

CAT Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension

Sample Paper – 5

Duration: 40 Minutes

Maximum Marks: 72

Instructions

- This paper contains **24** questions modelled on the Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC) section of CAT: **16** Reading Comprehension questions on four passages and **8** Verbal Ability questions.
- Each correct answer carries **+3 marks**. For **MCQs** there is a penalty of **-1 mark** for a wrong answer; **TITA** (Type-In-The-Answer) questions carry **no negative marking**. Unattempted questions score 0.
- For an MCQ, exactly **one** option is correct. For a TITA question, type the required sequence or number directly (no options are given).
- Read each passage once for structure, then answer from the text; do not rely on outside knowledge.
- Recommended time is **40 minutes**, matching the real CAT sectional limit.

Section I: Reading Comprehension

Directions (Q1–Q4): Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. Science has grown remarkably good at explaining how the brain works. It can map which regions light up when we see a colour, trace the signals that let us recognise a face, and predict, from a scan, some of what a person is about to do. Yet a stubborn question survives all this progress, one the philosopher David Chalmers named the hard problem of consciousness. The easy problems, as he called them, concern how the brain processes information; the hard problem asks why any of that processing should be accompanied by inner experience at all.

Consider the colour red. A neuroscientist can describe, in exhaustive detail, the wavelengths of light, the firing of cells in the retina, and the cascade of activity that follows in the brain. Nothing in that account, however, seems to explain why red looks the particular way it does from the inside, the felt quality that philosophers call qualia. One could, in principle, know every physical fact about the visual system and still not know what it is like to see red. That gap between the objective description and the subjective feel is what makes the problem hard.

Some thinkers argue that the gap is only apparent, a temporary product of our ignorance. On



their view, once neuroscience matures, talk of an unexplained residue will look as quaint as vitalism, the old belief that life required a special non-physical spark. Others reply that the two cases are not alike. Life turned out to be a matter of function, of what living things do, whereas experience is not obviously a function at all; a system might carry out every function of seeing while feeling nothing whatever.

The stakes reach beyond the seminar room. If subjective experience cannot be reduced to physical processes, then our confidence that we understand the mind may be premature, and questions about which creatures, or machines, can feel become genuinely open. If, on the other hand, the hard problem dissolves under better science, then consciousness is simply one more natural phenomenon awaiting explanation. The author does not pretend to settle the dispute. The point is rather that the hardest question about the mind is not a technical detail to be mopped up later, but a challenge that may force us to rethink what counts as an explanation in the first place.

- Q1.** Which of the following best expresses the main idea of the passage?
- (A) Neuroscience has already given a full physical explanation of subjective experience.
 - (B) The colour red is impossible for scientists to study by any method.
 - (C) Explaining brain processes leaves unresolved why they are accompanied by inner experience, a challenge that may reshape what counts as an explanation.
 - (D) Consciousness is identical to the discredited belief once called vitalism.
- Q2.** It can be inferred that the author distinguishes the “hard problem” from the “easy problems” chiefly on the grounds that:
- (A) explaining how the brain processes information does not by itself explain why that processing is accompanied by felt experience.
 - (B) the easy problems are in fact impossible for science ever to solve.
 - (C) the hard problem concerns only the colour red and no other experience.
 - (D) subjective experience has already been fully reduced to brain activity.
- Q3.** The passage mentions vitalism in order to present:
- (A) a theory that the author personally endorses and defends.



- (B) an analogy used by those who expect the hard problem to dissolve as neuroscience matures.
- (C) conclusive proof that experience is merely a biological function.
- (D) the author's own settled explanation of what qualia are.

Q4. The primary function of the final paragraph is to:

- (A) announce that the author has finally solved the hard problem.
- (B) argue that neuroscience should be abandoned as futile.
- (C) prove that machines certainly cannot ever feel anything.
- (D) explain why the question matters and note that it may force us to rethink what counts as an explanation.

Directions (Q5–Q8): Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. Walk into an old-growth forest and the drama seems to be overhead, in the vast trunks and the canopy that shuts out the sky. Yet much of the forest's life goes on unseen, beneath the leaf litter, where the roots of the trees are wrapped in a dense felt of fungal threads. These fungi, called mycorrhizae, sheathe and penetrate the roots, and in return for sugars supplied by the tree they draw water and scarce minerals from the soil far more efficiently than roots could manage alone. The partnership is ancient, and few trees thrive without it.

What has surprised researchers is that these fungal threads do not merely link a single tree to the soil; they link trees to one another. One fungal network may connect dozens of trees of different ages and even different species, forming an underground web through which resources can pass. Using tracers, scientists have watched carbon move from one tree into the fungi and out again into a neighbour. Popular writing has dubbed this the wood-wide web, and the image of a whispering, cooperative forest has proved irresistible.

The reality is more guarded. It is clear that the networks exist and that material moves along them, but why it moves is disputed. A large tree may be feeding a shaded seedling of its own kind, an act that looks like care; or the fungus, pursuing its own interest, may simply be shifting carbon toward wherever it is scarce, with the trees as incidental partners. Some transfers may even flow toward the fungus rather than any tree. To read the network as a scene of deliberate generosity is to project a human story onto a system that may be indifferent to it.

Still, the discovery changes how we picture a forest. The old image was of individual trees competing for light, each a self-contained unit. The newer picture is of a community bound together below ground, in which the fate of one tree is entangled with the fate of its neighbours and with organisms from an entirely different kingdom of life. Whether or not the forest is generous, it is certainly connected, and that connection carries practical weight: to clear the old trees may be to tear a network that took centuries to weave and on which the survivors depend.

Q5. The passage is primarily concerned with:



- (A) proving that trees consciously choose to care for their neighbours.
- (B) describing the underground fungal networks that connect forest trees and the debate over how to interpret them.
- (C) explaining why dense canopies block sunlight in old-growth forests.
- (D) arguing that mycorrhizal fungi ultimately harm the trees they attach to.

Q6. According to the passage, the mycorrhizal fungi benefit the trees chiefly by:

- (A) blocking sunlight from reaching competing seedlings.
- (B) producing the sugars that the trees are unable to make themselves.
- (C) replacing the tree's own roots entirely.
- (D) drawing water and scarce minerals from the soil more efficiently than roots could alone.

Q7. It can be inferred that the author regards the phrase “wood-wide web” as:

- (A) a vivid but potentially misleading label that risks projecting a human story onto the forest.
- (B) a precise scientific term that carries no risk of misunderstanding.
- (C) a description the author rejects as entirely false and unsupported.
- (D) firm proof that trees deliberately share resources out of generosity.

Q8. The final paragraph functions chiefly to:

- (A) dismiss the discovery of fungal networks as scientifically unimportant.
- (B) argue that trees do not depend on one another in any way.
- (C) draw out the practical implication that clearing old trees can damage a network the survivors rely on.
- (D) prove that competition for light is the only force that shapes a forest.



Directions (Q9–Q12): Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. In the early twentieth century, Frederick Winslow Taylor set out to make work scientific. Armed with a stopwatch, he broke each task in the factory into its smallest motions, timed them, and prescribed the single most efficient way to perform each one. Skill, under this scheme, belonged not to the worker but to the manager who designed the method; the worker merely executed it. Taylor's system, later called scientific management, or simply Taylorism, promised to wring waste out of production and to replace rule of thumb with measurement.

For a while it seemed to deliver. Output rose, and Taylor's ideas spread from factories into offices and even schools. But the human cost soon became hard to ignore. Reducing a person to a set of timed motions drained work of meaning and treated judgement as a defect to be engineered away. Workers resented being managed like machines, and the resentment showed up as turnover, absenteeism and quiet resistance. Efficiency measured too narrowly, it turned out, could undermine the very productivity it was meant to raise.

The reaction, when it came, ran in the opposite direction. A later school of thought argued that motivation, not just method, drove performance, and that workers who were consulted and trusted did better than those who were merely timed. Later still, management writers urged firms to push decisions downward, to treat employees as a source of ideas rather than a pair of hands. The assembly line did not vanish, but the belief that all thinking should sit with managers steadily lost its authority.

Yet Taylor's ghost has not been laid to rest. The instinct to measure everything, to break work into trackable units and optimise them, returns in each generation wearing new clothes. Warehouse workers are timed by handheld scanners; office staff are ranked by metrics that their software quietly records. The tools are subtler than a stopwatch, but the underlying bargain is the same: greater control and measurement in exchange for autonomy. The history of Taylorism is therefore less a story of a defeated idea than of a recurring temptation, one that each new technology makes freshly available and that each generation must decide, again, how far to indulge.

Q9. The main idea of the passage is that:

- (A) Taylorism promised efficiency through measurement, provoked a reaction that valued motivation and autonomy, and yet keeps returning in new forms.
- (B) Frederick Taylor personally invented the modern assembly line.
- (C) modern software has completely eliminated every trace of scientific management.
- (D) workers in Taylor's factories were more productive than any workers before or since.

Q10. According to the passage, under Taylor's system the skill involved in a task was understood to belong to:



- (A) the workers, who designed their own methods.
- (B) the customers who ultimately bought the product.
- (C) the manager who designed the method, while the worker merely executed it.
- (D) the engineers who manufactured the stopwatches.

Q11. It can be inferred that the author sees modern workplace metrics, such as handheld scanners, as:

- (A) entirely unrelated to Taylor's ideas about measurement.
- (B) a complete rejection of measurement in the workplace.
- (C) proof that worker autonomy has finally triumphed over control.
- (D) a fresh version of the same Taylorist bargain, trading autonomy for measurement.

Q12. The author's overall attitude toward Taylorism can best be described as:

- (A) wholly admiring of its relentless drive for efficiency.
- (B) critical of its costs while treating it as a recurring temptation rather than a settled defeat.
- (C) indifferent to whether it survives or disappears.
- (D) convinced that it was harmless and has now vanished for good.

Directions (Q13–Q16): Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. The phrase Silk Road conjures caravans of camels hauling bolts of silk from China toward Rome, and trade in luxury goods was real enough. But to picture the route as a mere conveyor belt for merchandise is to miss most of what made it matter. The Silk Road was never a single road, nor was silk its only cargo. It was a shifting web of overland and maritime routes, and along it travelled not just goods but languages, religions, technologies and diseases, in a centuries-long exchange that reshaped the societies at either end and everywhere between.

Consider what moved besides silk. Papermaking, developed in China, crept westward until it reached the Islamic world and eventually Europe, transforming how knowledge was recorded. Buddhism spread from India into Central Asia and China along the same paths that carried bales of cloth, so that a merchant's caravan might share the road with a wandering monk. Musical instruments, crops, artistic motifs and mathematical ideas all migrated, each adapted by the cultures that received it. The traffic was not one-directional; influence flowed east as readily as



west.

This exchange was rarely the work of a single traveller crossing the whole distance. Goods and ideas passed from hand to hand, market to market, each intermediary taking a share and adding something of his own. A design that began in Persia might be redrawn by a Central Asian weaver and sold in a Chinese city as something new. The route worked less like a pipeline than like a bucket brigade, in which what arrived at the far end had been altered many times along the way. To remember the Silk Road only as commerce, then, is to undervalue it. Its deeper legacy lies in the way distant civilisations were made porous to one another, their art and faith and learning quietly cross-fertilised long before anyone spoke of a global world. The camels carried silk, certainly; but they also carried the slow, mutual transformation of the cultures they linked, and it is that transformation, more than any bolt of cloth, that earns the route its lasting fame.

Q13. The central point of the passage is that:

- (A) silk was the only good ever traded along the Silk Road.
- (B) the Silk Road was a single paved road running directly from China to Rome.
- (C) the Silk Road mattered less as a route for goods than as a channel for the exchange of cultures, ideas and beliefs.
- (D) papermaking was the single most valuable technology of the ancient world.

Q14. According to the passage, which of the following travelled westward along the Silk Road from China?

- (A) Papermaking, which transformed how knowledge was recorded.
- (B) Buddhism, which the passage says originated in Rome.
- (C) The camel, which was first domesticated in Europe.
- (D) The printing press, which the passage credits to Persia.

Q15. In the final paragraph, the word “porous” most nearly means:

- (A) physically full of holes and therefore structurally weak.
- (B) open to being influenced by one another.
- (C) sealed off and resistant to any outside contact.
- (D) made wealthy by the profits of long-distance trade.



- Q16.** The comparison of the Silk Road to a “bucket brigade” rather than a “pipeline” is meant to convey that:
- (A) water was the main cargo carried along the route.
 - (B) a single trader usually carried goods across the entire distance.
 - (C) the route was too slow to be of any real practical use.
 - (D) goods and ideas passed through many hands and were altered at each stage.

Section II: Verbal Ability

- Q17.** The four sentences below, labelled 1–4, form a coherent paragraph when arranged in the correct order. Type the correct sequence of numbers as your answer.
1. The breakthrough came when a small circle was pressed into service as a symbol in its own right.
 2. Every counting system must eventually decide how to represent nothing at all.
 3. Once nothing had a name, arithmetic could be written down and manipulated with new power.
 4. For a long time many cultures simply left a gap, an ambiguity that invited confusion and error.

(TITA — type in the answer as a sequence, e.g. 2341; no negative marking)

- Q18.** Read the paragraph and choose the option that best captures its essence.
- “For most of its history chocolate was drunk, not eaten, and it was bitter rather than sweet. The peoples of Mesoamerica prized it as a ceremonial and even sacred beverage, sometimes reserved for rulers and warriors. Only after it crossed the ocean did Europeans add sugar and, much later, learn to make it solid. The familiar sweet bar is thus a late and local invention laid on top of a far older drink.”*
- (A) Europeans invented chocolate and then introduced it to the peoples of Mesoamerica.



- (B) Chocolate has always been eaten as a sweet solid treat throughout its long history.
- (C) Chocolate began as a bitter ceremonial drink, and the sweet solid bar is a much later European addition.
- (D) Chocolate was valued in Mesoamerica only as an ordinary, everyday food.

Q19. Five sentences are given below. Four of them can be combined into a single coherent paragraph; one does not fit. Type the number of the sentence that does NOT belong.

1. Before movable type, every book in Europe had to be copied out by hand, a labour of months.
2. The new presses could reproduce a page hundreds of times over with mechanical regularity.
3. Modern e-readers can now store thousands of volumes on a single slim device.
4. Within decades, printed books were spreading ideas faster than any authority could easily control.
5. Gutenberg's arrangement of reusable metal letters transformed how knowledge was stored and shared.

(TITA — type in the sentence number; no negative marking)

Q20. The four sentences below, labelled 1–4, form a coherent paragraph when arranged in the correct order. Type the correct sequence of numbers as your answer.

1. Yet the same pull raises a second bulge on the far side, so that most coasts see two high tides a day.
2. Ancient sailors noticed that the water climbed and retreated on a regular schedule.
3. The explanation is that the moon's gravity tugs the ocean into a bulge on the side facing it.
4. Only later did anyone connect this rhythm to the changing position of the moon.



(TITA — type in the answer as a sequence, e.g. 2341; no negative marking)

Q21. Read the paragraph and choose the option that best captures its essence.

“Canals were once the arteries of industrial trade, carrying coal and grain far more cheaply than carts on rutted roads. For a few decades they made fortunes and reshaped the towns along their banks. But the railways that followed were faster and reached places no waterway could, and the canals fell into disuse almost as quickly as they had risen. Their brief dominance is a reminder that a technology can be transformative and short-lived at the same time.”

- (A) Canals remain the cheapest way to move coal and grain even today.
- (B) Canals briefly transformed industrial transport before railways displaced them, showing that a technology can be both important and short-lived.
- (C) Railways were always slower and less useful than the canals they replaced.
- (D) Canals failed because they were never able to carry heavy goods at all.

Q22. Five sentences are given below. Four of them can be combined into a single coherent paragraph; one does not fit. Type the number of the sentence that does NOT belong.

1. Many animals survive not by fighting or fleeing but by not being seen at all.
2. Some match the colour of their surroundings so closely that a predator’s eye slides right past them.
3. Others break up their outline with bold patterns that confuse the sense of shape.
4. Zoologists estimate that the largest land animal, the elephant, can weigh several tonnes.
5. A few even change their appearance as the seasons or the background shift.



(TITA — type in the sentence number; no negative marking)

Q23. Read the paragraph and choose the option that best captures its essence.

“The global trade in cotton was never only about cloth. To feed distant mills, land was cleared, labour was coerced, and whole economies were bent toward a single crop. The soft fabric that clothed millions was tied at every stage to systems of power that reached across oceans. To trace a bale of cotton is therefore to trace not just a commodity but the political arrangements that produced it.”

- (A) Cotton cloth was valued chiefly for its softness and comfort against the skin.
- (B) The cotton trade was a purely local business with few wider effects.
- (C) Mills could have run just as easily on almost any crop other than cotton.
- (D) The cotton trade was bound up with systems of power and coerced labour, not merely with the making of cloth.

Q24. Choose the option that most logically and coherently completes the paragraph.

“For centuries pepper was so precious that it was counted out grain by grain and even accepted in place of coin. Its value rested on the length and danger of the routes that carried it from distant shores. _____”

- (A) But once new sea routes multiplied the supply, its price collapsed and it became an everyday seasoning.
- (B) The ships that carried it were often painted in bright and cheerful colours.
- (C) Meanwhile, other spices grew quietly in gardens far to the east.
- (D) Cooks generally agreed that it was the most fragrant of all the spices then available.



Detailed Solutions

Q1.

Solution

Concept — Main idea: The main idea is the single job the whole passage does, not one striking detail.

Step 1 — Track the arc: The passage grants that science explains brain processing well, then names the “hard problem”: why processing is accompanied by inner experience at all, and closes by saying this may reshape what counts as explanation.

Step 2 — Match to an option: Option C states both halves, the unresolved question about inner experience and the possible rethinking of explanation.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage says the opposite, that experience is not yet explained.
- B: The passage says a neuroscientist can describe red “in exhaustive detail,” so red is studied, not unstudyable.
- D: Vitalism is only an analogy raised by one camp, not what consciousness is said to be.

Final Answer: Inner experience is unexplained and may reshape explanation ⇒

C

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 1](#)

Q2.

Solution

Concept — Inference from a stated distinction: A valid inference restates the boundary the passage actually draws.

Step 1 — Locate the distinction: Paragraph 1 says the easy problems “concern how the brain processes information,” while the hard problem “asks why any of that processing should be accompanied by inner experience at all.”

Step 2 — Match: Option A restates exactly this: explaining processing does not explain why it is felt.

Why other options are wrong:

- B: The easy problems are called easy, not impossible.



- C: Red is only an illustration; the problem is general.
- D: The passage denies that experience has been reduced to brain activity.

Final Answer: Processing explained does not explain felt experience ⇒ A

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 2](#)

Q3.

Solution

Concept — Function of a reference: Ask whose argument the mention of vitalism serves.

Step 1 — Read the context: “Some thinkers argue that the gap is only apparent . . . once neuroscience matures, talk of an unexplained residue will look as quaint as vitalism.”

Step 2 — Match: Vitalism is the analogy used by those who expect the hard problem to dissolve. Option B states this.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The author reports this view; the “others reply” sentence shows it is contested, not endorsed.
- C: The analogy is offered by one side, not as proof; the other side disputes it.
- D: The author gives no settled explanation of qualia.

Final Answer: An analogy used by the “dissolve” camp ⇒ B

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q 3](#)

Q4.

Solution

Concept — Paragraph function: Ask what job the final paragraph does in the argument.

Step 1 — Read it: It lays out what is at stake either way, states that “the author does not pretend to settle the dispute,” and ends that the question “may force us to rethink what counts as an explanation.”

Step 2 — Match: Option D captures both moves, explaining why it matters and noting the possible rethinking.



Why other options are wrong:

- A: The author explicitly declines to settle it.
- B: Nothing calls for abandoning neuroscience.
- C: The passage says the question of which machines can feel is “genuinely open,” not settled against them.

Final Answer: Explain the stakes and the possible rethinking ⇒ **D**

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 4](#)

Q5.

Solution

Concept — Primary concern: The whole passage, not one paragraph, fixes the topic.

Step 1 — Track the arc: It describes the hidden fungal networks that link trees, reports the popular “wood-wide web” image, and then weighs the dispute over why resources move.

Step 2 — Match: Option B names both the networks and the interpretive debate.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage warns against reading the network as deliberate care.
- C: Canopy shade is a scene-setting detail, not the subject.
- D: The fungi are described as helpful partners, not as harming the trees.

Final Answer: The fungal networks and the debate over them ⇒ **B**

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q 5](#)

Q6.

Solution

Concept — Specific detail: Match the benefit the passage actually states.

Step 1 — Find the sentence: “In return for sugars supplied by the tree they draw water and scarce minerals from the soil far more efficiently than roots could manage alone.”

Step 2 — Match: Option D restates this precisely.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: Blocking sunlight is not attributed to the fungi.
- B: The sugars flow from the tree to the fungi, not the reverse.
- C: The fungi “sheathe and penetrate” the roots; they do not replace them.

Final Answer: They gather water and minerals more efficiently ⇒

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 6](#)

Q7.

Solution

Concept — Inferring the author’s view of a phrase: Weigh the tone in which the phrase is introduced.

Step 1 — Read the cues: The image “has proved irresistible,” but “the reality is more guarded,” and reading the network as generosity “is to project a human story onto a system that may be indifferent.”

Step 2 — Match: Option A captures “vivid but potentially misleading.”

Why other options are wrong:

- B: The author flags exactly its risk of misleading.
- C: The author accepts that the networks exist and material moves, so it is not entirely false.
- D: The author disputes the generosity reading rather than endorsing it.

Final Answer: Vivid but potentially misleading ⇒

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 7](#)

Q8.

Solution

Concept — Paragraph function: Identify the work the last paragraph does.

Step 1 — Read it: It contrasts the old “competing individuals” image with a connected community and closes that “to clear the old trees may be to tear a network . . . on which the survivors depend.”

Step 2 — Match: Option C names this practical implication.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: It calls the discovery significant, not unimportant.



- B: It stresses that trees are entangled, so dependence is affirmed.
- D: It replaces the “competition only” picture rather than proving it.

Final Answer: Clearing old trees can tear a needed network ⇒

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 8](#)

Q9.

Solution

Concept — Main idea: Capture the full trajectory of the argument.

Step 1 — Track the arc: Taylorism promised efficiency by measurement; it drew a reaction that stressed motivation and autonomy; yet the instinct to measure “returns in each generation.”

Step 2 — Match: Option A states all three movements.

Why other options are wrong:

- B: The passage credits him with the stopwatch method, not the invention of the assembly line.
- C: The passage says the instinct returns in new clothes, not that it is eliminated.
- D: No such claim about record productivity is made.

Final Answer: Promise, reaction, and recurrence of Taylorism ⇒

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 9](#)

Q10.

Solution

Concept — Specific detail: Match the passage’s own statement about where skill sat.

Step 1 — Find the sentence: “Skill, under this scheme, belonged not to the worker but to the manager who designed the method; the worker merely executed it.”

Step 2 — Match: Option C restates this word for word in substance.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The worker did not design the method, per the text.



- B: Customers are not mentioned in this connection.
- D: The stopwatch is a tool Taylor used, not the seat of skill.

Final Answer: Skill belonged to the method-designing manager ⇒

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 10](#)

Q11.

Solution

Concept — Inference from an explicit link: Use the connection the passage itself draws.

Step 1 — Find the link: “The tools are subtler than a stopwatch, but the underlying bargain is the same: greater control and measurement in exchange for autonomy.”

Step 2 — Match: Option D restates that scanners are a fresh version of the same bargain.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage explicitly ties them to Taylor’s instinct.
- B: They intensify measurement rather than reject it.
- C: The passage says autonomy is traded away, not triumphant.

Final Answer: A new form of the same Taylorist bargain ⇒

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 11](#)

Q12.

Solution

Concept — Tone/attitude: Choose the description that fits the author’s stance throughout.

Step 1 — Weigh the cues: The author records real harms (turnover, drained meaning) yet frames Taylorism as “a recurring temptation . . . that each generation must decide, again, how far to indulge.”

Step 2 — Match: Option B joins the criticism with the “recurring temptation” framing.

Why other options are wrong:



- A: The author details its costs, so “wholly admiring” is wrong.
- C: The evident concern rules out indifference.
- D: The author says the ghost “has not been laid to rest,” so it has not vanished.

Final Answer: Critical, and treating it as a recurring temptation ⇒ **B**

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q 12](#)

Q13.

Solution

Concept — Central point: The thesis is the claim the passage builds toward, not the popular image it corrects.

Step 1 — Identify the move: The passage grants that goods were traded but insists the route’s deeper significance was the exchange of “languages, religions, technologies” and the “mutual transformation of the cultures.”

Step 2 — Match: Option C states the culture-exchange thesis.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage lists many other cargoes besides silk.
- B: It says the route “was never a single road.”
- D: Papermaking is one example, not ranked the most valuable technology.

Final Answer: It was chiefly a channel for cultural exchange ⇒ **C**

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 13](#)

Q14.

Solution

Concept — Specific detail: Choose the item the passage states moved westward from China.

Step 1 — Find it: “Papermaking, developed in China, crept westward until it reached the Islamic world and eventually Europe.”

Step 2 — Match: Option A restates this.

Why other options are wrong:

- B: Buddhism is said to spread from India, not to originate in Rome.



- C: The passage makes no claim that camels were domesticated in Europe.
- D: The printing press is not mentioned; the passage credits Persia only with a design motif.

Final Answer: Papermaking spread westward from China ⇒

Answer: (A) [Go Back to Q 14](#)

Q15.

Solution

Concept — Vocabulary in context: Fix the meaning from the surrounding sentence, not a dictionary default.

Step 1 — Read the context: “distant civilisations were made porous to one another, their art and faith and learning quietly cross-fertilised.”

Step 2 — Infer: Here “porous” means open to mutual influence, letting each culture’s ideas pass into the others.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The literal “full of holes / weak” sense does not fit civilisations.
- C: “Sealed off” is the opposite of the intended meaning.
- D: Wealth is not what “porous” conveys here.

Final Answer: Open to being influenced by one another ⇒

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q 15](#)

Q16.

Solution

Concept — Purpose of an analogy: An analogy is chosen to make one precise point vivid.

Step 1 — Read the context: “Goods and ideas passed from hand to hand . . . each intermediary taking a share and adding something of his own . . . less like a pipeline than like a bucket brigade, in which what arrived . . . had been altered many times.”

Step 2 — Match: Option D states that goods passed through many hands and were altered at each stage.

Why other options are wrong:



- A: The “bucket” is figurative; water is not the cargo.
- B: The pipeline (single carrier) image is the one the passage rejects.
- C: The point is transformation in transit, not slowness.

Final Answer: Goods passed through many hands and were altered ⇒

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 16](#)

Q17.

Solution

Concept — Para-jumble: Find the general opening, then the historical sequence to the payoff.

Step 1 — Opening sentence: Sentence 2 states the general problem (every counting system must decide how to represent nothing); it needs no prior context, so it opens.

Step 2 — Early attempt: Sentence 4 describes the long makeshift (leaving a gap, causing confusion), the stage before the fix, so it follows 2.

Step 3 — The fix: Sentence 1 (“The breakthrough came ... a small circle”) gives the solution to that confusion, so it follows 4.

Step 4 — The payoff: Sentence 3 (“Once nothing had a name ...”) states the consequence, so it closes.

Order: 2 → 4 → 1 → 3.

Final Answer:

Answer: (2413) [Go Back to Q 17](#)

Q18.

Solution

Concept — Para-summary: The best summary keeps the author’s core claim without adding or reversing it.

Step 1 — Core claim: Chocolate was originally a bitter, ceremonial drink; the sweet solid bar is “a late and local invention laid on top of a far older drink.”

Step 2 — Match: Option C captures both the bitter-drink origin and the later European sweet bar.

Why other options are wrong:



- B: The passage says it was drunk, not eaten, and bitter, not sweet, for most of its history.
- A: Europeans added sugar; they did not invent chocolate or introduce it to Mesoamerica.
- D: It was prized as sacred and reserved for elites, not an ordinary food.

Final Answer: A bitter ancient drink, sweet bar a later addition ⇒

Answer: (C) [Go Back to Q 18](#)

Q19.

Solution

Concept — Odd sentence out: Four sentences share one theme; the outlier shifts topic or time frame.

Step 1 — Find the theme: Sentences 1, 2, 4 and 5 describe the movable-type revolution (hand-copying before it, the presses, the rapid spread of ideas, Gutenberg’s reusable letters).

Step 2 — Spot the outlier: Sentence 3 jumps to modern e-readers storing thousands of volumes, a present-day digital point outside the historical printing story.

Step 3 — Confirm coherence without it: 1, 5, 2, 4 form a clean paragraph on the coming and impact of movable type.

Final Answer: Sentence 3 does not belong ⇒

Answer: (3) [Go Back to Q 19](#)

Q20.

Solution

Concept — Para-jumble: Locate the observation, then move to the cause and its twist.

Step 1 — Opening: Sentence 2 records the plain observation (sailors saw the water climb and retreat on a schedule); it opens.

Step 2 — The delayed link: Sentence 4 (“Only later did anyone connect this rhythm to . . . the moon”) follows the observation, so it comes second.

Step 3 — The explanation: Sentence 3 states the mechanism (the moon’s gravity raises a bulge on the near side), so it follows 4.

Step 4 — The refinement: Sentence 1 (“Yet the same pull raises a second bulge



... two high tides a day”) completes the mechanism, so it closes.

Order: 2 → 4 → 3 → 1.

Final Answer:

Answer: (2431) [Go Back to Q 20](#)

Q21.

Solution

Concept — Para-summary: Keep the passage’s balanced claim, not an extreme version of it.

Step 1 — Core claim: Canals briefly transformed trade, then railways displaced them, showing a technology “can be transformative and short-lived at the same time.”

Step 2 — Match: Option B restates both the brief transformation and the swift displacement.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage says canals “fell into disuse,” so they are not the cheapest today.
- C: Railways were “faster” and reached more places, the opposite of C.
- D: They carried coal and grain, so “never able to carry heavy goods” is false.

Final Answer: Canals were transformative yet short-lived ⇒

Answer: (B) [Go Back to Q 21](#)

Q22.

Solution

Concept — Odd sentence out: The related sentences form one argument; the outlier drops in an unrelated fact.

Step 1 — Find the theme: Sentences 1, 2, 3 and 5 describe camouflage as a survival strategy (not being seen, colour-matching, disruptive patterns, seasonal change).

Step 2 — Spot the outlier: Sentence 4 states how much an elephant weighs, a fact about size that has nothing to do with concealment.

Step 3 — Confirm: 1, 2, 3, 5 read as a coherent paragraph on the varieties of



camouflage without 4.

Final Answer: Sentence 4 does not belong ⇒ 4

Answer: (4) [Go Back to Q 22](#)

Q23.

Solution

Concept — Para-summary: The summary must preserve the passage’s central reframing.

Step 1 — Core claim: The cotton trade “was never only about cloth”; it was “tied at every stage to systems of power” and coerced labour.

Step 2 — Match: Option D restates this link between cotton and structures of power and coerced labour.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: Softness is not the passage’s point; power is.
- B: The trade reached “across oceans,” so it was not purely local.
- C: The passage stresses how economies were bent toward cotton specifically, not that any crop would do.

Final Answer: Cotton was bound up with power and coerced labour ⇒ D

Answer: (D) [Go Back to Q 23](#)

Q24.

Solution

Concept — Sentence completion: The ending must follow the logical set-up of the paragraph.

Step 1 — Track the logic: The paragraph says pepper’s value “rested on the length and danger of the routes” that carried it, setting up what happens when that condition changes.

Step 2 — Match: Option A delivers the consequence: once new sea routes multiplied the supply, the price collapsed and pepper became everyday.

Why other options are wrong:

- D: Fragrance ignores the set-up about scarce, hard-won supply.
- B: The colour of the ships is irrelevant to value.



- C: Other spices elsewhere is a digression, not the logical payoff.

Final Answer: New routes multiplied supply and the price collapsed ⇒

[Go Back to Q 24](#)



Answer Key

Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans
1	C	2	A	3	B	4	D	5	B
6	D	7	A	8	C	9	A	10	C
11	D	12	B	13	C	14	A	15	B
16	D	17	2413	18	C	19	3	20	2431
21	B	22	4	23	D	24	A		

