

CUET 2026 May 26 Shift 2 English

Question Paper (Memory-Based) with Solutions

Conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA)



General Instructions

- (i) The examination will be conducted in Computer-Based Test (CBT) mode.
- (ii) Each question carries +5 marks for correct answer and -1 mark for wrong answer.
- (iii) The total number of questions are 50.
- (iv) Duration of the exam is 1 hour (60 minutes).

1. Passage:

My grandmother always held a certain stoic posture toward life's erratic tides. Living in a small, weathered cottage, she looked back at a history filled with transient joys and lasting trials. Her penchant for storytelling transformed rainy afternoons into grand journeys. Though neighbors viewed her solitary lifestyle as ascetic, if not dangerously precarious given her failing health, she remained entirely loquacious whenever a guest crossed her threshold, speaking with an eloquent cadence that captivated anyone who listened. She often reminded us that lingering on past predicaments was a futile exercise, urging us instead to make peace with our conflicts and move forward without looking back.

Based on the passage, why did neighbors characterize the grandmother's lifestyle as "ascetic"?

- (A) Because she had an unpredictable, erratic pattern of welcoming visitors.
- (B) Because she lived a severe, self-disciplined, and simple life alone.
- (C) Because her penchant for grand storytelling was confusing.
- (D) Because she spent her time constantly worrying about her failing health.

Correct Answer: (B) Because she lived a severe, self-disciplined, and simple life alone.

Solution:

Step 1: Identify the keyword in the passage.

The passage states:

“neighbors viewed her solitary lifestyle as ascetic”

Step 2: Understand the meaning of “ascetic.”

“Ascetic” means:

- Living a simple life
- Practicing self-discipline
- Avoiding luxury and comfort

Step 3: Relate it to the grandmother’s lifestyle.

The grandmother:

- Lived alone in a small weathered cottage
- Led a simple and disciplined life
- Did not depend on luxury

Thus, neighbors considered her lifestyle ascetic.

Therefore, the correct answer is:

Because she lived a severe, self-disciplined, and simple life alone.

Quick Tip: Remember:

Ascetic → Simple and self-disciplined lifestyle

Commonly associated with avoiding luxury or excessive comfort.

2. Passage:

My grandmother always held a certain stoic posture toward life's erratic tides. Living in a small, weathered cottage, she looked back at a history filled with transient joys and lasting trials. Her penchant for storytelling transformed rainy afternoons into grand journeys. Though neighbors viewed her solitary lifestyle as ascetic, if not dangerously precarious given her failing health, she remained entirely loquacious whenever a guest crossed her threshold, speaking with an eloquent cadence that captivated anyone who listened. She often reminded us that lingering on past predicaments was a futile exercise, urging us instead to make peace with our conflicts and move forward without looking back.

Which word used in the passage is closest in meaning to an “unstable, uncertain, or uncomfortable situation”?

- (A) Stoic
- (B) Transient
- (C) Precarious
- (D) Ascetic

Correct Answer: (C) Precarious

Solution:

Step 1: Locate the relevant word in the passage.

The passage says:

“if not dangerously precarious given her failing health”

Step 2: Understand the meaning of “precarious.”

“Precarious” means:

- Uncertain
- Unsafe
- Unstable
- Risky or uncomfortable

Step 3: Eliminate other options.

- **Stoic** → Emotionally strong and calm
- **Transient** → Temporary or short-lived
- **Ascetic** → Simple and self-disciplined lifestyle

Only “precarious” matches the required meaning.

Therefore, the correct answer is:

Precarious

Quick Tip: Remember:

Precarious → Uncertain or risky

Example:

“A precarious financial condition.”

3. One Word Substitution: A person who studies or collects postage stamps is called a/an:

- (A) Ornithologist
- (B) Philatelist
- (C) Numismatist
- (D) Graphologist

Correct Answer: (B) Philatelist

Solution:

Step 1: Understand the term related to stamp collection.

A person who:

- Collects postage stamps
- Studies stamps and postal history

is called a:

Philatelist

Step 2: Eliminate incorrect options.

- **Ornithologist** → Studies birds
- **Numismatist** → Collects/studies coins
- **Graphologist** → Studies handwriting

Therefore, the correct answer is:

Philatelist

Quick Tip: Remember:

Philatelist → Stamp collector

Numismatist → Coin collector

4. One Word Substitution: Identify the correct terms for the following two definitions respectively:

1. The study and analysis of handwriting.
2. An instrument that records heart/beat action.

- (A) Numismatics, Stethoscope
(B) Graphology, Cardiograph
(C) Ventriloquism, Cardiograph
(D) Graphology, Stethoscope

Correct Answer: (B) Graphology, Cardiograph

Solution:

Step 1: Identify the term related to handwriting analysis.

The study and analysis of handwriting is called:

Graphology

Step 2: Identify the instrument related to heart activity recording.

An instrument that records heart activity is called:

Cardiograph

Step 3: Eliminate incorrect options.

- **Numismatics** → Study of coins
- **Ventriloquism** → Throwing voice illusion
- **Stethoscope** → Instrument used for listening, not recording

Therefore, the correct answer is:

Graphology, Cardiograph

Quick Tip: Remember:

Graphology → Handwriting analysis

Cardiograph → Records heart activity

Stethoscope → Used for listening to heart sounds

5. Synonyms: Match the words in Column I with their correct meanings/synonyms in Column II.

Column I		Column II	
1.	Eloquent	P.	Fluent or persuasive in speaking
2.	Vivacious	Q.	Extremely unpleasant; repulsive
3.	Odious	R.	Lively, animated, and full of energy
4.	Penchant	S.	A strong or habitual liking for something

Choose the correct answer from the options given below:

- (A) 1-P, 2-R, 3-Q, 4-S
- (B) 1-R, 2-P, 3-S, 4-Q
- (C) 1-P, 2-Q, 3-R, 4-S
- (D) 1-S, 2-R, 3-Q, 4-P

Correct Answer: (A) 1-P, 2-R, 3-Q, 4-S

Solution:

Step 1: Match "Eloquent."

"Eloquent" means:

Fluent or persuasive in speaking

Thus:

$$1 \rightarrow P$$

Step 2: Match "Vivacious."

"Vivacious" means:

Lively, energetic, and animated

Thus:

$$2 \rightarrow R$$

Step 3: Match "Odious."

"Odious" means:

Extremely unpleasant or hateful

Thus:

$$3 \rightarrow Q$$

Step 4: Match "Penchant."

"Penchant" means:

A strong liking or preference

Thus:

$$4 \rightarrow S$$

Therefore:

1 – P, 2 – R, 3 – Q, 4 – S

Quick Tip: Remember:

Eloquent → Persuasive speaker

Vivacious → Full of energy

Penchant → Strong liking

6. Antonyms: Select the correct antonym for the word "Concise".

- (A) Brief
- (B) Loquacious
- (C) Verbose / Wordy
- (D) Meticulous

Correct Answer: (C) Verbose / Wordy

Solution:

Step 1: Understand the meaning of "Concise."

"Concise" means:

- Brief
- Short
- Expressed in few words

Step 2: Find the opposite meaning.

The antonym should mean:

Using too many words

Step 3: Analyze the options.

- **Brief** → Similar meaning
- **Loquacious** → Talkative person
- **Verbose / Wordy** → Using excessive words
- **Meticulous** → Very careful

Thus, the correct antonym is:

Verbose / Wordy

Quick Tip: Remember:

Concise → Short and precise

Verbose → Using too many words

7. Spelling Check: Identify the option with the exact correct spelling.

- (A) Maintainance
- (B) Maintenance
- (C) Maintenece
- (D) Mentenence

Correct Answer: (B) Maintenance

Solution:

Step 1: Examine each spelling carefully.

- **Maintainance** → Incorrect
- **Maintenance** → Correct
- **Maintenece** → Incorrect
- **Mentenence** → Incorrect

Step 2: Identify the correct standard spelling.

The correct spelling is:

Maintenance

Quick Tip: Remember:

Maintain → Maintenance

The word contains:

“ten” and not “tain” after “main”

8. Homophones: Complete the sentence using the correct set of homophones:

The actress wore a dark _____ to hide her face, but she could not suppress a loud _____ of grief when she saw the _____ state of the slum.

- (A) vail, wail, vile
- (B) veil, vail, vile
- (C) veil, wail, vile
- (D) vile, wail, veil

Correct Answer: (C) veil, wail, vile

Solution:

Step 1: Fill the first blank.

A cloth used to cover the face is called:

Veil

Thus, the first blank is:

veil

Step 2: Fill the second blank.

A loud cry of sorrow or grief is called:

Wail

Thus, the second blank is:

wail

Step 3: Fill the third blank.

“Vile” means:

Extremely unpleasant or horrible

Thus, the third blank is:

vile

Therefore, the correct sequence is:

veil, wail, vile

Quick Tip: Remember:

Veil → Face covering

Wail → Cry loudly

Vile → Extremely unpleasant

9. Match the Idioms in Column A with their meanings in Column B.

Column A		Column B	
1.	Bury the hatchet	P.	A sudden and completely unexpected event
2.	Bolt from the blue	Q.	To reveal a secret or disclose information prematurely
3.	Spill the beans	R.	To make peace or end a long-standing conflict
4.	Apple of discord	S.	A cause or subject of dispute and rivalry

Choose the correct answer from the options given below:

- (A) 1-R, 2-P, 3-Q, 4-S
- (B) 1-P, 2-R, 3-Q, 4-S
- (C) 1-R, 2-Q, 3-P, 4-S
- (D) 1-S, 2-P, 3-Q, 4-R

Correct Answer: (A) 1-R, 2-P, 3-Q, 4-S

Solution:

Step 1: Match “Bury the hatchet.”

This idiom means:

To make peace or end a conflict

Thus:

$$1 \rightarrow R$$

Step 2: Match “Bolt from the blue.”

This idiom means:

A sudden and unexpected event

Thus:

$$2 \rightarrow P$$

Step 3: Match “Spill the beans.”

This idiom means:

To reveal a secret

Thus:

$$3 \rightarrow Q$$

Step 4: Match “Apple of discord.”

This idiom means:

A cause of dispute or rivalry

Thus:

$$4 \rightarrow S$$

Therefore:

$1 - R, 2 - P, 3 - Q, 4 - S$

Quick Tip: Remember:

Bury the hatchet → Make peace

Spill the beans → Reveal a secret

Bolt from the blue → Unexpected shock

10. Complete the sentence:

“The candidate was completely _____ by the deceptive questions asked by the interview board.”

- (A) taken in
- (B) brushed off
- (C) ironed out
- (D) lashed out

Correct Answer: (A) taken in

Solution:

Step 1: Understand the sentence context.

The sentence suggests that:

- The interview board asked deceptive questions
- The candidate was fooled or deceived

Step 2: Understand the meanings of the phrasal verbs.

- **Taken in** → Deceived or fooled
- **Brushed off** → Ignored casually
- **Ironed out** → Resolved smoothly
- **Lashed out** → Reacted angrily

Step 3: Choose the most suitable option.

Since the candidate was deceived:

taken in

fits perfectly.

Therefore, the correct answer is:

taken in

Quick Tip: Remember:

Taken in → Fooled or deceived

Example:

“He was taken in by the scam.”