

**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.

Free daily practice — [clatgurukul.com/daily](http://clatgurukul.com/daily) · Pass this sheet to a friend.

**PASSAGE 1 (RC) — THE LONELINESS EPIDEMIC (SOCIETY / PUBLIC HEALTH)**

**Q1-5**

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

In 2023, the Surgeon General of the United States issued an advisory declaring loneliness a public-health epidemic, comparing its mortality risk to smoking up to fifteen cigarettes a day. The World Health Organization followed by establishing a Commission on Social Connection, signalling that what was once dismissed as a private sorrow is now treated as a measurable threat to population health, linked in longitudinal studies to cardiovascular disease, dementia, depression and premature death.

Loneliness, researchers stress, is not the same as solitude. Solitude is chosen and often restorative; loneliness is the subjective distress that arises when the relationships a person has fall short of the relationships she desires. A commuter pressed into a crowded metro carriage can be profoundly lonely; a writer alone in a mountain cabin may not be. This distinction matters because policy aimed merely at putting people in physical proximity to one another misses the point entirely.

India's experience complicates the familiar Western narrative. Rapid urbanisation has pulled millions of young migrants into cities where they live among strangers, while their parents age in emptying villages. The joint family, once an automatic web of connection, is dissolving faster than civic substitutes — clubs, libraries, neighbourhood associations — can form to replace it. Meanwhile, the digital paradox deepens: Indians spend among the world's highest hours on social media, yet surveys repeatedly find that the heaviest users report more isolation, not less.

Governments have begun to respond. The United Kingdom and Japan have appointed ministers for loneliness, and British general practitioners now offer 'social prescriptions', referring patients to gardening groups, choirs or volunteering instead of, or alongside, medication. Critics counter that such schemes medicalise what is essentially a social failure, allowing states to dodge harder questions about housing density, punishing work hours and the steady disappearance of free public space.

The wiser course is to treat connection as public infrastructure. Parks, libraries, affordable transit and community halls do for relationships what roads do for commerce: they make the desirable easy. A society that builds only for efficiency should not be surprised when its citizens report that they have no one to call.

**1. As used in the passage, 'social prescriptions' most nearly refers to:**

- A. medicines prescribed by doctors to treat the physical symptoms caused by chronic loneliness in elderly patients
- B. referrals by doctors to community activities such as choirs or volunteering, offered instead of or alongside medication
- C. binding government orders requiring all citizens to participate regularly in neighbourhood associations and local community clubs in their area
- D. advice issued by social media platforms encouraging their users to limit the hours they spend on screens daily

**2. Which of the following best captures the central argument of the passage?**

- A. Loneliness is essentially a private emotional state about which governments and public policy can realistically do very little in practice
- B. Social media use is the single most important cause of the global loneliness epidemic today
- C. Western policy models for tackling loneliness can be transplanted to India without any modification
- D. Loneliness is a structural public-health problem demanding collective infrastructure, not merely individual treatment

**3. It can be inferred that the author would most likely agree with which of the following statements?**

- A. Policies that address loneliness solely through individual therapy will ultimately prove inadequate
- B. Solitude chosen freely is just as damaging to human health as involuntary loneliness
- C. Appointing a dedicated minister for loneliness has already fully and permanently solved the loneliness problem in the United Kingdom
- D. Crowded cities, simply by putting people in close proximity, largely prevent loneliness

**4. The author's tone in the passage is best described as:**

- A. bitterly sarcastic about the persistent and wilful inaction of governments all around the world
- B. detached and purely statistical, avoiding any judgement or recommendation
- C. concerned yet constructive, moving from diagnosis towards a concrete proposal
- D. nostalgic and sentimental about the lost era of the Indian joint family

**5. Which finding, if true, would most weaken the author's final proposal?**

- A. Surveys show that lonely individuals tend to visit doctors considerably more often than well-connected individuals
- B. Cities that invested heavily in parks, libraries and transit show no lower loneliness scores than comparable cities, even after controlling for income
- C. Membership of choirs and gardening clubs has risen steadily in Britain since social prescriptions were first introduced
- D. Elderly residents of Indian villages consistently report somewhat lower levels of loneliness than young migrants who have recently moved to large metropolitan cities

**PASSAGE 2 (RC) — SPACE DEBRIS AND THE ORBITAL COMMONS (SCIENCE / LAW)**

**Q6-10**

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

More than a hundred million fragments of human-made debris now circle the Earth, ranging from defunct satellites the size of buses to flecks of paint travelling at twenty-eight thousand kilometres per hour. At such velocities, even a one-centimetre bolt carries the destructive energy of a hand grenade. In 1978, the NASA scientist Donald Kessler warned that collisions could cascade: each impact generating fragments that cause further impacts, until entire orbital bands become unusable for generations — a scenario now known as the Kessler syndrome.

The risk has sharpened with the rise of mega-constellations, as tens of thousands of small satellites crowd into low Earth orbit to deliver broadband internet. The legal architecture, however, dates from another era. The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 makes states internationally responsible for national space activities, and the 1972 Liability Convention imposes fault-based liability for damage caused in orbit. But proving fault — the attribution of a specific fragment to a specific launch made decades earlier — is close to impossible in practice, and no claim for an in-orbit collision has ever succeeded under the Convention.

Orbits are thus a textbook commons: no one owns them, everyone profits from using them, and the costs of pollution fall on all users collectively. No binding international rule requires an operator to remove a dead satellite, and the voluntary guideline that spacecraft should deorbit within twenty-five years of mission end is honoured unevenly at best.

Proposals abound. Engineers have demonstrated removal craft equipped with nets, harpoons and robotic arms. Economists suggest orbital-use fees, or performance bonds refundable when an operator deorbits responsibly. Yet every remediation technology is dual-use — a craft that can grapple a dead satellite can equally disable a live military one — so states view one another's clean-up missions with deep suspicion.

Voluntary restraint has never kept terrestrial commons clean, and there is little reason to expect orbit to be different. What is needed is a combination of market incentives that make debris costly to create and a modernised treaty that makes removal a duty rather than a gesture. The window for acting before cascade dynamics take hold is narrow, and it is closing.

**6. The central concern of the passage is that:**

- A. mega-constellations have made satellite broadband internet services prohibitively unaffordable for most developing countries
- B. NASA has consistently failed to fund Donald Kessler's collision research at adequate levels
- C. orbital space is an unmanaged commons whose pollution may soon become self-perpetuating and irreversible
- D. debris-removal technology is fundamentally impossible to build with current engineering knowledge

**7. In the passage, 'attribution' most nearly means:**

- A. tracing a particular fragment of debris back to the launch or operator responsible for creating it
- B. assigning proper literary credit for coining the widely used term Kessler syndrome
- C. the formal transfer of a satellite's ownership from one state to another while in orbit
- D. calculating the precise monetary value of a functioning satellite destroyed in an in-orbit collision with another object

**8. The author implies that states are reluctant to welcome foreign debris-removal missions because:**

- A. removal craft are far too expensive for any single state to design and fund alone
- B. the Liability Convention expressly prohibits touching another state's registered space objects
- C. removal missions would lower the fees that states can charge operators for orbital slots
- D. a craft able to capture a dead satellite could equally disable a functioning military one

**9. The author's attitude towards the voluntary twenty-five-year deorbit guideline is best described as:**

- A. enthusiastic endorsement of a rule that has already transformed operator behaviour
- B. scepticism about its sufficiency, given that compliance is uneven and non-binding
- C. complete indifference, since the guideline is irrelevant to the debris problem
- D. confidence that compliance will soon become universal without any treaty change

**10. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the author's case for orbital-use fees?**

- A. After a fee on plastic bags was introduced in several countries, bag consumption fell by over eighty per cent within two years
- B. Most satellite operators are private companies headquartered in a small number of wealthy states
- C. The number of tracked debris fragments in low Earth orbit has remained roughly constant since 2020
- D. Performance bonds are notoriously difficult to price accurately for commercial satellites that have very long operational design lives in orbit

**PASSAGE 3 (CR) — THE CASE FOR BANNING PRIVATE CRYPTOCURRENCY TRADING (ECONOMICS / REGULATION)**

**Q11-15**

**READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q11-15.**

India should prohibit the trading of private cryptocurrencies outright rather than attempt to regulate it. The argument rests on four premises. First, consumer harm is pervasive and irreversible: Indian investors have lost thousands of crores to exchange collapses, rug-pull schemes and phishing scams, and because blockchain transfers cannot be reversed, restitution is practically impossible even when fraud is conclusively proved. Second, private digital currencies corrode monetary sovereignty. If a meaningful share of household savings migrates into assets that the Reserve Bank can neither see nor influence, the transmission of interest-rate policy weakens and the central bank's capacity to manage a financial crisis shrinks. Third, the pseudonymity of crypto makes it the preferred rail for ransomware payments, terror financing and capital flight, burdening enforcement agencies that already struggle to police conventional financial crime. Fourth, whatever legitimate benefits blockchain settlement offers — speed, programmability, low transaction cost — are fully available through the Reserve Bank's own digital rupee, which delivers the technology without the speculation.

Regulation, the half-way house favoured by industry lobbyists, fails on its own terms. A regulator can license exchanges, but it cannot supervise peer-to-peer wallets, offshore platforms or decentralised protocols — and that is exactly where activity will concentrate the moment compliance becomes costly. Half-measures merely lend an official stamp of legitimacy to the asset class while leaving its most dangerous channels untouched.

Critics respond that prohibition drives trading underground. But underground markets are thinner, riskier and reach far fewer households than a legal, heavily advertised, celebrity-endorsed market does. A ban will not eliminate crypto trading entirely, just as prohibition of other harmful products never achieves perfection; it will, however, shrink participation dramatically, strip the industry of its mainstream marketing machinery, and protect the small saver who is least equipped to absorb catastrophic losses. The conclusion follows: the welfare costs of a legal crypto-trading market exceed its benefits, and Parliament should enact a statutory prohibition with criminal penalties for operating or advertising exchanges.

**11. The main conclusion of the argument is that:**

- A. blockchain technology offers no benefits whatsoever that the Indian economy genuinely needs
- B. the Reserve Bank's digital rupee should be made compulsory for all retail payments in India
- C. regulation of cryptocurrency exchanges should be tightened through substantially higher compliance requirements
- D. India should statutorily prohibit private cryptocurrency trading because its welfare costs exceed its benefits

**12. The argument's claim that a ban will 'shrink participation dramatically' depends on which of the following assumptions?**

- A. Criminal penalties of the kind proposed invariably and completely deter every single form of prohibited financial conduct in actual practice
- B. Most current participation is driven by legal, advertised, mainstream channels rather than channels that would survive underground
- C. Ransomware operators will stop demanding cryptocurrency payments once India enacts its ban
- D. The digital rupee will consistently earn higher returns for savers than private cryptocurrencies

**13. Which of the following, if true, most weakens the argument?**

- A. Several crypto exchanges operating in India have recently improved their security audits and begun publishing quarterly proof-of-reserves statements
- B. Some Indian investors have made substantial profits trading cryptocurrency during periods when equity markets delivered poor returns
- C. In countries that imposed bans, trading volumes recovered within two years through offshore and peer-to-peer channels, and fraud complaints rose
- D. Several film and sports celebrities have voluntarily reduced their paid endorsements of cryptocurrency platforms after regulatory warnings

**14. Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the argument?**

- A. In a country that banned exchanges, household crypto losses reported to the police fell sharply within eighteen months
- B. Trading volumes on Indian exchanges have grown every single year since 2020 despite steep increases in transaction taxes
- C. The Reserve Bank's digital rupee pilot has experienced repeated technical outages during peak usage hours in several large cities
- D. Many crypto investors say they would simply hold their existing coins rather than sell them if a ban were announced

**15. The argument's treatment of regulation as a 'half-way house' is most vulnerable to the criticism that it:**

- A. relies on statistics about consumer losses that have not been independently verified by any auditor or government agency
- B. attacks the motives of industry lobbyists rather than engaging with the substance of their regulatory proposals in detail
- C. assumes the Reserve Bank is incapable of effectively supervising any modern financial product or trading platform whatsoever
- D. presents a false choice, ignoring that supervision covering most mainstream channels may still substantially reduce harm

**PASSAGE 4 (CR) — LET THE CAMERAS IN — MANDATORY LIVE-STREAMING OF COURT PROCEEDINGS (LAW / GOVERNANCE)**

**Q16–20**

**READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q16–20.**

In *Swapnil Tripathi v. Supreme Court of India* (2018), the Supreme Court held that the right of access to justice flowing from Article 21 embraces the right of the public to view court proceedings, and that live-streaming of cases of constitutional importance would advance open justice. Since then, Constitution Bench hearings and several High Courts have streamed proceedings on public platforms, drawing audiences in the millions. The experiment should now be made mandatory for all benches of the Supreme Court and the High Courts.

The premises supporting this conclusion are straightforward. First, courts exercise public power in the public's name; in a democracy the default for public power is visibility, with secrecy as a narrow exception requiring justification — never the reverse. Second, second-hand reporting is a poor substitute for direct access: journalists compress hours of nuanced argument into headlines, and litigants' families hundreds of kilometres away learn the fate of their cases through rumour. Third, streaming creates accountability for conduct inside the courtroom itself — sharp practice by counsel, discourtesy from the bench and the chronic culture of adjournments all shrink under observation. Fourth, recorded proceedings are an unmatched teaching resource for law students who may never afford the journey to Delhi.

The standard objections are weaker than they appear. Witness privacy is a genuine concern in trials, but this proposal covers constitutional courts, which decide questions of law and only rarely examine witnesses. Grandstanding by lawyers is possible, but performance incentives already exist in packed courtrooms; cameras change the size of the audience, not its existence. Genuinely sensitive matters — sexual offences, national security, matrimonial disputes — can be carved out by a reasoned order, exactly as in-camera proceedings are ordered today.

A judiciary that speaks only through its written judgments invites misunderstanding of how it actually reasons. Mandatory live-streaming, subject to narrow exceptions recorded in writing, is therefore both constitutionally consonant and institutionally healthy, and the Supreme Court should adopt it without further delay.

**16. The conclusion of the argument is that:**

- A. live-streaming should be made mandatory for all Supreme Court and High Court benches, subject to narrow recorded exceptions
- B. the decision in *Swapnil Tripathi v. Supreme Court of India* should be reconsidered and overruled by a larger Constitution Bench
- C. trial courts across the country should immediately begin examining witnesses on camera in all categories of criminal cases
- D. journalists should be legally prohibited from compressing hours of courtroom argument into brief and misleading headlines

**17. The argument that streaming creates accountability for conduct inside the courtroom assumes that:**

- A. judges and lawyers currently behave improperly in the majority of hearings conducted before constitutional courts
- B. discourteous judges will inevitably face impeachment proceedings in Parliament once their conduct is publicly broadcast
- C. being observed by a wider public audience meaningfully influences the behaviour of judges and lawyers during hearings
- D. lawyers presently perform only for the presiding judges and never for the audience already present in the courtroom

**18. Which of the following, if true, most weakens the argument?**

- A. Several High Courts currently lack the technical bandwidth, the equipment and the trained support staff needed to stream their proceedings in adequate quality during peak hearing hours
- B. Short clips of streamed hearings, edited out of context, have repeatedly gone viral and spread more misinformation about courts than newspaper reporting ever did
- C. Some senior advocates practising before the Supreme Court have publicly supported the proposal for mandatory live-streaming of hearings
- D. Constitution Bench hearings that are already streamed routinely attract audiences running into millions of online viewers

**19. Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the argument?**

- A. The vast majority of litigants across the country now own smartphones capable of streaming live video over mobile networks
- B. Judges sitting in courtrooms that are streamed have been observed to deliver noticeably shorter and more focused judgments
- C. In-camera proceedings have been abolished almost entirely in several comparable common-law countries without any reported harm being caused to witnesses or to litigants
- D. In jurisdictions that adopted comprehensive courtroom streaming, independent surveys recorded a significant rise in public trust in the judiciary

**20. Which of the following arguments is most similar in its reasoning to the author's claim that 'the default for public power is visibility, with secrecy as a narrow exception requiring justification'?**

- A. A company's trade secrets should remain confidential in all circumstances because any disclosure would primarily benefit its competitors
- B. University students should be permitted to choose their own examiners because greater choice reliably improves student satisfaction scores
- C. Government contracts should by default be published in full, and any redaction must be specifically justified by the department concerned
- D. Voting in national elections should be made compulsory for all adults because a healthy democracy depends upon mass participation

**SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**Q21-28 · 8 Marks**

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

**21. The FIFA World Cup 2026 will be jointly hosted by how many countries?**

- A. Two
- B. Three
- C. Four
- D. One

**22. Choose the word closest in meaning to 'ALACRITY':**

- A. Eagerness
- B. Hostility
- C. Slowness
- D. Indifference

**23. Choose the word most nearly OPPOSITE in meaning to 'TACITURN':**

- A. Silent
- B. Morose
- C. Uncommunicative
- D. Garrulous

**24. The idiom 'to bite the bullet' means:**

- A. to speak harshly and rashly without pausing to think of the consequences
- B. to take revenge on an enemy at the first opportunity
- C. to face a painful or difficult situation with courage
- D. to abandon a task midway out of sheer frustration

**25. The doctrine of the 'basic structure' of the Constitution was propounded by the Supreme Court in:**

- A. Golak Nath v. State of Punjab
- B. Kesavananda Bharati v. State of Kerala
- C. Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India
- D. Minerva Mills v. Union of India

**26. Article 21A of the Constitution of India guarantees free and compulsory education to children of which age group?**

- A. 3 to 12 years
- B. 5 to 16 years
- C. 6 to 18 years
- D. 6 to 14 years

**27. Who among the following was one of the first recipients of the Bharat Ratna in 1954?**

- A. Jawaharlal Nehru
- B. B. R. Ambedkar
- C. C. Rajagopalachari
- D. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

**28. Which of the following is NOT a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council?**

- A. United Kingdom
- B. Germany
- C. Russia
- D. China