

Daily Reading Comprehension & Critical Reasoning

Two RC passages (English-as-Language) and two CR passages (Argumentation). Read each carefully and answer based on what is stated or implied.
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PASSAGE 1 (RC) – INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES IN DIGITAL SPACES (LINGUISTICS / TECHNOLOGY)

Q1-5

READ CAREFULLY AND ANSWER Q1-5 BASED ONLY ON THE PASSAGE.

Of the roughly seven thousand languages still spoken in the world today, fewer than five per cent have any meaningful presence on the internet. The remaining ninety-five per cent — most of them indigenous, oral, or spoken in low-income regions — face a particular kind of erasure: not the slow death of disuse, but the sudden invisibility of being algorithmically irrelevant. A search engine that does not index a language effectively concludes that the language does not exist. A voice assistant that cannot parse it instructs its speakers, every time they touch a smartphone, to abandon it for a better-resourced tongue.

The technical reasons are familiar. Modern natural-language processing relies on enormous text corpora; a language with five thousand speakers and no written tradition cannot supply the billions of tokens that contemporary language models demand. The economic logic is starker still. Building a serviceable speech model for, say, Toda or Onge would cost in the millions and serve a community that, by definition, cannot pay for the service. From a corporate balance sheet such investments make no sense.

Yet the cultural arithmetic is exactly inverted. Linguists estimate that a language dies roughly every two weeks, and each death carries with it a unique inventory of metaphor, taxonomy, and oral history. Once gone, these are unrecoverable; the silence is permanent. Some governments — notably New Zealand with Maori and Wales with Welsh — have invested in digital infrastructure as an act of public preservation. India's own efforts under the Bharat Linguistic Atlas have begun but remain modest in scale.

The most interesting development is community-led. Researchers, often working with elders and schoolchildren, have begun crowdsourcing speech recordings and constructing open datasets that anyone may extend. The output is rarely commercially competitive, but it does something more important: it tells a community of speakers that their language belongs in the digital century, and not only in the museum.

1. The author's central claim about the relationship between digital infrastructure and minority languages is best summarised as:

- A. Digital invisibility is now a major and qualitatively new threat to the survival of small languages.
- B. Digital infrastructure is irrelevant to language survival because spoken use is what matters most.
- C. Voice assistants and search engines actively suppress indigenous languages by design.
- D. Market forces are sufficient to ensure that any viable language will eventually find digital support.

2. By describing the cultural arithmetic as 'exactly inverted', the author intends to convey that:

- A. The number of languages dying each year is inversely related to corporate technology budgets.
- B. Cultural value runs opposite to commercial value: what is most worth preserving is least profitable.
- C. Indigenous languages, when digitised, generate more revenue than dominant languages in any meaningful sense applicable here.
- D. Cultural arithmetic operates on a logarithmic scale where each loss matters less than the last.

3. In the context of the passage, the word 'tokens' most nearly means:

- A. Cryptographic identifiers used in secure authentication.
- B. Coupons or vouchers redeemable for digital services.
- C. Symbolic gestures of recognition or respect as discussed in the relevant section of the passage.
- D. Discrete units of text used as training data for language models.

4. Which of the following best describes the author's attitude towards community-led language preservation projects?

- A. Triumphant — they have already solved the problem of language endangerment.
- B. Sceptical — such efforts are well-intentioned but commercially doomed under the framework that is conventionally applied.
- C. Cautiously approving — their commercial impact is small but their symbolic value is significant.
- D. Dismissive — they cannot match what well-funded corporate efforts could achieve.

5. The passage would be MOST WEAKENED by evidence that:

- A. The number of Maori speakers in New Zealand has continued to decline despite digital investments.
- B. A leading technology company has launched a speech model for fifty African languages at minimal cost.
- C. Linguists have over-estimated the rate of global language extinction by a factor of two.
- D. Indian languages have a stronger digital presence than the passage's framing suggests on a fair reading of the materials provided above.

PASSAGE 2 (RC) – WHY BEHAVIOURAL ECONOMICS DISRUPTED STANDARD THEORY (ECONOMICS / PSYCHOLOGY)

Q6-10

READ CAREFULLY AND ANSWER Q6-10 BASED ONLY ON THE PASSAGE.

For most of the twentieth century, the central assumption of economics was that human beings are rational maximisers — agents who, when choosing between options, pick the one that yields the highest expected utility. This 'homo economicus' was a useful fiction. It gave economic models tractable mathematics; it produced clean predictions; it allowed welfare theorems of remarkable elegance. But it had one persistent flaw: real human beings did not behave like that.

The quiet revolution began in the late 1970s with Daniel Kahneman and Amos Tversky, who showed through painstaking experiments that human choice was systematically biased. People weighed losses about twice as heavily as equivalent gains. They overestimated the probability of vivid events and underestimated the probability of statistical ones. They were anchored by arbitrary numbers, swayed by how questions were framed, and slow to update beliefs even in the face of strong contrary evidence. None of this was random noise. Each bias was predictable, replicable, and incompatible with the standard model.

What followed has been called the behavioural turn. Within two decades the new findings had penetrated public-policy design: pension defaults, organ-donor presumptions, calorie labels at restaurants. The 'nudge' philosophy, articulated by Thaler and Sunstein, proposed that small changes in choice architecture could produce large welfare gains without restricting individual freedom. Governments from London to Delhi set up behavioural insights units.

The critics, however, are not silent. Some argue that the new findings, while real in the laboratory, do not aggregate at the market level, where competition disciplines bias. Others worry that nudging slides easily into paternalism dressed in scientific authority. A third complaint is more empirical: several flagship behavioural results have failed to replicate at scale, and the discipline is now in the middle of a sobering reckoning with its own evidentiary standards.

The deeper lesson may be epistemic. Economics has always been an unusual social science in that it built its theory before it studied its subject. The behavioural turn does not destroy that theory; it embeds it in the messier reality of who we actually are.

6. The principal contention of the passage is that:

- A. Behavioural economics has decisively replaced classical economics in academic teaching regardless of the precise factual matrix involved.
- B. Behavioural economics has provided governments with new tools for paternalistic intervention.
- C. Behavioural economics has revealed systematic, predictable departures from the rational-agent assumption.
- D. Behavioural economics is a fashionable but empirically unreliable subfield of social science.

7. The phrase 'sobering reckoning with its own evidentiary standards' refers most directly to:

- A. A growing concern that several headline behavioural findings have failed to replicate at scale.
- B. Academic disputes about who deserves credit for founding the field as a matter of settled doctrinal exposition.
- C. The behavioural turn being absorbed into mainstream macroeconomic curricula worldwide.
- D. The political pushback against nudge units in established democracies.

8. Which of the following findings, if true, would MOST STRENGTHEN the position of behavioural economics as described in the passage?

- A. Survey data showing that economists prefer behavioural to classical models in the orthodox treatment of the subject.
- B. A theoretical proof that homo economicus is mathematically equivalent to actual human choice.
- C. Evidence that nudge interventions have produced measurable savings in pension take-up.
- D. A meta-analysis showing that loss aversion replicates robustly across cultures and demographics.

9. By calling 'homo economicus' a 'useful fiction', the author is best understood as suggesting that:

- A. The model is broadly accurate and the term 'fiction' is intended ironically without reference to any external or extraneous considerations.
- B. The model is a deliberate falsehood manufactured by economists to mislead policymakers.
- C. The model is empirically false but historically pernicious and should be discarded entirely.
- D. The model is a simplification that yielded tractable theory while failing to describe actual choice.

10. The author's tone in the closing paragraph can best be described as:

- A. Reflective and conciliatory — viewing the behavioural turn as a corrective, not a replacement.
- B. Ironic about both classical and behavioural traditions in equal measure.
- C. Triumphant about the behavioural turn's victory over classical theory as the question is ordinarily understood.
- D. Sceptical that the behavioural turn will outlast its present popularity.

PASSAGE 3 (CR) — SHOULD AI-GENERATED WORKS RECEIVE COPYRIGHT PROTECTION? (INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY / TECHNOLOGY POLICY) Q11-15

READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q11-15.

Copyright law in India, as in most jurisdictions, has traditionally protected the original expression of a human author. Section 2(d) of the Copyright Act, 1957, defines an 'author' in terms that presuppose a natural person making creative choices. The U.S. Copyright Office, in a series of recent decisions, has held that works generated entirely by artificial intelligence without meaningful human authorship are not protectable. Some commentators argue that this position is mistaken and that AI-generated works should be granted copyright on the same terms as human creations.

The argument runs roughly as follows. The purpose of copyright is to incentivise the production and dissemination of expressive works for public benefit. AI systems now produce text, images, and music that are indistinguishable in quality from human output and that consumers find equally valuable. If we deny copyright protection to such works, we discourage investment in AI tools and deprive the public of the resulting creative output. The category 'human author', the argument continues, is a historical accident — copyright law has always evolved with technology, from photography to software, and there is no principled reason to draw a fresh line at machine output. The economic incentive can be channelled to the firm that commissioned the AI or to the engineers who designed it.

Critics point out that copyright was never simply an incentive scheme. It rests on a moral idea — that the author has a personality-based stake in her work. An AI has no personality and no stake; granting it (or its corporate owner) the same legal recognition as a human author confuses two very different sources of value. There is also a distributive concern: if AI-generated works flood the market with cheap content that enjoys full copyright protection, human creators may be displaced from the very ecosystem the law was designed to nurture.

The deeper question is whether the law should evolve to track every technological capability, or whether it should retain certain principled commitments — like the linkage between authorship and a human creative act — even at the cost of leaving some new outputs unprotected.

11. Which of the following best identifies the conclusion of the pro-copyright argument as presented in the passage?

- A. Human creators will be displaced from the cultural ecosystem unless copyright is reformed.
- B. AI-generated works should receive copyright on the same terms as human-authored works.
- C. Technological evolution always justifies a corresponding extension of legal protection.
- D. Copyright law in India is currently inadequate to handle modern technology.

12. Which assumption is most necessary for the pro-copyright argument to succeed?

- A. AI-generated works are technically indistinguishable from human-authored works in any meaningful sense applicable here.
- B. AI tools are widely accessible and used by ordinary creators worldwide on the standard view of the matter.
- C. The principal function of copyright is to incentivise the creation and dissemination of expressive output.
- D. Indian and U.S. copyright law track each other closely in their treatment of authorship.

13. Which of the following, if true, would MOST WEAKEN the pro-copyright argument?

- A. Consumers find AI-generated images aesthetically pleasing in blind comparison tests across the range of plausible interpretations.
- B. Empirical studies show that AI firms invest in language models regardless of whether output is copyrighted.
- C. Several U.S. courts have begun granting limited copyright to AI-assisted human works.
- D. AI systems can generate output more quickly and cheaply than human creators in most genres.

14. Which of the following, if true, would MOST STRENGTHEN the critics' moral-rights argument?

- A. AI-generated works have, on aggregate, produced higher consumer welfare than human-authored works.
- B. Corporate authorship doctrines already exist for works made for hire under Indian law.
- C. Copyright registrations in India have grown sharply since the spread of generative AI tools.
- D. Surveys show that audiences value works more when they know a specific human created them.

15. The author's closing question is best characterised as:

- A. An invitation to consider whether legal evolution should always track technological capability.
- B. A concession that the critics have effectively settled the debate.
- C. A rhetorical question whose answer the author considers obvious when read in light of subsequent authority.
- D. A signal that the law has already chosen one side of the debate.

PASSAGE 4 (CR) – SHOULD INDIA REPLACE INCOME TAX WITH A CONSUMPTION TAX? (PUBLIC FINANCE / TAX POLICY) Q16–20

READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q16–20.

A persistent proposal in Indian fiscal debate is the abolition of personal income tax and its replacement with an expanded consumption tax — typically described as a higher rate of Goods and Services Tax, levied at the point of purchase. The proposal has surface appeal. India's income-tax base is famously thin: fewer than three per cent of citizens pay direct tax on their earnings. Consumption, by contrast, is universal. Replacing one tax with the other, the argument runs, would broaden the tax base, eliminate the administrative cost of personal income-tax filing, reward saving, and free the country from a tangle of exemptions, deductions, and disputes that produce litigation but little revenue.

The argument continues. A consumption tax is harder to evade than an income tax because it is collected at the point of sale rather than self-assessed. The compliance burden on individuals would vanish overnight. Critics of the present system, who argue that income tax punishes productive effort and rewards inheritance, would also be satisfied: a consumption tax levies its bill only when one spends, not when one earns. Some advocates point to the example of a few small economies — the Gulf states — that operate without an income tax. Detractors raise three objections. First, consumption taxes are regressive: the poor spend a higher fraction of their incomes than the rich, and therefore bear a disproportionate share of any consumption tax. Second, the comparison with the Gulf states is misleading, because those economies are sustained largely by hydrocarbon revenues that India cannot replicate. Third, eliminating income tax would forfeit a powerful instrument of progressive redistribution at a moment when wealth inequality in India is at a historic high. The state would lose its principal lever for shaping pre-tax inequality through marginal-rate design.

The deeper disagreement is therefore not about administrative efficiency but about what a tax system is for. If the goal is solely to raise revenue cheaply, the consumption-tax case has weight. If the goal includes shaping the distribution of economic outcomes, the case is much weaker.

16. Which of the following best identifies the central conclusion of the consumption-tax-replacement argument?

- A. Consumption taxes are administratively simpler than income taxes worldwide.
- B. Gulf-state fiscal systems are unsuitable models for the Indian economy in the usual run of comparable situations.
- C. India should abolish personal income tax and replace it with an expanded consumption tax.
- D. India's income tax base is narrower than that of comparable developing economies.

17. Which of the following is an unstated assumption necessary to the pro-replacement argument?

- A. All consumption taxes are levied at the same flat rate regardless of the type of good.
- B. Indian consumers spend more on average than consumers in comparable economies given the established analytical conventions.
- C. Income-tax filing is the most burdensome administrative interaction citizens have with the State.
- D. Tax policy is concerned primarily with revenue collection rather than with the distribution of incomes.

18. Which of the following, if true, would MOST WEAKEN the pro-replacement argument?

- A. Marginal-rate income tax remains the single most effective tool for compressing post-tax inequality in middle-income economies.
- B. Personal-income-tax revenue in India has grown faster than nominal GDP for five consecutive years.
- C. Hydrocarbon revenues account for over sixty per cent of Gulf-state public budgets in any meaningful sense applicable here.
- D. India's consumption-tax compliance rate exceeds that of every G20 economy except Singapore as discussed in the relevant section of the passage.

19. The critics' first objection (consumption taxes are regressive) is best characterised as:

- A. An attack on the empirical accuracy of the consumption-tax base claim.
- B. A normative challenge to the distributive consequences of the proposed shift.
- C. A procedural complaint about how the proposal has been advanced politically.
- D. An appeal to international comparisons unsupported by data as discussed in the relevant section of the passage.

20. The author's closing observation that 'the deeper disagreement is therefore not about administrative efficiency but about what a tax system is for' functions in the argument as:

- A. An empirical claim about how economists actually decide between competing tax systems.
- B. A dismissal of the critics' three objections as irrelevant to the central question.
- C. A reframing that locates the disagreement at the level of fundamental aims rather than technical design.
- D. A concession that the pro-replacement side has won on administrative grounds under the framework that is conventionally applied.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21–30 · 10 Marks

Standalone questions on current affairs, static GK, vocabulary in context and idiom usage. No passage required.

21. The Right to Information Act in India was enacted in which year?

- A. 2013 on a fair reading of the materials provided above
- B. 2005
- C. 2009
- D. 2002

22. Choose the word most opposite in meaning to 'EPHEMERAL':

- A. Permanent
- B. Transient
- C. Sudden regardless of the precise factual matrix involved
- D. Fragile

23. Which Indian city hosted the G20 Leaders' Summit in 2023?

- A. Bengaluru
- B. Hyderabad
- C. New Delhi
- D. Mumbai as a matter of settled doctrinal exposition

24. The idiom 'to bell the cat' means:

- A. To complain about a small problem at length
- B. To trap an opponent through deception
- C. To complete a dangerous task quietly in the orthodox treatment of the subject
- D. To take the lead in a risky undertaking on behalf of others

25. Under the Constitution of India, the power to dissolve the Lok Sabha vests in:

- A. A joint session of Parliament
- B. The Speaker of the Lok Sabha
- C. The Prime Minister without reference to any external or extraneous considerations
- D. The President, on the advice of the Council of Ministers

26. Which of the following authored 'The Argumentative Indian'?

- A. Arundhati Roy
- B. Amartya Sen
- C. Ramachandra Guha
- D. Shashi Tharoor

27. The headquarters of the International Court of Justice is located in:

- A. The Hague
- B. New York
- C. Geneva as the question is ordinarily understood
- D. Vienna

28. The landmark case that established the Basic Structure Doctrine in Indian constitutional law is:

- A. Minerva Mills v. Union of India
- B. Golak Nath v. State of Punjab on the standard view of the matter
- C. Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala
- D. S.R. Bommai v. Union of India

29. Choose the synonym of 'PROLIFIC':

- A. Wasteful
- B. Sparse across the range of plausible interpretations
- C. Hidden
- D. Productive

30. Which Article of the Indian Constitution abolishes titles, save for military or academic distinctions?

- A. Article 14
- B. Article 18
- C. Article 17
- D. Article 21 when read in light of subsequent authority