

ANSWER KEY – 12 MAY 2026

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
A	A	B	B	D	A	D	C	A	B
Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
B	B	D	A	A	B	B	C	C	C
Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25	Q26	Q27	Q28	Q29	Q30
C	A	C	C	A	B	D	D	D	D
Q31									
C									

RC PASSAGES

Q1 A

The phrase 'stretched this supervisory mechanism' uses 'stretched' in its figurative sense of 'strained or extended to the point of difficulty', not in the literal sense of physical reach. The supervisory mechanism is the Treaty's implicit assumption that states would license and answer for their nationals' activities; when private operators proliferate, the mechanism is asked to do more work than it was designed for, producing strain. Option (B) is too literal — physical reach is not what the Treaty governs. Option (A) correctly captures the figurative meaning and matches the surrounding context, which emphasises that legal architecture 'has not kept pace' and produces 'acute' questions. Option (D) inverts the meaning — the strain is involuntary, not designed. Option (C) introduces a substitution (state → multilateral) that the passage does not assert. The verb 'stretched' in legal-policy writing almost always denotes strain rather than reach.

Q2 A

The most reasonable inference is that private commercial space activity has outpaced the multilateral legal regime. The passage states explicitly that 'the legal architecture has not kept pace' and that 'proliferation of private actors has stretched this supervisory mechanism'. Option (D) is wrong because the passage never says the 1967 Treaty has been formally repealed; the issue is that it remains in force but is increasingly strained. Option (C) is wrong — the passage mentions Indian startups as part of a growing cluster but does not say India leads in launches; SpaceX is cited as the dominant private launcher. Option (B) is wrong — no party has claimed sovereignty over the lunar south pole; that would itself violate the Treaty. The inference of regulatory lag behind commercial growth is the central animating claim of the passage and is supported by multiple sentences across paragraphs two through five.

Q3 B

Option (B) is the most accurate summary of the central argument. The passage walks through (i) the historical state-dominance of space activity, (ii) the rapid rise of private operators since c. 2010, (iii) the resulting strain on the multilateral legal regime, and (iv) the unresolved question of whether to retrofit the existing Treaty or replace it. This four-step structure produces a balanced central claim: private activity has expanded, the regime is strained, and the path forward is contested. Option (C) overstates the legal position — the prohibition has not been rendered void; the silence on private appropriation is what is contested. Option (D) recommends a ban that the passage neither argues for nor against. Option (A) demands withdrawal of US/Luxembourg legislation — the passage describes the dispute but does not pick a side on whether the laws should be withdrawn. The author maintains analytical neutrality on the policy outcome.

Q4 B

The author cites the three states' legislation to illustrate a specific phenomenon: that domestic law has begun to act where multilateral law has remained silent. The passage notes critics' view ('such laws unilaterally rewrite the Treaty regime') and defenders' view ('the Treaty's silence creates a permission'), without taking a side. The purpose is illustrative — to evidence the strain on the multilateral regime — not normative. Option (B) correctly captures this purpose. Option (A) attributes a recommendation to the author that the author does not make. Option (D) introduces a 'collusion' claim that the passage explicitly does not make — each state's legislation is independently dated (2015, 2017, 2019) and presented without conspiratorial framing. Option (C) overstates the author's position; the author records the criticism but does not personally endorse a constitutional challenge. The fourth paragraph is descriptive, not prescriptive.

Q5 D

Option (D) would most weaken the author's case. The author's central claim is that the existing regime is under strain because of growing commercial activity; if independent scholarship demonstrates that the regime has in fact successfully prevented major commercial disputes for fifteen years, then the strain claim is empirically undermined. The mechanism the author cites (supervisory failure) would be shown to have functioned despite the growth in private actors. Option (B) is irrelevant — the Soviet programme's ambition is a backward-looking observation that does not affect the strain claim. Option (A) is wrong because the helium-3 mining example is cited as illustrative, not load-bearing; removing it does not affect the broader argument about resource extraction. Option (C) is wrong — a National Space Policy in India is consistent with the author's claim that domestic legislation is filling multilateral gaps. The strongest weakener is the one that directly challenges the empirical claim (regime is under strain) rather than auxiliary illustrations.

Q6 A

The phrase 'artifact of nostalgia masquerading as pedagogy' compresses two ideas: (i) nostalgia — a sentimental attachment to past practices — drives retention, and (ii) the retention is defended publicly as if it were educationally justified, when in fact the educational justification is post-hoc. The phrase is critical of the retention case. Option (C) inverts the meaning entirely. Option (A) correctly captures both halves of the phrase — sentimental retention plus pedagogical pretext. Option (D) is too literal — the passage is not arguing for museum preservation. Option (B) misreads 'masquerading' as referring to concealed motive rather than to a false claim of pedagogical justification. The verb 'masquerade' here describes the public framing of cursive as a teaching tool when the real reason for retention is sentimental — a sharp piece of rhetorical criticism.

Q7 D

The most reasonable inference is that the author treats the empirical question as unresolved. The closing paragraph explicitly states: 'the unresolved question is whether the cognitive benefits attributed to cursive are properties of cursive itself or properties of any sustained, deliberate motor activity ... Until that question is settled, education policy in this area will continue to be shaped less by evidence than by aesthetic and generational preference.' This is a direct textual statement that the question is open. Option (A) is wrong — voice-to-text dictation is mentioned alongside typing, not as having replaced it. Option (B) is wrong — the Princeton-UCLA findings are described as 'contested' and 'partial'. Option (C) is wrong — Norwegian RESEARCH is cited, not Norwegian POLICY; the passage does not say Norway has mandated cursive. The textual basis for the unresolved-question inference is explicit in the final paragraph.

Q8 C

Option (C) is the most faithful summary. The passage moves through (i) the descriptive observation that cursive has been removed from many curricula, (ii) the utility case for removal, (iii) the cognitive case for retention, (iv) the counter to that retention case (typing-with-good-pedagogy), and (v) the open empirical question. The central claim is that the policy appears unremarkable on the surface but is more contested than it appears, with the deeper question being whether cognitive benefits are unique to cursive or general to deliberate composition. Option (B) overstates — the author does not recommend reinstating cursive; he simply notes that removal may carry costs. Option (D) reverses the position — the passage does not assert typing's universal superiority. Option (A) is too strong — the author does not say education policy should be made solely on neuroscience grounds, only that aesthetic preference currently fills the evidence vacuum.

Q9 A

The fourth paragraph presents a counter-argument that QUALIFIES rather than rejects the cognitive case. The argument runs: even if handwriting outperforms keyboard use, the relevant comparison is between handwriting and TYPING-WITH-GOOD-PEDAGOGY — and a thoughtfully designed typing curriculum that requires selective summarisation might reproduce the cognitive benefits of handwriting without its time cost. The author neither endorses nor rejects this counter; he presents it as part of the unresolved debate. Option (B) overstates — the cognitive evidence is not 'definitively disproven', only qualified. Option (A) accurately describes the qualifying purpose. Option (D) is wrong — the counter-argument is about pedagogy generally, not about print vs cursive specifically. Option (C) is wrong — the counter-argument does not attack the researchers' credibility; it accepts the findings and reinterprets the comparison group.

Q10 B

The tone is analytical and balanced. The author presents both the utility case (for removal) and the cognitive case (for retention), introduces a thoughtful counter to the retention case, and concludes by flagging an unresolved empirical question. There is no advocacy for one position over another, and the closing observation that policy is being shaped 'less by evidence than by aesthetic and generational preference' is critical of the policy-making process generally, not of either substantive position. Option (C) is wrong — the passage is not polemical; it does not urge reinstatement. Option (A) is wrong — there is no nostalgic mourning; the passage explicitly critiques nostalgia as a basis for retention. Option (B) correctly captures the analytical-and-balanced tone. Option (D) is wrong — the cognitive-science evidence is not dismissed as pseudoscience; it is treated seriously as 'contested' and 'partial'.

CR PASSAGES

Q11 B

Option (B) accurately captures the conclusion. The final paragraph states: 'For these reasons — health, fiscal, reformulation and distributional — the author concludes that India should introduce a graduated sugar tax in the next Union Budget.' This is the explicit conclusion. Option (D) is wrong — although the author cites fiscal pressure on the healthcare system, the conclusion is about introducing a sugar tax, not about reforming the healthcare system. Option (C) inverts the author's view — the author cites the Mexican and UK experiences as evidence that the policy CAN be replicated. Option (A) is too narrow — the author proposes a graduated tax on beverages and packaged foods generally, not a school-meal ban. The conclusion identification question rewards careful reading of the framing 'For these reasons ... the author concludes that' which signals the load-bearing claim.

Q12 B

Option (B) is the critical unstated assumption. The author cites Mexican and UK evidence to project effects in India. This projection rests on the unstated premise that the Indian beverage and packaged-food market is sufficiently similar to those reference markets — in consumer price sensitivity, alternative-product availability, manufacturer responsiveness, and regulatory enforcement — for the same effects to arise. Without this assumption, the cross-country generalisation falls. Option (D) is wrong — the author does not assume voluntary price reductions; the whole point of the tax is to induce reductions via fiscal pressure. Option (C) is too broad — the author does not need to claim diabetes is the only disease worth taxing, only that the sugar tax produces sufficient benefit. Option (A) is wrong — the author is making a single policy proposal, not bundling multiple unrelated measures. Cross-country generalisation always rests on a similarity assumption — that is the textbook unstated premise of comparative-evidence arguments.

Q13 D

Option (D) would most directly weaken the argument. The author's central mechanism is that reducing taxed-product consumption will reduce sugar intake and thereby reduce diabetes. If empirical evidence in similar emerging economies shows that consumption falls in the taxed category but is fully offset by substitution to untaxed informal-sector sweets — with no NET reduction in sugar intake — then the mechanism is broken: the health benefit the author claims would not materialise. Option (C) is irrelevant — voluntary reformulation by some firms is consistent with the author's argument. Option (B) is irrelevant — industry lobbying does not weaken the policy's effectiveness. Option (A) actually undermines the author's premise only weakly — existing GST may dilute additional tax bite, but the author proposes a graduated structure that would impose targeted additional burden on high-sugar products beyond the GST base. The strongest weakener is the substitution evidence in Option (D).

Q14 A

Option (A) most directly strengthens the reformulation claim. The author's third argument is that a graduated tax — higher rates on higher-sugar products — produces stronger reformulation incentives than a flat tax, citing UK experience. A peer-reviewed evaluation finding that reformulation accounted for over 70% of the UK policy's sugar-intake reduction, exceeding the direct price-response effect, directly supports this mechanism: if reformulation drove most of the benefit in the UK, then a graduated tax in India can plausibly do the same. Option (B) is irrelevant to the reformulation mechanism — disposable income concerns the consumer side, not manufacturers. Option (D) is wrong — Mexico's tax being flat is already implicit in the author's argument; restating it does not strengthen. Option (C) is wrong because sugar production subsidies relate to upstream input costs, not to manufacturer reformulation incentives. The targeted strengthener is the one matching the mechanism the author proposes.

Q15 A

Option (A) most fairly identifies the distributional flaw. The author argues that lower-income households would receive disproportionate health benefits, offsetting the regressive tax burden. The flaw is that this assumes the households whose consumption falls would otherwise have developed diabetes — but lower-income consumption may fall not because of health awareness but simply because the tax makes the product unaffordable, while diabetes risk remains high for the same household due to OTHER lifestyle factors (low physical activity, refined-staple-heavy diet, occupational stress). The result is tax burden without proportional health benefit, breaking the 'effectively progressive' claim. Option (D) is irrelevant — Argentinian data is not necessary. Option (C) misreads the argument — the author DOES consider tax revenue but addresses it in a different context. Option (B) is wrong — the author does not assume identical consumption across income groups; the regressivity concern is precisely premised on lower-income consumption being disproportionate.

Q16 B

Option (B) accurately captures the conclusion. The commentary's final paragraph states explicitly: 'India should statutorily ban the publication of opinion polls in the four weeks preceding a general election.' Option (D) overstates — the author proposes a specific statutory ban, not 'broader regulatory powers' for the Election Commission generally; granting the ECI authority to impose the ban is a means, not the end. Option (C) is wrong — the author does not claim past elections were illegitimate; the inaccuracy argument is one of four reasons for the ban, not a retroactive challenge to past outcomes. Option (A) overstates the scope — the ban is on PRE-election polls in the four-week window only, not on opinion polling generally or on post-election polls. The conclusion is narrow and specific, and reading the 'For these reasons ... concludes' framing carefully isolates it.

Q17 B

Option (B) is the critical unstated assumption. The author argues that polls influence voter behaviour and therefore should be banned in the run-up to elections. This argument requires the further assumption that the behavioural influence is SUFFICIENTLY STRONG AND ONE-DIRECTIONAL to produce a meaningfully different electoral outcome if suppressed. If bandwagon and underdog effects roughly cancel out at the aggregate level (as some psephological research suggests), then suppressing polls would not change the electoral outcome and the rationale for a ban evaporates. Option (A) is irrelevant to the argument's logic. Option (C) is irrelevant — the ECI's popular support does not affect whether the ban is justified on substantive grounds. Option (D) misstates the author's position — the author does not require that election outcomes match polls; in fact the author cites poll inaccuracy as a problem. The targeted assumption is about the magnitude and directionality of the behavioural effect.

Q18 C

Option (C) would most weaken the commentary's argument. If empirical research across many democracies shows that bandwagon and underdog effects are roughly equal and cancel out at the aggregate level, then the second of the author's four reasons — that polls shape rather than measure voter behaviour — fails: the SHAPING is empirically negligible at the level of final vote shares. This directly undermines the central behavioural premise of the argument. Option (A) is irrelevant — France's blackout period being shorter than four weeks does not affect whether four weeks is appropriate for India. Option (B) is too narrow — that some voters do not read newspapers is consistent with the author's argument (since other voters do). Option (D) is wrong in direction — if 2024 polls underestimated the BJP that supports the author's inaccuracy argument, not weakens it. The targeted weakener attacks the behavioural-influence premise directly.

Q19 C

Option (C) most directly strengthens the inaccuracy claim. The author's third argument is that Indian pre-election polls show a credibility deficit, citing 2014, 2019, 2021 and 2024 outcomes. An independent meta-analysis showing that Indian polls in the 2019-2024 cycle had an average absolute prediction error of 8 percentage points in seat-share — more than three times the average error in mature democracies, and consistently in the same direction — provides direct, quantified, peer-reviewed support for the inaccuracy claim. The 'consistently in the same direction' detail rules out random noise as the explanation, strengthening the case that polls are systematically biased. Option (D) is irrelevant — open methodology does not contradict inaccuracy. Option (B) is irrelevant to poll inaccuracy. Option (A) is irrelevant — ECI provisional counts are post-poll counts, not pre-election polls. The strongest strengthener provides direct quantitative evidence for the very claim being made.

Q20 C

Option (C) most fairly identifies the constitutional flaw. The author argues that the ban is constitutionally permissible because the Supreme Court has upheld reasonable restrictions on speech under Article 19(2) in the interest of free and fair elections. This argument elides a critical further step: in the Indian constitutional doctrine of proportionality (most clearly articulated in *Modern Dental College, Puttaswamy* and the recent *Anuradha Bhasin v. Union of India 2020*), a restriction must be (i) prescribed by law, (ii) for a legitimate aim under Article 19(2), (iii) necessary, AND (iv) proportionate — i.e., the LEAST RESTRICTIVE means of achieving the aim. The author fails to engage with whether a less restrictive alternative (such as a 48-hour blackout combined with mandatory methodology disclosure) could achieve the same end, which is the necessary additional step in modern constitutional analysis. Option (D) is irrelevant — Supreme Court precedent is the higher authority. Option (A) misstates Article 19(2). Option (B) is rhetorical, not a flaw.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21 C

Article 3 empowers Parliament to form new States by separation of territory from existing States or by uniting two or more States or parts of States, and to alter the boundaries or name of any State. Such alterations require the President's recommendation and consultation with the legislatures of the affected States. Article 1 declares India a Union of States and lists the States. Article 2 enables Parliament to admit new States (e.g., Sikkim in 1975) or establish new States. Article 4 provides that laws made under Articles 2 and 3 are not deemed constitutional amendments under Article 368, allowing them to be enacted by ordinary simple majority. The 2014 reorganisation of Andhra Pradesh into Andhra Pradesh and Telangana was effected under Article 3.

Q22 A

The PM Vishwakarma scheme, launched by the Government of India on 17 September 2023, provides financial and skill support to traditional artisans and craftspeople in eighteen specified trades — including carpenters, blacksmiths, goldsmiths, potters, sculptors, weavers, cobblers, fishing-net makers, masons and barbers. Beneficiaries receive a recognition certificate, skill training stipends, collateral-free loans at concessional interest rates (initial tranche of ₹1 lakh, subsequent tranches of ₹2 lakh), digital-transaction incentives and marketing support. Option (C) is wrong — agricultural schemes are PM-KISAN and PM Fasal Bima Yojana. Option (D) is too narrow — the scheme covers artisans across rural and urban India. Option (B) is wrong — researchers are supported by separate science-and-technology ministry schemes.

Q23 C

'Gregarious' means fond of company, sociable, naturally inclined to seek the society of others. Its closest antonym among the options is 'reclusive', which means withdrawing from the society of others and preferring solitude. Option (A) 'sociable' is a near-synonym of gregarious, not an antonym. Option (C) 'reclusive' is the correct antonym. Option (D) 'garrulous' means excessively talkative, often pejoratively — it is related to but not synonymous with gregarious, and certainly not its opposite. Option (B) 'convivial' means cheerfully sociable, another near-synonym. The trap is to choose 'garrulous' (which has a similar texture to gregarious) instead of recognising that 'reclusive' is the direct opposite of being naturally drawn to others' company. CLAT vocabulary questions reward precise sense-discrimination.

Q24 C

The idiom 'a wild goose chase' originated in the 16th century (with a different meaning in horsemanship) but was firmly established by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* to mean a futile pursuit, often involving much effort, with very little or no chance of success. It typically connotes either chasing a phantom or chasing something that constantly shifts beyond reach. Option (D) inverts the meaning — wild goose chases are characterised by failure, not success. Option (C) is correct. Option (B) is unrelated — the idiom has no financial connotation. Option (A) takes 'chase' too literally — the idiom is not about walking but about pursuing an unattainable objective. The idiom is often used in legal and detective contexts to describe a misleading line of investigation.

Q25 A

Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala (1973) is the landmark Supreme Court decision that authoritatively established the doctrine of 'basic structure' — the principle that Parliament's amending power under Article 368 cannot extend to altering, damaging or destroying the essential features of the Constitution. Decided by a 7-6 majority of a 13-judge Constitution Bench, it remains the longest-running constitutional case in Indian history. Option (D) A.K. Gopalan (1950) dealt with preventive detention and a narrower view of Article 21. Option (B) Indira Gandhi v. Raj Narain (1975) APPLIED the basic-structure doctrine to strike down parts of the 39th Amendment, but did not establish it. Option (C) Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan (1997) dealt with workplace sexual harassment guidelines, not basic structure. Kesavananda Bharati remains the foundational case.

Q26 B

The Jnanpith Award is conferred by the Bharatiya Jnanpith Trust, a literary and cultural research organisation founded in 1944 by Sahu Shanti Prasad Jain and Rama Jain, on behalf of the Sahu Jain family. The award was instituted in 1961 and has been given annually since 1965 to authors writing in any of the 22 scheduled languages of India for outstanding literary contribution. Option (D) the Sahitya Akademi is a different, government-funded institution that confers the Sahitya Akademi Award, a separate prestigious literary honour. Option (C) the President of India confers civilian honours (Padma awards) but not the Jnanpith. Option (A) the Ministry of Culture does not directly confer the Jnanpith. The 2023 award went to Sanskrit scholar Jagadguru Rambhadracharya and Urdu poet Gulzar.

Q27 D

At the 2024 Paris Olympics, India won 6 medals — 1 silver and 5 bronze — finishing 71st in the medal tally. The silver medal went to Neeraj Chopra in javelin throw (his second consecutive Olympic medal after gold in Tokyo 2020). The 5 bronze medals came from Manu Bhaker (10m air pistol), Manu Bhaker and Sarabjot Singh (10m air pistol mixed team — making Manu Bhaker the first Indian woman to win two Olympic medals at a single Games), Swapnil Kusale (50m rifle 3 positions), the Indian men's hockey team, and Aman Sehrawat (freestyle wrestling 57 kg). Option (D) is correct. Option (B) overstates silver and underestimates bronze. Option (C) is wrong on both counts. Option (A) is wrong — India did not win gold at Paris 2024.

Q28 D

'Ubiquitous' means existing or appearing everywhere at the same time; widespread and omnipresent. The closest synonym among the options is 'omnipresent', which means present everywhere. Option (C) 'rare' is the opposite. Option (D) 'omnipresent' is the correct synonym. Option (A) 'ancient' refers to age, not pervasiveness. Option (B) 'conspicuous' means easily seen or noticeable, which is related to visibility but does not capture the sense of being everywhere. The trap is to confuse 'ubiquitous' (everywhere) with 'conspicuous' (noticeable in one place) — a candidate must focus on the everywhere-ness rather than the visibility. Common CLAT example sentences: 'Smartphones have become ubiquitous in urban India'.

Q29 D

'Abstruse' means difficult to understand, obscure, recondite — an explanation can be abstruse if it relies on unfamiliar concepts or convoluted reasoning. An abstruse explanation would leave students more confused than enlightened, perfectly fitting the blank. Option (D) is correct. Option (C) 'lucid' means clear and easily understood — the opposite of what the sentence requires. Option (A) 'pellucid' is a near-synonym of lucid (transparently clear), also opposite to the required sense. Option (B) 'cogent' means clear, logical and convincing — again the opposite. The sentence requires a word that captures unintentional or stylistic OBSCURITY, and 'abstruse' is the only option that does. Vocabulary-in-context items reward candidates who eliminate near-synonyms of the wrong sense first.

Q30 D

Article 148 of the Indian Constitution provides for the appointment, conditions of service, duties and powers of the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India. The CAG is appointed by the President of India by warrant under his hand and seal, holds office for a term of six years or until the age of 65, whichever is earlier, and can be removed only in the manner of a Supreme Court judge. Option (C) Article 124 deals with the appointment of Supreme Court judges. Option (D) Article 148 is correct. Option (A) Article 165 deals with the appointment of the Advocate-General of a State. Option (B) Article 280 deals with the Finance Commission. The CAG audits all receipts and expenditure of the Union and State governments and reports to the President / Governors respectively.

Q31 C

'Prolix' means tediously lengthy, wordy, using more words than necessary in writing or speech. Its direct antonym is 'succinct', meaning briefly and clearly expressed. Option (D) 'verbose' is a near-synonym of prolix, not an antonym. Option (B) 'tedious' is related to prolix (a prolix passage is often tedious) but is not its direct opposite — it shares the negative connotation. Option (C) 'succinct' is the correct antonym, denoting concise economy of expression. Option (A) 'tangential' means deviating from the main point but does not capture the quality of conciseness. The trap is confusing 'tedious' (a CONSEQUENCE of being prolix) with the antonym of prolix; the right framing is to ask which option describes the opposite QUALITY, not the opposite EFFECT.