CAT Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension

Sample Paper – 6

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. Every day we perform dozens of actions without deciding to: reaching for the light switch, taking the same route to work, checking a phone the moment it buzzes. Neuroscientists describe such behaviours as habits, and they have come to understand them not as failures of attention but as a clever economy of the brain. Deliberate thought is slow and expensive; by handing routine tasks to habit, the brain frees its limited attention for problems that genuinely need it.

At the centre of this system lies a loop. A cue, some trigger in the environment or the body, prompts a routine, the behaviour itself, which is followed by a reward that tells the brain the sequence was worth remembering. Repeated often enough, the loop sinks below awareness. Activity that once engaged the decision-making regions of the brain migrates to the basal ganglia, an older structure that runs sequences automatically. This is why a practised driver can navigate a familiar road while thinking of something else entirely.

The efficiency of habit is also the source of its grip. Because a habit runs without conscious permission, willpower alone is a poor tool for breaking one; the cue fires and the routine follows

before deliberation has a chance to intervene. Researchers have found that habits are rarely erased. The old loop remains encoded, ready to reassert itself under stress or in the presence of the original cue. What we call breaking a habit is usually the slow construction of a competing routine attached to the same cue.

This has practical consequences. The most reliable way to change a habit is not to attack the behaviour head-on but to keep the cue and the reward while substituting a new routine between them. A person who snacks when bored is fighting a losing battle if the plan is simply to resist; a better plan supplies a different response to the same boredom. It also explains why changing one's surroundings can be so powerful. Remove the cue, and the routine loses its trigger, which is why habits are often easiest to reshape during a move or a holiday, when the familiar signals are absent.

The lesson is oddly reassuring. Our routines are neither moral failings nor fixed traits but learned loops, assembled by repetition and, with patience, open to reassembly. Understanding the machinery does not make change effortless, but it does tell us where to push.

Q1. Which of the following best captures the primary purpose of the passage?

(A) To prove that habits are moral failings that can be overcome by willpower alone.

(B) To explain how habits form as cue–routine–reward loops and why that makes them efficient yet hard to break.

(C) To argue that habits should never be changed because they are fixed traits.

(D) To describe the anatomy of the basal ganglia in technical detail.

Q2. According to the passage, the habit loop consists of which three elements, in order?

(A) reward, then cue, then routine.

(B) routine, then reward, then cue.

(C) cue, then routine, then reward.

(D) cue, then reward, then routine.

Q3. It can be inferred that willpower alone is a poor tool for breaking a habit because:

(A) the cue sets off the routine before conscious deliberation has a chance to intervene.

(B) people who rely on willpower do not truly want to change.

(C) the reward at the end of the loop is always harmful.

(D) the basal ganglia can be removed only with great difficulty.

Q4. According to the passage, the most reliable way to change a habit is to:

(A) rely on sheer willpower to resist the behaviour each time it arises.

(B) erase the old loop completely from the brain.

(C) remove the reward while keeping the cue and routine unchanged.

(D) keep the cue and the reward but insert a new routine between them.

Directions (Q5–Q8): Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. For much of the twentieth century, prosperous societies told themselves a hopeful story about opportunity. A child born poor, the story went, could climb through talent and effort to a station far above the one into which she was born; where you started said little about where you would end. Economists who measure social mobility have found that the story was always partly a myth, and that in several rich countries it is becoming less true over time.

Mobility is usually measured by asking how strongly a parent's income predicts a child's. In a perfectly mobile society the link would be zero: knowing a father's earnings would tell you nothing about his son's. In reality the link is substantial, and in some countries it has strengthened as inequality has widened. The two trends are connected. When the gap between top and bottom grows, the advantages that wealth can buy, better schools, safer neighbourhoods, unpaid internships, become larger, and the distance a poor child must travel to catch up grows with them.

The mechanisms are not mysterious. Affluent parents can invest in their children in countless small ways that compound over years: tutoring, books, quiet rooms in which to study, and the confidence that comes from expecting to succeed. None of these guarantees success, but together they tilt the odds. Meanwhile a talented child from a poor household may never reach the starting line of the competition that the hopeful story imagined, held back not by ability but by circumstance.

This matters beyond fairness. A society that wastes the talents of those born poor is also poorer in aggregate, forgoing the inventions and contributions that never come to be. And when people sense that effort no longer pays, the belief that sustains a market economy, that reward tracks contribution, begins to erode. Resentment and disengagement follow.

None of this is fixed by nature. The countries with the highest mobility are not those with the most talented citizens but those that have chosen to spread opportunity more evenly, through good public schooling, accessible healthcare and support for families early in a child's life. Mobility, the evidence suggests, is less a matter of national character than of policy. Where a child starts need not decide where she ends, but only if a society decides that it should not.

Q5. The central argument of the passage is that:

(A) social mobility is shaped by inequality and policy rather than by national character, and can be widened by spreading opportunity more evenly.

(B) social mobility has always been perfectly equal in rich countries.

(C) a child's income is completely independent of her parents' income.

(D) talent alone determines where a person ends up in life.

Q6. According to the passage, social mobility is usually measured by:

(A) counting how many times people move house during their lifetime.

(B) comparing the total wealth of different countries.

(C) asking citizens whether they feel optimistic about opportunity.

(D) how strongly a parent's income predicts a child's income.

Q7. It can be inferred that rising inequality tends to reduce mobility because:

(A) poor children become less talented as inequality grows.

(B) the advantages wealth can buy grow larger, widening the distance a poor child must travel to catch up.

(C) wealthy parents stop investing in their children once they are rich.

(D) governments always respond to inequality by cutting public schooling.

Q8. With which of the following statements would the author most likely agree?

(A) Differences in mobility between countries are mainly due to differences in innate talent.

(B) Inequality has no effect on a child's chances of rising.

(C) Higher mobility results largely from policies that spread opportunity, such as good schooling and family support.

(D) Nothing a society does can change how much origins determine outcomes.

Directions (Q9–Q12): Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. It is a fair question why poetry survives at all. It is harder to read than prose, it sells in tiny quantities, and it seems to resist the very clarity that modern communication prizes. Yet every culture keeps producing it, and lines of verse lodge in the memory long after paragraphs of prose have faded. Whatever poetry does, prose apparently cannot do it as well.

Part of the answer is compression. A poem says much in little, packing into a few words meanings that prose would need paragraphs to unfold. Where an essay explains, a poem presents, trusting the reader to feel the weight of an image rather than have it spelled out. This density is why a single line can carry more than its literal sense, and why poems reward the rereading that prose seldom demands.

Sound is the second source of poetry's power. Prose treats words mainly as carriers of meaning; poetry also treats them as physical things, with rhythm, echo and pace. The music of a line can reinforce its sense, slowing the reader at a heavy moment or quickening at a light one, and it is largely this music that makes verse so easy to remember. We recall a rhyme or a beat when we have long forgotten the plain words that surround it.

Then there is ambiguity, which ordinary communication tries to eliminate and poetry deliberately keeps. A good poem often means more than one thing at once, and holds those meanings in tension rather than resolving them. This is not vagueness but richness: the poem becomes a space the reader can return to and find something new, because it was never reducible to a single message in the first place.

These qualities explain the odd endurance of a difficult art. Poetry survives not in spite of resisting easy paraphrase but because of it. A message that can be fully restated in other words has used itself up once it is understood; a poem that cannot be so restated keeps its charge. In an age awash in information that is instantly consumed and forgotten, the very features that make poetry inconvenient, its compression, its music, its refusal to settle, are what allow it to last.

Q9. The passage is primarily concerned with:

(A) proving that poetry sells in larger quantities than prose.

(B) tracing the history of rhyme in Western verse.

(C) arguing that prose should imitate the techniques of poetry.

(D) explaining what poetry does that prose cannot, and why this lets it endure.

Q10. According to the passage, the compression of poetry means that:

(A) a poem packs into a few words meanings that prose would need paragraphs to unfold.

(B) poems are always physically shorter than any work of prose.

(C) poetry avoids using images so as to stay perfectly clear.

(D) a poem states its single message as plainly as it can.

Q11. It can be inferred that poetry is easier to remember than prose largely because:

(A) poems are usually printed in larger type than prose.

(B) poems contain fewer difficult ideas than prose does.

(C) the sound of a line, its rhythm and echo, helps fix it in the memory.

(D) readers are required to memorise poems in school.

Q12. The author regards the ambiguity of a good poem as:

(A) a defect that skilled poets try to remove.

(B) a richness that lets the reader return and find something new.

(C) the same thing as vagueness or careless writing.

(D) proof that poetry cannot communicate anything at all.

Directions (Q13–Q16): Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. Water covers most of the planet, yet the fraction humans can drink and farm with is vanishingly small. Almost all of the earth's water is salt; most of the rest is locked in ice or buried too deep to reach. The usable remainder, in rivers, lakes and shallow aquifers, is unevenly spread and, in many regions, being drawn down faster than nature replaces it. As populations grow and climates shift, freshwater is becoming one of the century's defining constraints.

What makes the problem politically fraught is that rivers ignore borders. A great many of the world's major rivers are shared by two or more countries, and a nation upstream holds a natural advantage: it can dam, divert or pollute a river before the water ever reaches its neighbours. When an upstream state builds a large dam to generate power or irrigate its fields, it may reduce the flow on which downstream farmers and cities have depended for generations. The upstream country sees development; the downstream country sees a threat to its survival.

International law offers only weak guidance. The principle that states should share transboundary waters "equitably and reasonably" is widely endorsed and rarely enforceable, because there is no court with the power to compel a thirsty and sovereign nation. Agreements exist, and some have held for decades even between hostile neighbours, but they depend on a willingness to cooperate that scarcity itself tends to erode. As the resource shrinks, the temptation to grab a larger share grows.

Yet the darker predictions of "water wars" have so far mostly not come to pass. Studies of shared rivers find that cooperation, though undramatic, is far more common than open conflict. Countries that argue bitterly over a river also, quietly, sign treaties, share data and build joint institutions, because the alternative, unmanaged competition, serves no one. Water is as much a

reason to negotiate as a reason to fight.
The realistic hope, then, is not that scarcity will vanish but that it will be managed. That will require treating a shared river as a common problem rather than a prize to be seized, and building the patient, unglamorous institutions through which neighbours can divide a shrinking resource without coming to blows. The rivers will keep crossing borders; whether that becomes a source of conflict or of cooperation is, as ever, a human choice.

Q13. According to the passage, the fraction of the earth's water humans can actually use is small because:

(A) rivers and lakes have all dried up in recent decades.

(B) humans have already polluted almost all available fresh water.

(C) almost all water is salt, and most of the rest is locked in ice or buried too deep to reach.

(D) governments deliberately restrict access to fresh water.

Q14. The passage states that an upstream country holds a natural advantage because it can:

(A) desalinate seawater far more cheaply than its neighbours.

(B) dam, divert or pollute a river before the water reaches downstream states.

(C) appeal to an international court that enforces water sharing.

(D) produce rain through direct control of the climate.

Q15. It can be inferred that predictions of "water wars" have largely not come true because:

(A) shared rivers have turned out to be far more abundant than feared.

(B) an international court now compels nations to share water fairly.

(C) upstream countries have stopped building dams entirely.

(D) cooperation over shared rivers has proved more common than open conflict.

Q16. The author's attitude toward the future of shared rivers is best described as:

(A) cautiously hopeful, treating conflict or cooperation as a human choice rather than a certainty.

(B) certain that water wars are now unavoidable.

(C) indifferent to whether nations cooperate or fight.

(D) convinced that international law alone will solve the problem.

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. Only in the nineteenth century did it shed that association and become an ordinary defence against rain.

2. For centuries a man carrying one in Europe was thought faintly ridiculous, since it was considered a woman's accessory.

3. The umbrella began not as protection from rain but as a shade against the sun, a mark of rank in ancient courts.

4. Today it is so common that we forget it was ever anything but a plain, practical tool.

(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.

"Sourdough bread is not made with commercial yeast but with a living culture of wild yeasts and bacteria that the baker keeps alive by regular feeding. These microbes ferment the dough slowly, producing the gas that makes it rise and the acids that give it its tang. Because the process is slow and depends on organisms that vary from kitchen to kitchen, no two sourdough loaves are quite alike; the bread carries the signature of the particular culture that raised it."

(A) Sourdough is raised by a living, regularly fed culture of wild microbes whose slow fermentation gives each loaf a character unique to that culture.

(B) Sourdough bread is identical to bread made with commercial yeast in every important respect.

(C) The tang of sourdough comes entirely from acids that the baker adds directly to the dough.

(D) Sourdough should be avoided because its wild microbes make the outcome unpredictable.

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. For centuries pepper was so valuable in Europe that it was counted out grain by grain and even used to pay rents.

2. Merchants risked long sea voyages to the East, and fortunes rose and fell on the cargo of a single ship.

3. Pepper is today one of the cheapest and most widely used spices in the world's kitchens.

4. Whole cities grew wealthy as middlemen, controlling the routes along which the spice travelled.

5. The search for a direct route to these spices helped launch the great voyages of European exploration.

(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. Within decades, wires spanned continents and even crossed the floor of the ocean.

2. Before the telegraph, a message could travel no faster than the person who carried it.

3. News that once took weeks to arrive now came in minutes, and the

world began to feel smaller.

4. The telegraph broke that link for the first time, letting information outrun the fastest horse or ship.

(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.

"On steep hillsides, rain tends to run straight downhill, stripping away soil and carrying it into the valleys below. Terraced farming answers this by cutting the slope into a staircase of level steps, each held by a low wall. Water that would have rushed away is instead caught and made to soak in, and the soil that would have washed off stays where crops can use it. What looks like mere decoration on a mountainside is in fact a patient piece of engineering that turns an unfarmable slope into productive land."

(A) Terraced farming is mainly a decorative practice that makes mountainsides look more beautiful.

(B) Because rain always runs downhill, farming on any slope is effectively impossible.

(C) Terracing turns erosion-prone slopes into productive land by cutting them into level steps that hold soil and water in place.

(D) Valleys are more fertile than hillsides only because soil naturally collects there.

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. A firefly's glow is produced by a chemical reaction in its abdomen, not by any source of heat.

2. The reaction combines a compound called luciferin with oxygen, releasing energy almost entirely as light.

3. Because so little is lost as heat, the light is among the most efficient known anywhere in nature.

4. Each species flashes in its own rhythm, a code by which males and females find one another in the dark.

5. Many gardeners plant bright flowers specifically to attract bees and butterflies to their yards.

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

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

"Before satellite navigation, a sailor far from land could still fix her position with a sextant, an instrument that measures the angle between a star or the sun and the horizon. Knowing that angle at a precise moment, and comparing it with tables, allowed the navigator to calculate latitude and, with an accurate clock, longitude as well. The sextant demanded skill and careful timing, but it freed ships from hugging the coast and made confident ocean crossings possible."

(A) Satellite navigation has always been the only reliable way to cross an open ocean.

(B) A sextant works by measuring the depth of the ocean beneath a ship.

(C) Sailors preferred to hug the coast because the sextant was far too simple to be of any use.

(D) By measuring the angle between a celestial body and the horizon, the sextant let navigators fix their position and cross open oceans with confidence.

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

"When armies began to march farther from home, feeding them became almost as hard as fighting. Fresh food spoiled within days, and a campaign could fail not for want of courage but for want of supper. The problem drew inventors and prizes, and eventually a method was found for sealing cooked food in airtight containers that kept it edible for months. _____"

(A) Soldiers, meanwhile, continued to prefer the taste of freshly cooked meals above all else.

(B) What had begun as a way to feed soldiers soon spread to ordinary kitchens, changing how everyone stored food.

(C) Fresh fruit, however, remained a rare treat in most European cities for many years.

(D) The containers were often heavy and awkward to carry over very long distances.

Detailed Solutions

Q1.

Solution

Concept — Primary purpose: The purpose is the single job the whole passage does, not one detail drawn from it.

Step 1 — Track the arc: The passage introduces habits as an economy of the brain, describes the cue–routine–reward loop, explains why habits are hard to break, and ends on how to change them.

Step 2 — Match to an option: Option B names both the formation (the loop) and the twin consequences (efficiency and difficulty of breaking).

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage explicitly denies that habits are moral failings and that willpower alone works.
- C: The passage argues habits *can* be reshaped, not that they never should be.
- D: The basal ganglia are mentioned briefly, not described in technical detail.

Final Answer: Explain the habit loop and why it is efficient yet hard to break $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{\text{B}}$

Answer: (B) Go Back to Q 1

Q2.

Solution

Concept — Ordered detail: Match the exact sequence the passage lists.

Step 1 — Locate the definition: Paragraph 2 says "A cue . . . prompts a routine . . . which is followed by a reward."

Step 2 — Match: That order is cue, then routine, then reward, which is option C.

Why other options are wrong:

- A and B: These scramble the sequence; the cue must come first.
- D: The reward follows the routine, not the other way round.

Final Answer: Cue $\rightarrow$ routine $\rightarrow$ reward $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{\text{C}}$

Answer: (C) Go Back to Q 2

Q3.

Solution

Concept — Inference from a stated mechanism: A valid inference restates a cause the passage gives.

Step 1 — Find the cause: Paragraph 3 says "the cue fires and the routine follows before deliberation has a chance to intervene."

Step 2 — Match: Option A restates exactly this timing problem.

Why other options are wrong:

- B: The passage never says people who fail do not want to change.
- C: Rewards are not called harmful; they are what encode the loop.
- D: The difficulty of removing the basal ganglia is not the passage's point.

Final Answer: The cue triggers the routine before deliberation can act $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{\text{A}}$

Answer: (A) Go Back to Q 3

Q4.

Solution

Concept — Specific prescription: The answer must be the method the passage recommends.

Step 1 — Find the sentence: Paragraph 4 says the most reliable way is "to keep the cue and the reward while substituting a new routine between them."

Step 2 — Match: Option D states this precisely.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: Sheer resistance is called "a losing battle."
- B: The passage says habits are "rarely erased," so complete erasure is not the method.
- C: The recommendation keeps the reward; it does not remove it.

Final Answer: Keep the cue and reward, insert a new routine $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{\text{D}}$

Answer: (D) Go Back to Q 4

Q5.

Solution

Concept — Central argument: The thesis is the claim the whole passage builds toward.

Step 1 — Identify the arc: The passage shows mobility is limited, links this to inequality, then concludes that "mobility . . . is less a matter of national character than of policy."

Step 2 — Match: Option A captures both the diagnosis (inequality and policy) and the remedy (spreading opportunity).

Why other options are wrong:

- B: The passage says the equal-opportunity story "was always partly a myth."
- C: The passage says the parent–child income link "is substantial," not zero.
- D: The passage argues circumstance, not talent alone, shapes outcomes.

Final Answer: Mobility is shaped by inequality and policy $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{\text{A}}$

Answer: (A) Go Back to Q 5

Q6.

Solution

Concept — Specific detail: Match the definition of measurement the passage gives.

Step 1 — Find the sentence: Paragraph 2 opens, "Mobility is usually measured by asking how strongly a parent's income predicts a child's."

Step 2 — Match: Option D restates this directly.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: Physical house moves are never mentioned as the measure.
- B: Comparing national wealth is not how mobility is defined here.
- C: Optimism surveys are not the stated method.

Final Answer: How strongly a parent's income predicts a child's $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{\text{D}}$

Answer: (D) Go Back to Q 6

Q7.

Solution

Concept — Inference from a stated link: Use the connection the passage draws between inequality and mobility.

Step 1 — Find the reasoning: Paragraph 2 says that when the gap grows, "the advantages that wealth can buy . . . become larger, and the distance a poor child must travel to catch up grows with them."

Step 2 — Match: Option B restates this mechanism.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage says poor children are held back "not by ability," so talent does not fall.
- C: Affluent parents invest *more*, not less.
- D: The passage makes no such claim about automatic school cuts.

Final Answer: Wealth's advantages grow, widening the gap to close ⇒ B

Answer: (B) Go Back to Q 7

Q8.

Solution

Concept — Author agreement: Choose the statement the author's argument supports.

Step 1 — Find the stance: The final paragraph says the highest-mobility countries are those that "spread opportunity more evenly, through good public schooling, accessible healthcare and support for families."

Step 2 — Match: Option C restates this policy claim.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage denies that talent differences explain national gaps.
- B: Inequality is shown to affect a child's chances.
- D: The passage insists origins "need not decide where she ends," so change is possible.

Final Answer: Mobility rises with policies that spread opportunity ⇒ C

Answer: (C) Go Back to Q 8

Q9.

Solution

Concept — Main concern: The whole passage, not one paragraph, sets the topic.

Step 1 — Track the arc: It asks why poetry survives, names three features (compression, sound, ambiguity), and concludes these are what let poetry endure.

Step 2 — Match: Option D captures "what poetry does that prose cannot" and "why this lets it endure."

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage says poetry "sells in tiny quantities."
- B: History of rhyme is not the subject.
- C: The passage does not advise prose to imitate poetry.

Final Answer: What poetry does that prose cannot, and why it lasts ⇒ $\boxed{\text{D}}$

Answer: (D) Go Back to Q 9

Q10.

Solution

Concept — Specific detail: Match the definition of compression the passage offers.

Step 1 — Find the sentence: Paragraph 2 says a poem is "packing into a few words meanings that prose would need paragraphs to unfold."

Step 2 — Match: Option A restates this exactly.

Why other options are wrong:

- B: Compression is about density of meaning, not being shorter than all prose.
- C: The passage says a poem "presents" an image, so it uses images rather than avoiding them.
- D: A poem "can carry more than its literal sense," not a single plain message.

Final Answer: Much meaning packed into few words ⇒ $\boxed{\text{A}}$

Answer: (A) Go Back to Q 10

Q11.

Solution

Concept — Inference from a stated cause: Choose the reason the passage actually names.

Step 1 — Find the sentence: Paragraph 3 says "it is largely this music that makes verse so easy to remember," and "we recall a rhyme or a beat."

Step 2 — Match: Option C ties memorability to sound, rhythm and echo.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: Type size is never mentioned.
- B: The passage stresses that poetry is denser, not simpler in ideas.
- D: School memorisation is not the stated cause.

Final Answer: The music of a line fixes it in memory $\Rightarrow$ C

Answer: (C) Go Back to Q 11

Q12.

Solution

Concept — Author's evaluation: Identify how the author judges ambiguity.

Step 1 — Find the judgement: Paragraph 4 says ambiguity "is not vagueness but richness: the poem becomes a space the reader can return to and find something new."

Step 2 — Match: Option B restates this positive view.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: Poetry "deliberately keeps" ambiguity, so it is not a defect to remove.
- C: The passage explicitly says ambiguity "is not vagueness."
- D: The passage says a poem "keeps its charge," not that it communicates nothing.

Final Answer: A richness that rewards rereading $\Rightarrow$ B

Answer: (B) Go Back to Q 12

Q13.

Solution

Concept — Specific detail: Match the reason the passage states.

Step 1 — Find the sentence: Paragraph 1 says "Almost all of the earth's water is salt; most of the rest is locked in ice or buried too deep to reach."

Step 2 — Match: Option C restates this two-part reason.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: Rivers and lakes are the usable remainder, not dried up.
- B: Pollution is not given as the reason the usable share is small.
- D: No deliberate government restriction is mentioned here.

Final Answer: Most water is salt or locked in ice / too deep $\Rightarrow$ C

Answer: (C) Go Back to Q 13

Q14.

Solution

Concept — Specific detail: Match the stated upstream advantage.

Step 1 — Find the sentence: Paragraph 2 says an upstream nation "can dam, divert or pollute a river before the water ever reaches its neighbours."

Step 2 — Match: Option B restates this.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: Desalination is never discussed.
- C: The passage says there is "no court with the power to compel" a nation.
- D: Controlling the climate to make rain is not claimed.

Final Answer: It can dam, divert or pollute the river first $\Rightarrow$ B

Answer: (B) Go Back to Q 14

Q15.

Solution

Concept — Inference from evidence: Use the finding the passage reports.

Step 1 — Find the finding: Paragraph 4 says "cooperation, though undramatic, is far more common than open conflict."

Step 2 — Match: Option D restates this as the reason water wars have not materialised.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage says the resource is shrinking, not newly abundant.
- B: It explicitly says no court can compel nations.
- C: Upstream dam-building is presented as ongoing, not halted.

Final Answer: Cooperation is more common than conflict $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{\text{D}}$

Answer: (D) Go Back to Q 15

Q16.

Solution

Concept — Tone/attitude: Choose the description that fits the author's closing stance.

Step 1 — Weigh the cues: The passage acknowledges real scarcity but ends that conflict or cooperation "is, as ever, a human choice," and calls managed scarcity "the realistic hope."

Step 2 — Match: Option A (cautiously hopeful; outcome is a human choice) fits both cues.

Why other options are wrong:

- B: The passage says water wars have "mostly not come to pass."
- C: The concern shown rules out indifference.
- D: The passage calls international law "weak," so it cannot solve the problem alone.

Final Answer: Cautiously hopeful; the outcome is a human choice $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{\text{A}}$

Answer: (A) Go Back to Q 16

Q17.

Solution

Concept — Para-jumble: Find the origin statement, then follow the time sequence to the present.

Step 1 — Opening: Sentence 3 states the origin (the umbrella began as a sunshade and mark of rank); it needs no prior context, so it opens.

Step 2 — Middle stage: Sentence 2 ("For centuries a man carrying one ... was thought ridiculous") describes the long intermediate period, so it follows 3.

Step 3 — The turn: Sentence 1 ("Only in the nineteenth century did it shed that association") marks the change out of that period, so it follows 2.

Step 4 — Closing: Sentence 4 ("Today it is so common ...") brings the story to the present, so it closes.

Order: $3 \to 2 \to 1 \to 4$.

Final Answer: $\boxed{3214}$

Answer: (3214) 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: Sourdough uses a living, regularly fed wild culture; slow fermentation makes it rise and gives it tang; because the culture varies, each loaf is unique.

Step 2 — Match: Option A carries all three points (living culture, slow fermentation, uniqueness).

Why other options are wrong:

- B: The passage stresses that sourdough differs from commercial-yeast bread.
- C: The tang comes from acids the microbes produce, not from added acids.
- D: The passage treats unpredictability as character, not a reason to avoid the bread.

Final Answer: A living wild culture makes each slow-fermented loaf unique $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{A}$

Answer: (A) 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 all describe the *historical* value and trade of pepper (its worth, the sea voyages, wealthy middlemen, the voyages of exploration).

Step 2 — Spot the outlier: Sentence 3 jumps to the present day, noting that pepper is now cheap and common, which breaks the historical narrative.

Step 3 — Confirm coherence without it: 1, 2, 4, 5 read as a clean paragraph on pepper's past value and trade.

Final Answer: Sentence 3 does not belong $\Rightarrow \boxed{3}$

Answer: (3) Go Back to Q 19

Q20.

Solution

Concept — Para-jumble: Set up the "before" state, name the change, then trace its effects.

Step 1 — Opening: Sentence 2 describes the world before the telegraph (a message travelled no faster than its carrier); it opens.

Step 2 — The break: Sentence 4 ("The telegraph broke that link") refers back to that limit, so it follows 2.

Step 3 — The spread: Sentence 1 ("Within decades, wires spanned continents") describes how far the new technology reached, following 4.

Step 4 — The consequence: Sentence 3 ("News that once took weeks . . . the world began to feel smaller") states the result, so it closes.

Order: $2 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 1 \rightarrow 3$.

Final Answer: $\boxed{2413}$

Answer: (2413) Go Back to Q 20

Q21.

Solution

Concept — Para-summary: Keep the passage's central point, not a distractor detail.

Step 1 — Core claim: Terracing cuts an erosion-prone slope into level steps that hold soil and water, turning "an unfarmable slope into productive land."

Step 2 — Match: Option C restates this engineering function.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage says what "looks like mere decoration" is really engineering.
- B: Terracing shows slope farming *is* possible, contradicting B.
- D: The point is about making slopes farmable, not ranking valleys against hillsides.

Final Answer: Level steps hold soil and water, making slopes productive $\Rightarrow \boxed{C}$

Answer: (C) Go Back to Q 21

Q22.

Solution

Concept — Odd sentence out: The four related sentences form one explanation; the outlier adds an unrelated fact.

Step 1 — Find the theme: Sentences 1, 2, 3 and 4 all explain a firefly's light: the chemical reaction, the luciferin–oxygen combination, its efficiency, and the flashing code.

Step 2 — Spot the outlier: Sentence 5 is about gardeners planting flowers to attract bees and butterflies, unrelated to how fireflies glow.

Step 3 — Confirm: 1, 2, 3, 4 read as a coherent paragraph on firefly bioluminescence without 5.

Final Answer: Sentence 5 does not belong $\Rightarrow \boxed{5}$

Answer: (5) Go Back to Q 22

Q23.

Solution

Concept — Para-summary: The summary must preserve what the instrument does and why it mattered.

Step 1 — Core claim: The sextant measures the angle between a celestial body and the horizon, letting a navigator fix position and thus cross open oceans confidently.

Step 2 — Match: Option D captures both the method and the payoff.

Why other options are wrong:

- A: The passage says the sextant worked "before satellite navigation," so satellites were not always the only way.
- B: A sextant measures angles to the sky, not ocean depth.
- C: The sextant freed ships from the coast; it was skilled, not too simple to use.

Final Answer: Measuring celestial angles fixed position for ocean crossings $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{D}$

Answer: (D) Go Back to Q 23

Q24.

Solution

Concept — Sentence completion: The ending must follow the logical arc the paragraph sets up.

Step 1 — Track the logic: The paragraph frames a problem (armies could not carry food that kept) and its solution (airtight containers that stayed edible for months). The natural next beat is the success of that solution.

Step 2 — Match: Option B extends the arc: the military fix "soon spread to ordinary kitchens, changing how everyone stored food."

Why other options are wrong:

- A and C: Soldiers' tastes and fresh fruit shift away from the just-solved preservation point.
- D: A caveat about weight undercuts the triumph the passage is building toward, breaking the logical flow.

Final Answer: The military fix spread to ordinary kitchens $\Rightarrow$ $\boxed{B}$

Answer: (B) Go Back to Q 24

Answer Key

Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans	Q	Ans
1	B	2	C	3	A	4	D	5	A
6	D	7	B	8	C	9	D	10	A
11	C	12	B	13	C	14	B	15	D
16	A	17	3214	18	A	19	3	20	2413
21	C	22	5	23	D	24	B		