning.

Solution:

A central theme in the passage is that Cassini’s data suggests that Saturn’s rings and several of its moons are relatively young

— only 70 to 200 million years old — compared to the age of the solar system.

This contradicts the long-held assumption that planets, moons, and rings have been present since the formation of the solar system.

Option (A) – Correct. The discovery of young rings and moons directly challenges this assumption.

Option (B) – This is actually supported by the theory mentioned in the passage, not contradicted.

Option (C) – Cassini confirmed that Saturn’s rings are composed mostly of water ice; this is not challenged.

Option (D) – The passage mentions life on Earth as a comparison but doesn’t challenge any assumption about it.

Hence, Option (A) best captures the assumption challenged by Cassini’s data.

Quick Tip

Focus on key scientific findings in the passage to determine what long-standing ideas they challenge or overturn.

Q22. Based on information provided in the passage, we can infer that, in addition to water ice, Saturn’s rings might also have small amounts of:

(A) methane and rock particles.

(B) rock particles and comet dust.

(C) helium and methane.

(D) helium and comet dust.

Correct Answer: (B) rock particles and comet dust.

Solution:

The passage states that Saturn’s rings are made up of more than 90% water ice.

It also explains how comet dust in the solar system causes discoloration of the rings over time.

This implies that comet dust can accumulate in small amounts within the rings.

Additionally, since the rings are made up of debris from earlier moons (as inferred from the theory proposed by Matija Čuk),

and moons are typically composed of rock and ice, it is reasonable to infer that rock particles are also present in the rings.

Option (A) – Methane is not mentioned in the passage as a component of the rings.

Option (B) – Correct. Both rock particles (from moon remnants) and comet dust are supported by the passage.

Option (C) and (D) – Helium is not referenced at all.

Thus, Option (B) is the best inference based on the passage.

Quick Tip

For inference questions, combine explicit statements with logical connections drawn from the text.

Q23. The main objective of the passage is to:

- (A) provide evidence that Saturn's rings and moons are recent creations.
- (B) highlight the beauty, finer structures and celestial drama of Saturn's rings and moons.
- (C) demonstrate how the orbital patterns of Saturn's rings and moons change over time.
- (D) establish that Saturn's rings and inner moons have been around since the beginning of time.

Correct Answer: (A) provide evidence that Saturn's rings and moons are recent creations.

Solution:

The passage opens by discussing the findings of Cassini and quickly pivots to the surprising idea that Saturn's rings and moons might be relatively young.

It presents multiple strands of evidence:

- The brightness of the rings (indicating low contamination from comet dust),
- Mass measurements suggesting a young age, and
- Orbital simulations of moons like Tethys and Dione supporting their recent emergence.

These details collectively argue against the earlier assumption that such planetary features are as old as the solar system.

Option (A) – Correct. This option captures the central thesis of the passage.

Option (B) – Though beauty is mentioned briefly, it is not the focus.

Option (C) – The passage mentions orbital patterns but uses them to support the age hypothesis, not as the main theme.

Option (D) – This is directly contradicted by the evidence presented.

Hence, the main objective is best captured by Option (A).

Quick Tip

To identify the main objective, look for the conclusion that all examples, data, and theories are collectively supporting.

Q24. Based on information provided in the passage, we can conclude all of the following EXCEPT:

- (A) Saturn's lighter rings discolour faster than rings with greater mass.
- (B) Tethys and Dione are less than 100 million years old.
- (C) none of Saturn's moons ever had suitable conditions for life to evolve.
- (D) Saturn's rings were created from the remains of older moons.

Correct Answer: (C) none of Saturn's moons ever had suitable conditions for life to evolve.

Solution:

This is an EXCEPT question, so we are looking for the statement that is **not** supported by the passage.

Option (A) – This is supported. The passage explains that lighter rings, which have less mass, accumulate celestial “pollution” (comet dust) more quickly, causing them to darken faster.

Option (B) – Supported. According to orbital simulations, Dione and Tethys must have come into being after the time when they should have interacted, around 100 million years ago. Therefore, they are likely less than 100 million years old.

Option (C) – **This is not supported and is in fact contradicted.**

The passage clearly states that Enceladus, one of Saturn's moons, is considered a promising candidate for harboring life due to its geological activity and subsurface ocean. Thus, at least one of Saturn's moons **does** have suitable conditions.

Option (D) – Supported. The passage presents a theory that Saturn's current rings and inner moons were formed from the remains of a previous generation of moons that were destroyed.

Therefore, Option (C) is the only statement that cannot be concluded from the passage.

Quick Tip

In EXCEPT questions, identify the one choice that clearly contradicts the information or inference from the passage.

Q25. The four sentences (labelled 1, 2, 3, 4) given below, when properly sequenced would yield a coherent paragraph.

Decide on the proper sequence of the order of the sentences and key in the sequence of the four numbers as your answer.

1. It was his taxpayers who had to shell out as much as \$1.6bn over 10 years to employees of failed companies.
2. Companies in many countries routinely engage in such activities which means that the employees are left with unpaid entitlements.
3. Deliberate and systematic liquidation of a company to avoid liabilities and then restarting the business is called phoenixing.
4. The Australian Minister for Revenue and Services discovered in an audit that phoenixing had cost the Australian economy between 2.9bn and 5.1bn last year.

Correct Answer: 3-2-4-1

Solution:

We begin by identifying the sentence that introduces a concept clearly — this is the definition sentence.

Sentence 3 introduces a key term: “phoenixing.”

It defines phoenixing as the deliberate and systematic liquidation of a company to avoid liabilities and then restarting the business.

Since this is a technical term and none of the other sentences make sense without first knowing what phoenixing is, Sentence 3 must come first.

Next, Sentence 2 builds on that idea. It talks about how this activity is common in many countries, indicating that phoenixing is not just theoretical but a global corporate malpractice.

The reference to “such activities” clearly refers to phoenixing, which was introduced in Sentence 3.

Sentence 2 also presents the consequence of phoenixing: employees are left with unpaid entitlements.

Now we come to Sentence 4, which adds an example and a quantitative detail.

It refers to the Australian Minister’s audit findings, stating phoenixing cost the country 2.9 to 5.1 billion dollars.

This narrows down the focus from a general problem (Sentence 2) to a real-world example (Sentence 4).

Finally, Sentence 1 wraps up the paragraph with a more personal consequence — the burden on taxpayers.

It states that over 10 years, taxpayers had to pay \$1.6 billion to failed company employees. This outcome makes sense after discussing the definition, global spread, national-level loss, and then the direct impact on citizens.

It also references “his taxpayers,” connecting with the “Minister” mentioned in Sentence 4, so the pronoun link further supports placing 1 after 4.

Thus, the correct and coherent order is: 3-2-4-1.

Quick Tip

Start with definition-based or introductory sentences.

Look for pronouns like “such activities” or “his taxpayers” — they point back to previously mentioned ideas.

Use cause-effect flow: define → general case → specific example → resulting consequence.

Q26. The four sentences (labelled 1, 2, 3, 4) given below, when properly sequenced would yield a coherent paragraph.

Decide on the proper sequence of the order of the sentences and key in the sequence of the four numbers as your answer.

1. The group was a failure in the short term, crushed by the military power of the state.
2. Armed with the new understanding of class struggle, nationalism and anti-imperialism, the group slowly started gaining local support.

3. The Naxalite movement, which arose in the late 1960s, was an important landmark in the political history of India.

4. The movement has been resilient — it continues to influence Indian politics and movements even today.

Correct Answer: 3-2-1-4

Solution:

We start with **Sentence 3**, as it introduces the main topic — the Naxalite movement.

It provides the timeframe (late 1960s), geographical context (India), and thematic relevance (political history).

This acts as a perfect topic sentence. No other sentence introduces the subject matter as clearly.

Next is Sentence 2, which begins with “Armed with...”

This sentence gives insight into the ideological strength and grassroots appeal of the movement.

It describes how class struggle, nationalism, and anti-imperialism helped the group grow in influence and gain local support.

This builds chronologically after the introduction in Sentence 3.

Now comes Sentence 1, which brings a contrast or twist.

Despite gaining support, the group was crushed by the state’s military — showing a setback or failure.

This presents a turning point in the narrative: the initial defeat of the movement.

It uses the phrase “short term,” implying that something changed later — preparing the reader for the next idea.

Finally, Sentence 4 discusses the long-term resilience of the movement.

It says that despite being crushed, the movement still influences Indian politics today.

This ties back to the “short term failure” mentioned in Sentence 1 and completes the cause-effect arc.

The chronological arc flows naturally from rise → struggle → suppression → legacy.

Therefore, the correct order is: 3-2-1-4.

Quick Tip

Always begin with the sentence that introduces the topic clearly and completely.

Look for logical contrasts such as “in the short term” followed by “resilience” to establish a timeline.

Try building the paragraph as a story — rise, conflict, fall, aftermath.

Q27. The four sentences (labelled 1, 2, 3, 4) given below, when properly sequenced would yield a coherent paragraph.

Decide on the proper sequence of the order of the sentences and key in the sequence of the four numbers as your answer.

1. They would rather do virtuous side projects assiduously as long as these would not compel them into doing their day jobs more honourably or reduce the profit margins.
2. They would fund a million of the buzzwordy programs rather than fundamentally question the rules of their game or alter their own behavior to reduce the harm of the existing distorted, inefficient and unfair rules.
3. Like the dieter who would rather do anything to lose weight than actually eat less, the business elite would save the world through social-impact-investing and philanthro-capitalism.
4. Doing the right thing — and moving away from their win-win mentality — would involve real sacrifice; instead, it’s easier to focus on their pet projects and initiatives.

Correct Answer: 3-2-1-4

Solution:

To form a coherent paragraph, we must look for the best introductory sentence that sets up a strong analogy or argument.

Sentence 3 fits best as the opener because it sets up a metaphor comparing the business elite to a dieter.

This simile is clear and memorable — it helps establish the overall idea: the business elite want to appear as though they are helping the world, without making actual sacrifices.

This introduces both the tone (critical) and the central theme (cosmetic vs real effort).

Next, Sentence 2 logically follows.

It elaborates on the actions mentioned in Sentence 3 — that instead of questioning or changing harmful business practices, they support flashy programs.

This builds on the “save the world through social-impact-investing” idea and contrasts it with a refusal to engage with root causes.

Sentence 1 continues the same thread, adding another example of superficial effort.

Here, they “do virtuous side projects,” as long as these don’t impact their core business practices or profitability.

It aligns with the earlier point — highlighting the hypocrisy in making only convenient sacrifices.

The transition from Sentence 2 to Sentence 1 is smooth, as both emphasize appearance over substance.

Sentence 4 is best placed last.

It wraps up the paragraph by stating the hard truth: doing the right thing would require real sacrifice.

This contrasts directly with all the previous sentences that showed unwillingness to make such sacrifice.

The sentence also contains the phrase “instead, it’s easier…” which serves as a conclusion to the previous pattern.

Hence, it functions as the final evaluation of the behavior described in Sentences 1–3.

The correct sequence that ensures logical progression, vivid metaphor, and a strong conclusion is: 3-2-1-4.

Quick Tip

When a sentence uses a metaphor or analogy (like the dieter), it’s often a strong opening.

Look for shifts in tone and summary-type phrases (like “instead, it’s easier. . .”) to identify concluding sentences.

Middle sentences should build the core logic by adding examples or elaborating ideas.

Q28. The four sentences (labelled 1, 2, 3, 4) given below, when properly sequenced would yield a coherent paragraph.

Decide on the proper sequence of the order of the sentences and key in the sequence of the four numbers as your answer.

1. In the era of smart world, however, ‘Universal Basic Income’ is an ineffective instrument which cannot address the potential breakdown of the social contract when large swathes of the population would effectively be unemployed.
2. In the era of industrial revolution, the abolition of child labour, poor laws and the growth of trade unions helped families cope with the pressures of mechanised work.
3. Growing inequality could be matched by a creeping authoritarianism that is bolstered by technology that is increasingly able to peer into the deepest vestiges of our lives.
4. New institutions emerge which recognise ways in which workers could contribute to and benefit by economic growth when, rather than if, their jobs are automated.

Correct Answer: 2-1-3-4

Solution:

Let us begin by identifying the sentence that provides a historical backdrop — this typically forms the introduction.

Sentence 2 refers to the Industrial Revolution, the abolition of child labour, the introduction of poor laws, and the role of trade unions.

It outlines how past societies managed the pressures of mechanisation — offering context to the broader conversation about work, labour, and transitions.

This sentence sets the stage and gives us a comparative lens to evaluate today’s technological disruptions.

Next, Sentence 1 builds directly on the theme of mechanisation, but in a modern context — the “smart world.”

It argues that Universal Basic Income (UBI), a popular modern idea, is ineffective in addressing mass unemployment and the erosion of the social contract.

This functions as a contrast with the past: while trade unions and laws worked then (Sentence 2), UBI may not work now.

Also, the phrase “however” in Sentence 1 indicates it is responding to something earlier —

in this case, the positive impact of reforms during the Industrial era in Sentence 2.

Then comes Sentence 3, which highlights the dangers of growing inequality in the smart-tech era.

It discusses how authoritarianism might rise, aided by technology’s invasive power — suggesting the possible social and political fallout of inadequate modern solutions (like UBI). It logically follows Sentence 1, which has already expressed skepticism about UBI, by adding another layer: the risk of digital authoritarianism and surveillance.

Finally, Sentence 4 offers a hopeful resolution — the emergence of new institutions that might help workers adapt to automation.

It looks ahead and suggests a more productive way forward — enabling workers to still contribute and benefit, despite job automation.

The phrase “rather than if” indicates inevitability of automation, reinforcing the urgency and continuity from the concerns raised in Sentence 3.

Thus, Sentence 4 serves as a conclusion or vision statement for the paragraph.

Putting it all together, we get a smooth logical flow:

- (2) sets the historical context.
- (1) brings in the modern failure of UBI.
- (3) deepens the concern with political and tech consequences.
- (4) offers a potential solution.

Hence, the most coherent sequence is: 2-1-3-4.

Quick Tip

Start with historical context to build contrast with the modern era.

Use transition cues like “however” to find continuity and contrast.

A paragraph typically ends with either a consequence or a vision — Sentence 4 fits that purpose here.

Q29. The passage given below is followed by four alternate summaries. Choose the option that best captures the author’s position.

Passage:

The early optimism about sport's deterrent effects on delinquency was premature as researchers failed to find any consistent relationships between sports participation and deviance.

As the initial studies were based upon cross-sectional data and the effects captured were short-term, it was problematic to test and verify the temporal sequencing of events suggested by the deterrence theory.

The correlation between sport and delinquency could not be disentangled from class and cultural variables known.

Choosing individuals to play sports in the first place was problematic, which became more acute in the subsequent decades as researchers began to document just how closely sports participation was linked to social class indicators.

(A) There is a direct relationship between sport participation and delinquency but it needs more empirical evidence.

(B) Contradicting the previous optimism, later researchers have proved that there is no consistent relationship between sports participation and deviance.

(C) Statistical and empirical weaknesses stand in the way of inferring any relationship between sports participation and deviance.

(D) Sports participation is linked to class and cultural variables such as education, income, and social capital.

Correct Answer: (C) Statistical and empirical weaknesses stand in the way of inferring any relationship between sports participation and deviance.

Solution:

The passage discusses the historical belief that sports could help reduce delinquency but then critiques that belief with newer research findings.

Initially, the author notes that early optimism was “premature” — this implies a shift in understanding based on empirical evidence.

The passage highlights two central problems:

(1) Methodological flaws — such as the use of short-term, cross-sectional studies which failed to capture long-term cause-effect relationships.

(2) Confounding variables — such as class and cultural factors that make it hard to isolate

the effect of sport alone.

Option (C) directly reflects both of these concerns.

It emphasizes “statistical and empirical weaknesses” — which is precisely what the author criticizes in early studies.

It also avoids making a strong claim for or against the relationship, which matches the author’s cautious tone.

Option (A) is incorrect because it falsely claims a direct relationship exists.

The passage states the opposite — that no consistent relationship could be found.

Option (B) is closer but slightly overstated.

The phrase “have proved” is too strong, considering the author speaks of complexity and difficulty in establishing causality — not a firm disproof.

Option (D) mentions an important idea from the passage — that sports participation is linked to social class — but it misses the main argument.

The central issue is not just class, but the inability to prove a causal deterrent effect due to empirical limitations.

Therefore, the best summary capturing the author’s nuanced position is: (C).

Quick Tip

In summary questions, avoid options that exaggerate or oversimplify the argument.

When the passage discusses flaws in studies or limitations in data, look for options that reflect cautious or inconclusive positions.

Q30. The passage given below is followed by four alternate summaries. Choose the option that best captures the author’s position.

Passage:

Should the moral obligation to rescue and aid persons in grave peril, felt by a few, be enforced by the criminal law?

Should we follow the lead of a number of European countries and enact bad Samaritan laws?

Proponents of bad Samaritan laws must overcome at least three different sorts of obstacles.

First, they must show the laws are morally legitimate in principle, that is, that the duty to aid

others is a proper candidate for legal enforcement.

Second, they must show that this duty to aid can be defined in a way that can be fairly enforced by the courts.

Third, they must show that the benefits of the laws are worth their problems, risks and costs.

(A) Everyone agrees that people ought to aid others, the only debate is whether to have a law on it.

(B) A number of European countries that have successfully enacted bad Samaritan laws may serve as model statutes.

(C) Bad Samaritan laws may be desirable but they need to be tested for legal soundness.

(D) If bad Samaritan laws are found to be legally sound and enforceable they must be enacted.

Correct Answer: (C) Bad Samaritan laws may be desirable but they need to be tested for legal soundness.

Solution:

The passage discusses whether the moral duty to aid others should be converted into a legal duty through what are called “bad Samaritan laws.”

It does not immediately advocate for or against them, but rather presents a set of stringent requirements or tests that must be fulfilled before such laws can be justified.

These three obstacles mentioned are:

1. The laws must be morally legitimate — meaning they must align with our ethical expectations and be fit for legal codification.
2. They must be defined in such a way that the courts can enforce them fairly — which implies clarity and precision in the law.
3. They must deliver more benefit than cost — meaning that the practical consequences should justify the law.

Option (C) is the best match because it reflects the author’s cautious and conditional tone. It acknowledges that the laws may be desirable, but emphasizes the need for evaluation and legal scrutiny, which aligns exactly with the three-part test described in the passage.

Option (A) oversimplifies the debate.

The passage does not say that everyone agrees people ought to help others, nor does it reduce

the discussion to “only” whether there should be a law.

Instead, it emphasizes the complexity of converting moral duty into legal obligation.

Option (B) mentions European models, but this is merely a question posed in the opening line — it is not the author’s conclusion or main argument.

The passage does not endorse following Europe’s lead uncritically.

Option (D) is too assertive.

It suggests that if the laws are sound and enforceable, they “must” be enacted.

However, the passage does not reach this imperative stance — it only suggests what needs to be proven before considering enactment.

Thus, only Option (C) captures the nuanced, conditional, and evaluative position of the author.

Quick Tip

When summarizing a passage about legal or ethical debates, avoid options that oversimplify or skip over the conditions and arguments presented.

Look for cautious language like “must show,” “must prove,” and “must evaluate” — these often point to a conditional stance.

Q31. The passage given below is followed by four alternate summaries. Choose the option that best captures the author’s position.

Passage:

A Japanese government panel announced that it recommends regulating only genetically modified organisms that have had foreign genes permanently introduced into their genomes and not those whose endogenous genes have been edited.

The only stipulation is that researchers and businesses have to register their modifications to plants or animals with the government, with the exception of microbes cultured in contained environments.

Reactions to the decision are mixed.

While lauding the potential benefits of genome editing, an editorial opposes across-the-board permission.

Unforeseen risks in gene editing cannot be ruled out.

All genetically modified products must go through the same safety and labeling processes regardless of method.

(A) A government panel in Japan says transgenic modification and genome editing are not the same.

(B) Creating categories within genetically modified products in terms of transgenic modification and genome editing advances science but defies laws.

(C) Exempting from regulations the editing of endogenous genes is not desirable as this procedure might be risk-prone.

(D) Excepting microbes cultured in contained environments from the regulations of genome editing is premature.

Correct Answer: (C) Exempting from regulations the editing of endogenous genes is not desirable as this procedure might be risk-prone.

Solution:

The passage discusses a recommendation by a Japanese panel regarding the regulation of genetically modified organisms.

The key point is that the panel wants to regulate only transgenic organisms — those that have foreign genes — while not regulating organisms whose own genes (endogenous genes) are simply edited.

Additionally, the passage highlights concerns about this selective regulation.

Though some experts see the benefits of genome editing, others warn that risks — especially those unforeseen — still exist.

Therefore, the editorial viewpoint favors consistent oversight of all genetically modified products, regardless of whether the genes are foreign or endogenous.

Option (C) reflects this concern correctly.

It summarizes the argument that removing regulatory scrutiny from endogenous gene editing might be dangerous or “risk-prone.”

This captures the caution urged in the second half of the passage.

Option (A) is factually true but incomplete — it merely restates a classification mentioned in the opening line.

It does not capture the larger concern about safety and regulation, which is the focus of the author's position.

Option (B) makes an unfounded claim — there is no mention that such categorization defies laws.

Also, it adds the idea that classification "advances science", which is not directly claimed in the passage.

Hence, it introduces information that isn't aligned with the author's position.

Option (D) narrows down on microbes in contained environments, which is a minor detail in the passage.

The concern raised is broader — about the overall exemption of endogenous gene editing — not specifically microbes.

Thus, the only option that accurately and completely summarizes the author's position, including the regulatory concern and safety risks, is: (C).

Quick Tip

Look for summaries that reflect both the factual content and the tone of caution or evaluation from the passage.

Avoid choices that fixate on minor examples or introduce ideas not discussed by the author.

Q32. Five sentences related to a topic are given below. Four of them can be put together to form a meaningful and coherent short paragraph.

Identify the odd one out. Choose its number as your answer and key it in.

(A) As India looks to increase the number of cities, our urban planning must factor in potential natural disasters and work out contingencies in advance.

(B) Authorities must revise data and upgrade infrastructure and mitigation plans even if their local area hasn't been visited by a natural calamity yet.

(C) Extreme temperatures, droughts, and forest fires have more than doubled since 1980.

(D) There is no denying the fact that our baseline normal weather is changing.

(E) It is no longer a question of whether we will be hit by nature's fury but rather when.

Correct Answer: (C) Extreme temperatures, droughts, and forest fires have more than doubled since 1980.

Solution:

The task is to identify which one of the five sentences does not fit with the rest in forming a logically consistent and coherent paragraph.

Let's first identify the central theme in the paragraph formed by four of these sentences.

Sentences (A), (B), (D), and (E) all revolve around the need for urban planning and disaster preparedness due to growing environmental instability.

- **Sentence (A)** introduces the theme: India's urban expansion requires planning for natural disasters.

- **Sentence (D)** builds upon the context by asserting that climate conditions are no longer normal — i.e., baseline weather is changing.

- **Sentence (E)** follows logically from (D), emphasizing the urgency — it's not "if" but "when" natural disasters will strike.

- **Sentence (B)** concludes the argument with a prescriptive recommendation: authorities must upgrade infrastructure regardless of whether their area has experienced disaster yet.

These four sentences form a tight logical unit: they identify a problem (changing weather), its implication (rising disaster risk), the urgency (inevitable nature's fury), and the solution (improved planning).

Now consider **Sentence (C)** — it provides a statistical fact about increased environmental events since 1980.

While related to climate, it introduces a historical data point that feels detached from the more forward-looking and planning-based orientation of the other four sentences.

It does not tie directly into the narrative structure of preparation, urgency, or policy recommendation.

Therefore, **Sentence (C)** is the odd one out — it doesn't match the tone or argumentative structure of the other four.

Quick Tip

When identifying the odd sentence out, look for shifts in time, tone, or specificity.

The four connected sentences usually follow a common thread of narrative, cause-effect, or recommendation — exclude the one that doesn't fit that logic.

Q33. Five sentences related to a topic are given below. Four of them can be put together to form a meaningful and coherent short paragraph.

Identify the odd one out. Choose its letter as your answer and key it in.

(A) Much has been recently discovered about the development of songs in birds.

(B) Some species are restricted to a single song learned by all individuals, others have a range of songs.

(C) The most important auditory stimuli for the birds are the sounds of other birds.

(D) For all bird species there is a prescribed path to development of the final song.

(E) A bird begins with the subsong, passes through plastic song, until it achieves the species song.

Correct Answer: (C) The most important auditory stimuli for the birds are the sounds of other birds.

Solution:

To determine the odd one out, we must find a set of four sentences that together form a coherent paragraph.

Let's begin by identifying the common theme across the statements.

Sentence (A) provides an introductory line: it states that new discoveries have been made regarding how birds develop songs.

This sets up a discussion around the process and variation in song development.

Sentence (B) talks about variation among species — some learn a single song while others learn multiple.

This builds on the introductory idea by introducing species-specific patterns.

Sentence (D) makes a generalization: all birds follow a prescribed developmental path in learning their song.

This statement connects well with (A) and (B) by explaining that, regardless of the number of songs, a consistent learning path exists.

Sentence (E) describes the developmental stages in detail: from subsong to plastic song to species song.

It acts as a natural elaboration of what (D) refers to as the "prescribed path."

So, Sentences (A), (B), (D), and (E) all flow together:

- (A) introduces the topic.
- (B) gives species-specific observations.
- (D) generalizes the developmental sequence.
- (E) illustrates the detailed stages.

Sentence (C) — while related to birds — shifts the focus away from the development process to the *stimuli* that affect birds.

It discusses what birds hear (sounds of other birds), which is tangential and not directly connected to the development process, learning stages, or species-specific variations.

It does not build on or connect logically with the rest of the sequence.

Therefore, the sentence that does not belong with the rest of the paragraph is: (C).

Quick Tip

When identifying the odd one out, ensure that every sentence included contributes to a single focused narrative.

A sentence that introduces a different concept (even if loosely related) breaks coherence and should be excluded.

Q34. Five sentences related to a topic are given below. Four of them can be put together to form a meaningful and coherent short paragraph.

Identify the odd one out. Choose its letter as your answer and key it in.

(A) Our smartphones can now track our diets, our biological cycles, even our digestive systems and sleep-patterns.

(B) Researchers have even coined a new term, "orthosomnia", to describe the insomnia brought on by paying too much attention to smartphones and sleep-tracking apps.

(C) Sleep, nature’s soft nurse, is a blissful, untroubled state all too easily disturbed by earthly worries or a guilty conscience.

(D) The existence of a market for such apps is unsurprising: shift work, a long-hours culture and blue light from screens have conspired to rob many of us of sufficient rest.

(E) A new threat to a good night’s rest has emerged – smart-phones, with sleep-tracking apps.

Correct Answer: (C) Sleep, nature’s soft nurse, is a blissful, untroubled state all too easily disturbed by earthly worries or a guilty conscience.

Solution:

To find the odd one out, we must first determine the central theme shared by the majority of the sentences.

Most of the options (A, B, D, and E) revolve around a specific topic: **the impact of smartphones and sleep-tracking apps on sleep quality.**

Sentence (A) introduces the idea of smartphones’ increasing capabilities — including tracking sleep patterns.

This sets the stage for the theme of technology intruding on sleep.

Sentence (B) follows this up with a specific example: the coining of the term “orthosomnia” to describe sleep problems *caused by* obsession with sleep-tracking apps.

It continues the theme and gives it a clinical and psychological layer.

Sentence (D) adds context for why such apps are popular. It mentions shift work, long hours, and blue light — all external lifestyle factors pushing people to rely on apps for sleep regulation.

Thus, it supports the same narrative arc: why and how we got dependent on sleep-related apps.

Sentence (E) delivers the core conclusion: smartphones and their sleep-tracking features are a *new threat* to restful sleep.

It ties all the threads together into a clear problem statement.

Now consider Sentence (C).

It is about sleep in poetic, abstract terms — “nature’s soft nurse” and “a blissful, untroubled state.”

While it does mention that sleep can be disturbed, the causes here are “earthly worries” and

“guilty conscience,” not technology.

This sentence stands apart in tone (literary and figurative) and in content (it doesn’t address smartphones or apps at all).

Thus, although it is about sleep, it diverges completely from the rest, which are analytical and focused on a modern tech-related phenomenon.

Hence, the correct odd one out is: (C).

Quick Tip

When solving odd one out questions, align not just the topic but also the tone, focus, and argumentative flow.

A poetic or philosophical tone amidst factual or critical sentences is often the giveaway.