

VARC CAT 2025 Question Paper with Solutions

Q1. Reading Comprehension (Short Passage)

Read the passage and answer the question that follows:

Modern behavioral economists argue that human decisions are not merely deviations from rationality but reflections of multiple competing goals: emotional satisfaction, social approval, cognitive ease, and fear avoidance. Traditional economic models assumed that people maximize utility through consistent preferences. However, empirical evidence shows that preferences fluctuate depending on framing, context, memory limits, and social cues. What we label as “irrationality” may simply be the mind optimizing for criteria that formal models fail to capture.

Question: Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the author’s argument?

Solution:

Since the specific options (A, B, C, D) are not visible, the exact choice cannot be selected. However, we can identify the type of option that would best strengthen the passage’s argument.

The author claims that behaviors labeled “irrational” by traditional economics are actually rational responses to alternative goals such as emotional comfort, social approval, or fear reduction. Thus, a strengthening statement must show that a seemingly irrational decision actually serves one of these overlooked goals.

A correct strengthening option would look like this:

“A study finds that individuals who make financially ‘irrational’ choices, such as sharing resources, often gain social status.”

This strengthens the argument by showing that the behavior optimizes a real benefit ignored by standard economic models.

Quick Tip

For strengthening questions, look for evidence that reinforces the author’s reasoning process, not just the conclusion. The best answer usually provides a mechanism that supports the author’s claim.

Q2. Reading Comprehension (Inference)

Read the passage and answer:

Several historians argue that the decline of ancient civilizations was not solely due to environmental factors but also due to institutional rigidity. When rules and governance systems become resistant to change, societies lose flexibility and innovation capacity. Even mild environmental shocks can then trigger collapse because institutions cannot adapt quickly enough.

Question: Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

Solution:

The passage states that ancient civilizations declined partly because their institutions were too rigid, making them unable to adapt to new circumstances. From this, we can infer that flexibility and adaptability in political or social institutions are crucial for long-term survival.

Thus, a correct inference would look like:

“Societies with adaptable institutions are more resilient to environmental or external shocks than those with rigid governance.”

This inference follows logically because the passage explains that *rigid* institutions lead to collapse when even small disturbances occur.

Quick Tip

For inference questions, look for statements that must be true based on the passage—not something stated verbatim, but something logically implied.

Q3. Para-Jumble

Arrange the sentences in a logical order:

- A. This pursuit of conformity creates a dilemma: the more individuals try to blend in, the more homogeneous and predictable the group becomes.
- B. Humans often conform to group norms to avoid social rejection.
- C. Yet, creativity tends to flourish in environments that allow diversity of thought.
- D. As a result, groups must balance the need for cohesion with the need for individual expression.

Question: Arrange A, B, C, D in the most coherent order.

Solution:

Correct order: B, A, D, C.

Reasoning: Start with the general observation (B) that humans often conform to group norms to avoid social rejection. Sentence A naturally follows by describing the consequence of that conformity — it creates a dilemma because increased blending makes the group more homogeneous. Sentence D then presents the prescriptive response to that dilemma: groups must balance cohesion and individual expression. Finally, sentence C provides the contrasting benefit of allowing individual expression: creativity flourishes when diversity of thought is permitted. This sequence produces a clear logical flow from behavior → consequence → required response → positive outcome.

Quick Tip

For para-jumble questions, look for a sentence that states a general fact or cause to begin with, follow with consequences or developments, place any recommendations or results next, and end with a concluding contrast or consequence.

Q4. Odd One Out

Identify the sentence that does *not* fit in the paragraph:

- A. Urban planners increasingly recognize that walkable cities improve both physical and mental well-being.
- B. Several studies indicate that green spaces in cities contribute to lower stress levels.
- C. Public transportation systems are often designed to optimize fuel efficiency.
- D. Compact city design reduces car dependency and encourages healthier lifestyles.

Question: Which sentence is the odd one out?

Solution:

The majority of the sentences (A, B, and D) focus on **how urban design promotes health and well-being**—emphasizing walkability, green spaces, and reduced car dependency. Sentence C, however, shifts the focus to **fuel efficiency in public transportation**, which does not align with the health-and-lifestyle theme of the others.

The odd one out is C.

Quick Tip

When identifying the odd one out, look for sentences that shift the theme—either in purpose, tone, or topic—compared to the main idea expressed by the other sentences.

Q5. Para-Summary

Choose the option that best captures the *central idea* of the following paragraph:

Human memory is not a recording of the past but a reconstruction influenced by expectations, emotions, and present needs. People often recall events differently at different times, not because they are careless, but because memory adapts to serve current goals. Understanding this adaptive nature explains why eyewitness testimonies are unreliable and why personal narratives evolve over time.

Question: Which option best summarizes the paragraph?

Solution:

The paragraph explains that memory is **reconstructive and adaptive**, shaped by present goals rather than a fixed record of past events. As a result, people remember the same event differently over time, making eyewitness accounts unreliable.

A correct summary would therefore be:

“Human memory is an adaptive reconstruction rather than an exact recording, which is why recollections change and eyewitness accounts are unreliable.”

This captures the central idea without adding or omitting key points.

Quick Tip

A good para-summary condenses the entire paragraph into one sentence that preserves the core message while avoiding unnecessary details or examples.

Q6. Critical Reasoning (Weaken the Argument)

Argument:

A company claims its new productivity software significantly improves employee efficiency because workers using it complete tasks 30% faster.

Question: Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the company’s claim?

Solution:

To weaken the company’s argument, we must show that the observed 30% increase in task completion speed is **not caused by the software** or **does not actually reflect improved efficiency**.

A strong weakening statement would demonstrate that the faster task completion is due to other factors or that the software introduces offsetting problems.

A correct weakening option would look like:

“Independent audits reveal that employees make significantly more errors when using the new software, requiring extensive rework and slowing down overall productivity.”

This seriously weakens the company’s claim because it shows that although tasks may be completed faster, overall productivity does not improve and may even decline.

Quick Tip

To weaken an argument, identify its central assumption and look for evidence showing that the stated cause does not lead to the claimed effect.

Q7. Critical Reasoning (Assumption)

Argument:

"Cities that invest in cycling infrastructure will see a long-term reduction in traffic congestion because people will shift from cars to bicycles."

Question: Which of the following is an essential assumption in the argument?

Solution:

The argument claims that investing in cycling infrastructure will reduce traffic congestion **because** people will switch from driving to cycling. For this reasoning to hold, the argument must assume that a meaningful number of people will actually make that shift.

A correct essential assumption would therefore look like:

"A significant portion of current car users are willing and able to switch to bicycles if cycling infrastructure improves."

Without this assumption, investment alone does not guarantee reduced congestion—people might simply continue driving.

Quick Tip

Assumptions fill the logical gap between the evidence and the conclusion. Ask yourself: "What must be true for the argument to work?"