

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) — WHY LANGUAGES VANISH (LINGUISTICS / CULTURE)

Q1-5

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

Of the roughly seven thousand languages spoken on Earth today, linguists estimate that nearly half may fall silent before the century is out. A language is judged endangered not merely when its speakers grow few, but when the chain of transmission between generations begins to fray — when parents, for reasons of prestige, economy or coercion, cease to pass their mother tongue to their children. The death of a language is rarely a single event; it is a slow attrition, a contraction of the domains in which the tongue is spoken until it survives only in proverbs, lullabies and the memories of the old.

It is tempting to regard this winnowing as the natural and even efficient consequence of globalisation. If a handful of world languages can knit humanity into a single conversation, why mourn the loss of tongues spoken by a few hundred people in a remote valley? The answer the linguist offers is that each language is a distinct architecture of thought. Grammar encodes habits of attention: some languages oblige their speakers to mark, in every verb, whether an event was witnessed or merely reported; others fold direction, evidence or social rank into words that English renders only clumsily, through long paraphrase. When such a language disappears, we lose not a quaint dialect but a way of carving up experience that took millennia to refine.

There is, too, a quieter loss. Much of humanity's knowledge of the natural world — the medicinal use of plants, the navigation of currents, the reading of seasons — is stored not in books but in the vocabularies of small communities. A language is a library that has never been catalogued, and its extinction burns the library before anyone has read its shelves. Critics of the preservation movement object that languages have always died and been born, and that sentiment should not freeze a living thing in place. Yet the present rate of loss is without precedent, driven less by the slow churn of history than by the deliberate marginalisation of minority tongues in schools and markets.

What, then, can be done? Revival is possible but rare, and it depends less on grammarians than on communities deciding that their language is worth the inconvenience of using. Where speakers regain pride, where a tongue is granted a place in classrooms and broadcasts, the chain of transmission can be mended. The task is not to embalm languages as museum pieces, but to make room, in a crowded modern life, for more than one way of speaking the world.

1. As used in the passage, the word 'attrition' most nearly means:

- A. a gradual wearing away or reduction
- B. a sudden and violent collapse
- C. a deliberate act of destruction, according to the passage as written
- D. a revival after long decline

2. Which of the following best captures the central idea of the passage?

- A. Globalisation is a wholly beneficial force because it unites humanity in one shared conversation
- B. Languages spoken by very few people are dialects whose loss carries no real cost to humankind
- C. Language death is a grave and accelerating loss that committed communities can still reverse
- D. Grammarians, rather than ordinary speakers, hold the key to reviving the world's dying languages

3. It can be inferred that the author regards the claim 'languages have always died and been born' as:

- A. entirely false, since no language had ever died before the modern era began
- B. true in itself but inadequate, because the present rate of loss is unprecedented
- C. a decisive argument that justifies leaving endangered languages to their fate
- D. irrelevant, because the author denies that any languages are truly dying today, on a careful reading of the text

4. The author's attitude toward the preservation of endangered languages is best described as:

- A. nostalgic and sentimental, wishing to freeze every language unchanged forever
- B. detached and neutral, declining to take any position on whether loss matters
- C. dismissive and sceptical, doubting that language loss is a real problem at all
- D. concerned and sympathetic, yet realistic about how revival actually happens

5. Which statement, if true, would most WEAKEN the author's argument that losing a language means losing a unique way of thinking?

- A. Speakers of very different languages perform identically on tests of perception and reasoning
- B. Many endangered languages have rich grammatical features absent from major world languages
- C. Communities that revive their languages report a renewed sense of cultural pride and identity, according to the passage as written
- D. Much ecological knowledge is preserved only in the vocabulary of small speech communities

PASSAGE 2 (RC) — ON THE ART OF WALKING (LITERATURE / PHILOSOPHY)

Q6-10

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

There is a kind of thinking that can only be done on foot. The desk encourages a cramped, anxious concentration; the mind, like the body, hunches forward and grips its problem too tightly. But set the same mind in motion along a road, and something loosens. The rhythm of walking — that ancient, unhurried metre of the body — seems to lend itself to the rhythm of thought, so that ideas arrive not by force but by a kind of ambling consent. The philosophers knew this. Aristotle taught while walking; his school took its very name, the Peripatetic, from the colonnade along which he paced. Rousseau confessed that he could meditate only when walking, that the moment he stopped, he ceased to think.

What is it about the act that frees us? Partly it is the mild, undemanding occupation of the body, which leaves the higher faculties at liberty while quieting the restless will. A walker is busy enough not to fidget, yet idle enough to notice. Partly it is the steady supply of the new — a turning lane, a changing sky, the small theatre of the street — which feeds the mind without taxing it. The walker is a spectator who need not pay for his seat, a reader of a book whose pages turn themselves. And partly it is the curious democracy of the pavement, where the eminent and the obscure move at the same deliberate pace, subject alike to weather and distance.

Yet walking has fallen on hard times. The modern city, engineered for the motor car, treats the pedestrian as an obstacle to be funnelled, fenced and hurried across. We have built a world in which to walk is to be slightly suspect, a person evidently too poor or too eccentric to drive. The consequence is not merely physical but mental: a civilisation that has forgotten how to walk has perhaps forgotten how to think slowly, to let a thought ripen rather than demanding it on command.

To recover the walk, then, is to recover something more than exercise. It is to reclaim a tempo of attention that the age of speed has nearly abolished. The walker proposes a modest rebellion: that not everything worth reaching is worth reaching quickly, and that the longest way round is, often enough, the surest way to arrive.

6. The phrase 'a reader of a book whose pages turn themselves' is best understood to mean that the walker:

- A. is too distracted by the street to follow any single train of thought
- B. receives a continuous flow of new sights without effort on his part
- C. must constantly work to keep pace with a rapidly changing environment
- D. prefers reading actual books to observing the life of the street around him

7. The references to Aristotle and Rousseau are included primarily to:

- A. contrast ancient philosophy with the habits of the modern city, on a careful reading of the text
- B. show that great thinkers disagreed about the value of walking
- C. prove that walking was once the only available mode of travel
- D. lend historical support to the claim that walking aids thinking

8. Which of the following best states the author's main argument?

- A. The motor car is a more efficient and therefore superior means of moving through cities
- B. Physical exercise of any kind is necessary for maintaining a sound and healthy intellect, as the passage clearly suggests
- C. Walking fosters a slower, more fruitful mode of thought that modern life has nearly lost
- D. Cities should be redesigned mainly to reduce traffic congestion and commuting time

9. The author's tone in the final paragraph is best described as:

- A. angry and openly accusatory
- B. reflective and gently persuasive
- C. anxious and deeply pessimistic, according to the passage as written
- D. neutral and strictly factual

10. By 'the walker proposes a modest rebellion,' the author suggests that walking:

- A. is an organised political movement against the building of roads, as the author makes reasonably plain
- B. openly defies the law by reclaiming streets meant for vehicles
- C. is a violent reaction against the pace of contemporary commerce
- D. quietly resists the modern assumption that faster is always better

**PASSAGE 3 (CR) — SHOULD JUNK-FOOD ADVERTISING AIMED AT CHILDREN BE BANNED?
(PUBLIC HEALTH / POLICY)**

**Q11-
15**

READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q11-15.

Rates of childhood obesity have climbed steadily for two decades, and with them the incidence of early-onset diabetes and related illness. A growing coalition of paediatricians and public-health officials now argues that governments should ban the advertising of foods high in fat, salt and sugar during programming watched by children. The argument runs as follows. Children below a certain age lack the cognitive maturity to recognise persuasive intent; to them an advertisement is not a sales pitch but information. Studies show that exposure to such advertising measurably increases children's preference for, and consumption of, the advertised products. Since the resulting diet contributes to obesity, and since obesity imposes both suffering on the child and costs on the health system, the state is justified in restricting the advertising that drives it. A ban, the coalition concludes, would reduce childhood obesity.

Opponents reply on several fronts. Some contend that responsibility for a child's diet lies with parents, not advertisers, and that a ban wrongly transfers a parental duty to the state. Others note that obesity is the product of many causes — sedentary lifestyles, school meals, the price of fresh food — so that singling out advertising is unlikely to move the needle. A third group warns of a slippery slope: if the state may ban advertisements for unhealthy food, it may next ban advertisements for anything it deems harmful, eroding commercial speech generally.

The coalition's case, however, rests on a chain of claims that can be examined one link at a time. It assumes that the advertising it targets actually reaches children in sufficient volume to shape their diets; that a ban on televised advertising would not simply be replaced by marketing through other channels, such as social media and product placement; and that the measured increase in preference translates into a lasting change in what children eat, rather than a momentary craving soon forgotten. If any of these assumptions fails, the predicted fall in obesity may not follow, even granting that young children cannot identify persuasive intent. The strength of the proposal, in the end, turns less on the moral premise than on the empirical question of whether a ban would change behaviour at scale.

11. Which of the following best states the main conclusion of the coalition's argument?

- A. A ban on junk-food advertising to children would reduce childhood obesity
- B. Children below a certain age cannot recognise the persuasive intent of advertisements
- C. Obesity imposes both personal suffering and significant costs on the health system
- D. Exposure to advertising increases children's consumption of the advertised products

12. The coalition's argument depends on which of the following assumptions?

- A. Parents bear no responsibility whatever for the dietary choices their young children make, on the reasoning that is offered
- B. Childhood obesity is caused exclusively by the advertising of foods high in fat and sugar
- C. The advertising targeted by the ban reaches children in volume sufficient to shape their diets
- D. Commercial speech enjoys no protection that could limit the state's power to regulate it

13. Which of the following, if true, would most WEAKEN the coalition's argument?

- A. Children who see fewer junk-food advertisements ask their parents for such products less often
- B. Paediatric associations in several countries have formally endorsed the proposed advertising ban
- C. After a televised ban, firms shift the same spending to online channels children use even more
- D. The cost of treating obesity-related illness has risen sharply over the past two decades

14. Which of the following, if true, would most STRENGTHEN the coalition's argument?

- A. In regions that banned such advertising, childhood consumption of junk food fell and stayed lower
- B. Surveys find that most parents say they alone should decide what their children eat each day
- C. Advertising agencies report that food accounts for a small share of all children's advertising, given the premises actually advanced
- D. Some adults also struggle to recognise the persuasive intent behind certain advertisements

15. The reasoning in the third paragraph proceeds chiefly by:

- A. offering statistical proof that a ban has already reduced obesity in practice
- B. attacking the motives of those who oppose the advertising ban as self-interested, as the passage presents the case
- C. appealing to the authority of paediatricians to settle the empirical question
- D. identifying the unstated assumptions on which the conclusion depends and testing each

PASSAGE 4 (CR) — SHOULD THE VOTING AGE BE LOWERED TO SIXTEEN? (POLITY / DEMOCRACY)

Q16–20

READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q16–20.

A proposal to lower the voting age from eighteen to sixteen has gathered support in several democracies. Its advocates advance a confident argument. Decisions taken by today's governments — on climate, on public debt, on education — will fall most heavily on the young, who must live longest with the consequences; it is therefore only fair, they say, that those approaching adulthood have a voice in choosing the governments that bind their futures. Sixteen-year-olds, the advocates add, may already work and pay tax, and a habit of voting formed early tends to persist for life, so enfranchising them would strengthen turnout for a generation. Lowering the voting age, they conclude, would make democracy both fairer and healthier.

The proposal's critics are unpersuaded. They argue that the line at eighteen tracks a broader threshold of legal adulthood — the age at which a person may sign a binding contract, stand trial as an adult, or serve without restriction — and that a coherent legal order should not let one such right drift loose from the others. Some critics press a further claim: that sixteen-year-olds, still largely within the orbit of parents and teachers, are more susceptible to influence and less likely to have formed independent political judgement. To extend the franchise to them, on this view, would be to add not informed citizens but echoes of the adults around them.

Notice, though, what the advocates' argument quietly takes for granted. It assumes that being affected by a decision is, by itself, a sufficient ground for a vote in it — yet very young children and non-citizen residents are also deeply affected by government, and few would extend them the ballot on that basis alone. It assumes, too, that the capacity for independent political judgement arrives reliably at sixteen rather than later, an empirical claim the advocates assert but do not establish. And the appeal to lifelong voting habits, even if true, speaks to the health of democracy, not to the fairness the advocates also claim; a measure can raise turnout without being just. The proposal may yet be sound, but its defenders have not closed the gap between 'affected by' and 'entitled to decide.'

16. Which of the following is the main conclusion advanced by the advocates of lowering the voting age?

- A. Decisions on climate and debt fall most heavily on the young, who live with them longest
- B. Lowering the voting age to sixteen would make democracy both fairer and healthier
- C. Many sixteen-year-olds already work and pay tax on the income that they earn
- D. A habit of voting formed early in life tends to persist over the following decades

17. The third paragraph contends that the advocates' argument relies on an unstated assumption that:

- A. sixteen-year-olds are in every respect the intellectual equals of adult voters
- B. lowering the voting age would necessarily reduce overall voter turnout over time
- C. non-citizen residents should immediately be granted the right to vote in elections, on the argument as it is stated
- D. being affected by a decision is, by itself, enough to ground a right to vote on it

18. Which of the following, if true, would most WEAKEN the advocates' argument?

- A. Several democracies that lowered the voting age saw youth turnout rise at the next election, given the premises actually advanced
- B. Studies find that political judgement typically becomes settled and independent only after age eighteen
- C. Sixteen-year-olds in many countries are legally permitted to undertake paid employment
- D. Older voters are also influenced by family, media and the opinions of their peers

19. The author of the passage, in the third paragraph, is best described as:

- A. fully endorsing the advocates' conclusion as established beyond reasonable doubt
- B. rejecting outright any proposal to alter the existing voting age in any direction, as the passage presents the case
- C. distinguishing fairness from democratic health and noting the advocates conflate them
- D. arguing that turnout is the only proper measure of a healthy modern democracy

20. The critics' argument in the second paragraph relies mainly on the principle that:

- A. the various rights of legal adulthood should move together rather than drift apart
- B. no right should ever be extended to a person below the age of twenty-one years
- C. young people should be barred from paid work until they reach full legal adulthood, on the reasoning that is offered
- D. turnout among the young is irrelevant to the overall quality of a democracy

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

21. Choose the word most nearly **OPPOSITE** in meaning to 'EPHEMERAL'.

- A. Fleeting B. Permanent
 C. Transparent D. Delicate

22. Select the word that best fills the blank: 'Her _____ remarks, though brief, conveyed more than a long speech could.'

- A. verbose B. rambling
 C. pithy D. tedious

23. The idiom 'to bury the hatchet' means to:

- A. hide evidence of a crime
 B. abandon a difficult task
 C. prepare secretly for a fight
 D. make peace and end a quarrel

24. Which Schedule of the Constitution of India contains the languages officially recognised by the Union?

- A. Eighth Schedule B. Seventh Schedule
 C. Sixth Schedule D. Ninth Schedule

25. The 2024 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to Nihon Hidankyo, an organisation associated with:

- A. survivors of atomic bombings (hibakusha)
 B. climate-change activism
 C. press freedom advocacy
 D. famine relief operations in standard usage

26. Choose the correctly spelt word.

- A. Concientious B. Conscienteous
 C. Consciencious D. Conscientious

27. Identify the part of the sentence that contains an error: 'Neither the players nor the coach / were / satisfied with / the result.'

- A. Neither the players nor the coach
 B. were
 C. satisfied with
 D. the result

28. 'A blessing in disguise' refers to:

- A. a gift given in secret
 B. praise that hides an insult
 C. a misfortune that turns out to be beneficial
 D. a disguise worn for protection as conventionally defined

29. Which body in India conducts the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT)?

- A. University Grants Commission in standard usage
 B. National Testing Agency
 C. Consortium of National Law Universities
 D. Bar Council of India

30. Choose the word that is the **SYNONYM** of 'METICULOUS'.

- A. Careless B. Painstaking
 C. Hasty D. Indifferent