

XH-B1: Reasoning and Comprehension

This is to test the candidate's ability to comprehend and interpret written information – skills that are critical to research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. The section will not directly test language competence in terms of grammar, vocabulary etc. The focus is instead on critical reasoning (similar to what is often found in exams like LSAT, GRE, GMAT etc.) and analysis of the text and its stylistic and rhetorical structure.

Questions of this section XH-B1 will test the following skills:

- **Reading Comprehension** – ability to understand complex language material in short paragraphs and answer questions regarding them
- **Expression** – questions on stylistic and rhetorical aspects of a short passage including corrections or modifications of particular sentences
- **Analytical reasoning** – ability to understand relationships in statements or short passages and being able to draw reasonable conclusions/inferences from them.
- **Logical reasoning** – Thinking critically to evaluate or to predict an argument, identify the main and supporting arguments, predict outcomes etc.



XH-B1: Reasoning and Comprehension (25 marks)

Q1. to Q5. are MCQ type, where only one answer is correct. Each question carries one mark.

Q1. In ancient India, workers building a temple would say “darya yatsum” when greeting other temple workers, meaning “Good Building!”. When the temple workers’ returned home in the evening, their children would ask them “ema yatsum darya?” meaning, “Was building good”? The temple workers would either reply “ema darya yatsum” (“Was good building”) or “ema derya yatsum!” If derya symbolises the opposite of darya, what could “ema derya yatsum” mean?

- (A) Was fair building
- (B) Was poorbuilding
- (C) Was hardbuilding
- (D) Was no building

Q2. Find the two statements that together prove:

A team in a blue cap beat Mahesh’s team in the World Cup final.

- i. The cricketer wearing a blue cap was in the team that won the World Cup.
- ii. A cricketer on the losing side wore purple.
- iii. Mahesh is a cricketer and he wears a red cap.
- iv. Mahesh and his team were runners up in the WorldCup.

- (A) i & iii
- (B) iii & iv
- (C) ii & iv
- (D) ii & iii

Q3. If some paks are saks, and some zaks are kaks, and all naks are paks, then:

- (A) no paks arenaks
- (B) all paks arenaks
- (C) some kaks are naks
- (D) some naks may be saks

Q4. Kept within a wooden hutch are a certain number of rabbits. Four rabbits wear ear tags and five wear neck bands. Of the three white rabbits in the hutch, each rabbit only has either an ear tag or a neck band. Both grey rabbits in the hutch have neck bands. What is the minimum possible number of rabbits in the hutch?

- (A) Eight
- (B) Six
- (C) Seven
- (D) Nine

Q5. Dr. Shah is a dentist. He has patients with appointments from Monday to Friday one week. He is seeing Chitra two days before Mahi. Sandeep is booked for two days before Bharat, who is booked one day after Mahi and one day before Ananth. Finally, Priya is scheduled for four days after Chitra. If Chitra is coming in on Monday, which patients have been double booked?

- (A) Chitra and Ananth
- (B) Mahi and Sandeep
- (C) Ananth and Priya
- (D) Priya and Sandeep

Q6. to Q10. are MCQ type, where only one answer is correct. Each question carries two marks.

Q6. As an example of the devastation wrought on music publishers by the xerox machine, one publishing executive said that for the recent World Music Competition with 1,200 singers, the festival's organising committee purchased only twelve copies of the music pieces published by her company that were performed at the festival.

Which of the following statements, if true, most seriously weakens the argument of the publishing executive?

- (A) Only a third of the 1,200 singers were involved in performing the music published by the executive's company.
- (B) Half of the singers at the festival had already heard the music they were to perform before they began to practice for the festival.
- (C) Because of shortages in funding, the organising committee of the choral festival required singers to purchase their own copies of the music performed at the festival.
- (D) Each copy of music that was performed at the festival was shared by two singers.

Q7. In one study, high school students who prepared for an exam using matchsticks and twine did no worse than did similar students who prepared by using an expensive computer with sophisticated graphics software. In another study, soldiers who trained on an expensive, high-tech simulator performed no better on a practical exam than did soldiers who trained using an inexpensive cardboard model. Therefore, one should not always purchase technologically advanced education tools.

Which of the following principles, if valid, most helps to justify the reasoning above?

- (A) One should not invest in expensive teaching aids unless there are no other tools that are less expensive and at least as effective.
- (B) One should use different educational tools to teach engineering to civilians than are used to train military personnel.
- (C) Spending large sums of money on educational tools is at least as justified for nonmilitary training as it is for military training.
- (D) One should always provide students with a variety of educational materials so that each student can find the materials that best suit that student's learning style.

Q8. In the table below, column 1 lists four different meanings of the word DEAL labelled a to d. Column 2 has four sentences labelled i to iv that use the word DEAL. Match the meaning of the word with the sentence and choose one of the four options below.

a. Sell, trade	i. Ramesh insisted on dealing the cards.
b. Cover, treat	ii. This book deals with handmade cards.
c. Distribute	iii. My brother deals in handmade cards.
d. Be concerned with	iv. I decided not to deal with handmade cards.

- (A) a-iv, b-i, c-ii, d-iii
- (B) a-iii, b-ii, c-i, d-iv
- (C) a-i, b-iv, c-iii, d-ii
- (D) a-ii, b-iii, c-iv, d-i

- Q9. There are five sentences below labelled a to e. Choose the correct ordering of the sentences in order to create a coherent passage.
- a. “This face off will continue for several months given the strong convictions on either side,” says a senior functionary of the high-powered task force on drought.
 - b. During the past week-and-half, the Central Government has sought to deny some of the earlier apprehensions over the impact of drought.
 - c. The recent revival of the rains had led to the emergence of a line of divide between the two.
 - d. The state governments, on the other hand, allege that the Centre is downplaying the crisis so as to evade its full responsibility for the financial assistance required to alleviate the damage.
 - e. Shrill alarm about the economic impact of an inadequate monsoon had been sounded by the Centre as well as most of the states, in late July and early August.

- (A) dbace
- (B) bdcae
- (C) ebcda
- (D) ecbda

- Q10. Two researchers argued as follows:

Newton: Pure research provides us with new technologies that contribute to saving lives. Even more worthwhile than this, however, is its role in expanding our knowledge and providing new, unexplored ideas.

Huxley: Your priorities are mistaken. Saving lives is what counts most of all. Without pure research, medicine would not be as advanced as it is.

On what do the two researchers disagree?

- (A) Pure research has its most valuable achievements in medical applications
- (B) Pure research derives its significance in part from its providing new technologies.
- (C) Pure research expands the boundaries of our knowledge of medicine.
- (D) Pure research should have the saving of human lives as an important goal.

Q11. to Q15. are MSQ type, where one or more answers are correct. Each question carries two marks.

Q11. The failures of sensory perception can be unusual and debilitating. A particular sensory deficit that inhibits an important social function of humans is prosopagnosia, or face blindness. The word comes from the Greek words prosopa, that means “faces,” and agnosia, that means “not knowing.” Some people may feel that they cannot recognize people easily by their faces. However, a person with prosopagnosia cannot recognize the most recognizable people in their respective cultures. They would not recognize the face of a celebrity, an important historical figure, or even a family member like their mother. They may not even recognize their own face.

**Which of the following sentences express essential ideas in the paragraph?
Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out information.**

- (A) Prosopagnosia is when one cannot recognize familiar faces, which can hurt social interactions
- (B) This specific sensory deficiency affects important social structures.
- (C) Prosopagnosia is also called face blindness.
- (D) Humans can suffer from sensory deficits like face blindness.

Q12. A high level of appreciation for one's own culture can be healthy; a shared sense of community pride, for example, connects people in a society. But ethnocentrism can lead to disdain or dislike for other cultures, causing misunderstanding and conflict. People with the best intentions sometimes travel to a society to "help" its people, seeing them as uneducated or backward; essentially inferior. In reality, these travelers are guilty of cultural imperialism, the deliberate imposition of one's own cultural values on another culture. Europe's colonial expansion, begun in the 16th century, was often accompanied by a severe cultural imperialism. European colonisers often viewed the people in the lands they colonised as uncultured savages who were in need of European governance, dress, religion, and other cultural practices. A more modern example of cultural imperialism may include the work of international aid agencies who introduce agricultural methods and plant species from developed countries while overlooking indigenous varieties and agricultural approaches that are better suited to the particular region.

Which of the following best expresses essential ideas in the paragraph?

Incorrect choices change the meaning in important ways or leave out information.

- (A) How international aid agencies work in other countries is a modern example of cultural imperialism.
- (B) Helping under-developed countries is an example of modern colonisation.
- (C) Aid agencies impose religious, cultural and other practices wherever they serve.
- (D) An example of cultural imperialism is when an international aid organisation ignores native farming methods and plant varieties

Q13. The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis is based on the idea that people experience their world through their language, and that they therefore understand their world through the culture embedded in their language. The hypothesis, which has also been called linguistic relativity, states that language shapes thought. Studies have shown, for instance, that unless people have access to the word “ambivalent,” they don’t recognize an experience of uncertainty due to conflicting positive and negative feelings about one issue. Essentially, the hypothesis argues, if a person can’t describe the experience, the person is not having the experience.

Which of the following can be inferred from the hypothesis described above?

- (A) Experiences are encoded by means of language.
- (B) Linguistic categories are a priori to making sense of the world.
- (C) Without number words it is not possible to know the cardinality of a set.
- (D) Thought and reasoning are not possible without language.

Q14. Centuries ago, the Maya of Central America produced elaborate, deeply cut carvings in stone. The carvings would have required a cutting tool of hard stone or metal. Iron-ore deposits exist throughout Central America, but apparently the Maya never developed the technology to use them and the metals the Maya are known to have used, copper and gold, would not have been hard enough. Therefore, the Maya must have used stone tools to make these carvings.

Choose the statement(s) that offer support to the argument in the passage.

- (A) In various parts of the world, civilisations that could not make iron from ore fashioned tools out of fragments of iron from meteorites.
- (B) All the metallic Mayan artifacts that have been found by archaeologists are made of metals that are too soft for carving stone.
- (C) The stone out of which these carvings were made is harder than the stone used by other Central American peoples.
- (D) Archaeologists disagree about how certain stone tools that have been found among Mayan ruins were used.

Q15. Meritocracy is another system of social stratification in which personal effort—or merit—determines social standing. High levels of effort will lead to a high social position, and vice versa. The concept of meritocracy is an ideal—that is, a society has never existed where social rank was based purely on merit. Because of the complex structure of societies, processes like socialisation, and the realities of economic systems, social standing is influenced by multiple factors, not merit alone. Inheritance and pressure to conform to norms, for instance, disrupt the notion of a pure meritocracy. Sociologists see aspects of meritocracies in modern societies when they study the role of academic performance and job performance, and the systems in place for evaluating and rewarding achievement in these areas.

This passage suggests that meritocracy is:

- (A) the sole determinant of performance in jobs and academics.
- (B) taking over modern societies as a system of social stratification.
- (C) an unrealistic ideal where so many social complexities exist
- (D) a system where one's social standing is dependent on merit.

END of paper XH-B1

ANSWER KEY:**XH-B: Reasoning and Comprehension**

Q. No.	Type	Section	Key	Marks
1.	MCQ	XH-B1	B	1
2.	MCQ	XH-B1	B	1
3.	MCQ	XH-B1	D	1
4.	MCQ	XH-B1	B	1
5.	MCQ	XH-B1	C	1
6.	MCQ	XH-B1	C	2
7.	MCQ	XH-B1	A	2
8.	MCQ	XH-B1	B	2
9.	MCQ	XH-B1	D	2
10.	MCQ	XH-B1	A	2
11.	MSQ	XH-B1	A, C, D	2
12.	MSQ	XH-B1	A, D	2
13.	MSQ	XH-B1	A, B, C	2
14.	MSQ	XH-B1	B, C, D	2
15.	MSQ	XH-B1	C, D	2