

ANSWER KEY — 18 JUNE 2026

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

RC PASSAGES

Q1 A
In context the passage speaks of 'the respite of cooler darkness' on which the body depends 'to recover'. 'Respite' denotes a temporary period of relief or rest from something difficult — here, relief from daytime heat. It does not mean a sudden increase (the opposite of relief), nor a permanent solution (respite is by nature temporary), nor a unit of measurement. Hence the closest meaning is 'a period of relief or rest'. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q2 B
The passage explains the causes of the urban heat island, stresses that its burden falls unequally on the poor and vulnerable, and argues that simple measures — trees, pale roofs, parks and water — can lower city temperatures. Option (B) captures all three threads: human-made cause, social inequality, and remedy. Option (A) overreaches, confusing a local effect with global warming and ignoring multiple causes. Option (C) contradicts the passage, which praises trees over air-conditioners. Option (D) inverts the text, which presents traditional settlements as cooler, not warmer. Hence option (B) is the central idea. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q3 C
The author notes that a mature tree cools the air 'as effectively as several air-conditioners, and at no running cost', and calls shade and water 'the cheapest remedies' and 'the oldest'. The valued qualities are therefore cost-free cooling combined with being a time-tested, traditional remedy — option (C). Option (A) introduces fashion, never mentioned. Option (B) raises property value, which the passage does not discuss. Option (D) attributes heat-trapping to trees, but the passage blames buildings and street canyons for trapping heat, not trees. The supported inference is option (C). Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q4 D
The closing paragraph offers practical remedies (trees, reflective roofs, parks), praises their cheapness, and ends by insisting we cannot 'afford not to' green our streets. This combines a sense of urgency with an optimistic, solution-focused stance — constructively urgent. It is not bitterly cynical, since the author believes change is possible. It is not coldly indifferent, given the evident concern for the vulnerable. And though it mentions older settlements fondly, it is not defeatist; it calls for action rather than mourning a lost past. Hence the tone is constructively urgent. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q5 B
The author's remedy rests on the premise that trees and greenery measurably cool cities, especially at night. A finding that urban trees 'fail to lower night-time temperatures even after decades' would strike directly at that premise, weakening the central remedy — option (B). Option (A) (residents enjoy tree-lined streets) is irrelevant to the cooling claim. Option (C) (cheaper paint) would, if anything, support the remedy, not weaken it. Option (D) (rural heatwaves) does not address whether greening cools cities. Only option (B) undermines the causal link the author relies upon. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q6 C
The author says zero 'is not just another number on the scale; it is a category of its own, capable of producing choices that no small positive price ever could.' The phrase therefore conveys that zero (free) shapes behaviour differently from ordinary positive prices — option (C). Option (A) misreads the maths; the point is psychological, not that zero is 'larger'. Option (B) is contradicted by the chocolate example, where the free item was the *ordinary* one. Option (D) is unsupported; economists are shown studying free goods closely. The intended meaning is option (C). Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q7 D
The passage uses the pull of 'free' to argue that price is 'a story we tell ourselves about risk, fairness and loss', and that to understand markets we must understand how costs make us feel. Option (D) states exactly this. Option (A) fixes on a detail of the chocolate example, not the main point. Option (B) overstates the argument; the author explicitly says the lesson is 'not that people are irrational'. Option (C) adds a prescriptive claim about marketers that the passage does not make. The main point is option (D). Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q8 A

The passage explains that paying anything carries a faint fear of overpaying, and that 'free' removes that fear, so the offer 'feels not merely cheap but safe'. When the ordinary chocolate became free, this fearlessness drew the crowd to it — option (A). Option (B) is wrong: prices were reduced, not raised. Option (C) invents a change in taste; nothing about the product changed. Option (D) contradicts the text, which stresses that 'nothing about the relative value had changed'. The correct explanation is option (A). Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q9 C

The author treats the behaviour as a window into human psychology, concluding that 'the lesson is not that people are irrational' but that rationality is 'shaped by feelings we rarely notice'. This is a sympathetic, explanatory attitude — understanding rather than scornful. The tone is not contemptuous; the author does not mock consumers. It is not indifferent, given the careful analysis offered. Nor is it alarmed or disapproving; the author finds the behaviour revealing, not deplorable. Hence the attitude is understanding rather than scornful. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q10 D

The author's central explanation is that 'paying anything at all carries a small psychological cost — a faint fear of making a mistake', which 'free' removes entirely. This rests on the assumption that a positive price imposes a psychological cost absent at zero — option (D). Without that assumption, the contrast between free and cheap collapses. Option (A) (formal study of economics) is unnecessary and unsupported. Option (B) concerns the seller's production cost, irrelevant to the buyer's psychology. Option (C) about luxury discounts is not assumed anywhere. The key assumption is option (D). Hence (D) is the correct answer.

CR PASSAGES

Q11 A

The conclusion is the claim the rest of the passage is marshalled to support. The opening sentence asserts that 'India should adopt a universal basic income', and every subsequent point — administrative simplicity, dignity, the rebuttal of the idleness objection — is offered as a reason for that recommendation. Option (A) is therefore the main conclusion. Options (B), (C) and (D) are all premises or supporting points used along the way: the messiness of current schemes (B), the pilot evidence (C), and the tax clawback (D) are reasons advanced in service of the conclusion, not the conclusion itself. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q12 B

The passage answers the 'wasteful' charge by saying 'the rich can be made to return their basic income, and more, through the tax system, so that the net transfer still flows downward.' This depends on the assumption that taxation can genuinely recover the payment from the wealthy — option (B). If that recovery failed, the rebuttal collapses. Option (A) (voluntary refusal) is not what the argument relies on; it speaks of compulsion through tax. Option (C) (few wealthy citizens) is never claimed and would not address the design point. Option (D) (the wealthy pay no tax) contradicts the argument, which assumes a working tax system. The needed assumption is option (B). Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q13 D

The argument claims universality is superior because the tax system claws back payments from the rich and the design beats targeted schemes on the whole. Option (D) strikes at both pillars: it says the clawback fails AND that targeted schemes reduce poverty more — directly undermining the case for universality. Option (A) (a few rich people declining) is anecdotal and does not affect the systemic claim. Option (B) (complicated forms) actually supports the argument's critique of existing schemes. Option (C) (buying livestock) is consistent with productive use of cash and does not weaken the case. The strongest weakener is option (D). Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q14 A

To rebut the idleness objection, the author writes that 'the evidence from pilot programmes, in India and abroad, points the other way', and describes recipients starting businesses, repairing homes and investing in schooling. The support is empirical evidence from pilots — option (A). No constitutional employment guarantee is invoked (option (B)). The argument does not quote business leaders (option (C)), nor does it lean on a historical analogy to abolished taxes (option (D)). The method of support is the appeal to pilot-programme evidence, making option (A) correct. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q15 B

The passage meets a predicted bad outcome (idleness) by pointing to real-world evidence (pilots) showing the feared outcome does not materialise and a beneficial one occurs instead. Option (B) mirrors this exactly: a feared abuse (joyriding) is rebutted by data showing the resource is used productively (by commuters and students). Option (A) appeals to the authority of the engineer, a different structure. Option (C) reasons from price to effectiveness, an irrelevant inference. Option (D) argues from absence of evidence. Only option (B) shares the 'predicted harm rebutted by empirical evidence of beneficial use' pattern. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q16 C

The passage presents the minister's view and then argues against it. The author's own conclusion is that the 'grow now, clean up later' position 'rests on shaky ground' — in other words, that prioritising growth over the environment is poorly founded. Option (C) states this. Option (A) is a premise of the minister's argument, which the author is criticising, not the author's conclusion. Option (B) is a historical claim the author uses while rebutting the minister's appeal to history. Option (D) is part of the minister's reasoning, not the author's conclusion. The author's main conclusion is option (C). Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q17 A

The author writes that the minister's 'central assumption is that growth and environmental protection are opposites, so that more of one must mean less of the other', and then attacks that assumption by showing pollution itself carries economic costs. The criticism therefore targets the assumed opposition between growth and protection — option (A). Option (B) is wrong: the author agrees poverty is serious. Option (C) misreads the history discussion; no one denies industrialisation occurred. Option (D) overstates the author's point, which is that protection can sustain growth, not that regulation is 'always cheaper'. The central criticism is option (A). Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q18 B

The author argues that environmental protection is not opposed to growth but sustains it, partly because pollution harms workers' health and productivity. Option (B) directly supports this: evidence that early pollution control produced higher long-run growth via healthier, longer-working populations confirms the author's claim that protection and growth are complementary. Option (A) (ministers' personal dislikes) is irrelevant to the substance. Option (C) (some factories cost more) does not bear on the growth-environment relationship. Option (D) (population sizes) is unrelated to the strength of the argument. The strongest support is option (B). Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q19 C

Against the minister's 'they did it, so may we' history, the author replies that the early polluters acted 'in ignorance', whereas 'we do not have that excuse', and that we now face 'accumulated, planet-wide damage' they never confronted. The response is that today's circumstances are materially different — option (C). Option (A) denies that industrialisation brought wealth, which the author does not claim. Option (B) overgeneralises into a blanket distrust of history, broader than the author's targeted point. Option (D) recommends copying the wealthy nations, the very course the author rejects. The author's actual response is option (C). Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q20 D

The final sentence identifies an unstated premise in the slogan — that a 'later' will always exist in which clean-up remains possible — and warns that 'a damaged planet may not allow us to make' that assumption. Its function is thus to expose a hidden assumption and cast doubt on it — option (D). It does not concede the minister's correctness (option (A)); it does the opposite. It offers no statistics (option (B)). And it stays on the growth-versus-environment theme rather than turning to taxation (option (C)). The sentence works by surfacing and challenging a buried assumption, so option (D) is correct. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21 B

'Ephemeral' describes something that lasts only a very short time before passing away, like a mayfly that lives a single day or a fashion that fades within a season. The question asks for the nearest synonym, so we want a word meaning brief or fleeting; 'short-lived' captures this precisely. The other choices fail: 'permanent' means lasting forever and is in fact an antonym, 'enormous' speaks to size rather than duration, and 'hidden' speaks to visibility. So the word most nearly similar in meaning is 'short-lived'. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q22 C

'Benevolent' means well-meaning, kindly, and disposed to do good to others. The question asks for the opposite, so we need a word expressing ill-will. 'Malevolent' fits exactly, since the prefix 'mal-' signals 'bad' and the word means wishing harm to others — the direct contrary of benevolent. The remaining choices are traps because they are synonyms, not antonyms: 'generous', 'charitable' and 'kindly' all share the helpful, good-natured sense of benevolent. So the word most nearly opposite in meaning is 'malevolent'. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q23 D

'To bite the bullet' means to force oneself to endure a difficult or unpleasant situation with courage and resolve, originating from the practice of having a wounded soldier bite a bullet during surgery before anaesthesia. It does not mean to eat quickly, to err carelessly, or to start a quarrel. Hence the correct meaning is to endure a painful situation bravely. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q24 A

The basic structure doctrine, holding that Parliament cannot amend the Constitution so as to destroy its fundamental framework, was laid down in *Kesavananda Bharati v State of Kerala* (1973). Maneka Gandhi expanded Article 21; A. K. Gopalan was an early, narrower view of personal liberty; and *Golaknath* dealt with the amendability of fundamental rights but predates and was effectively superseded on this point. Hence *Kesavananda Bharati* is the answer. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q25 C

India hosted the G20 Leaders' Summit in New Delhi in September 2023 under its presidency, during which the African Union was granted permanent membership of the group. Indonesia held the presidency in 2022, Brazil in 2024, and Italy hosted an earlier summit in 2021. Hence the host nation for the 2023 summit was India. Hence (C) is the correct answer.

Q26 D

Article 17 abolishes untouchability and forbids its practice in any form, making its enforcement an offence punishable by law. Article 15 prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth; Article 18 abolishes titles; and Article 23 prohibits trafficking in human beings and forced labour. Hence Article 17 is the correct provision. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q27 A

The clue lies in the second half of the sentence: 'even its critics could not dispute them.' The blank must therefore describe findings so clearly true that disagreement is impossible. 'Incontrovertible' means exactly that — impossible to controvert, dispute or deny — so it fits perfectly. The distractors all clash with this sense: 'ambiguous' means open to more than one interpretation, 'tentative' means uncertain or provisional, and 'negligible' means too small to matter. None of these would explain why critics could not dispute the findings. So 'incontrovertible' correctly fills the blank. Hence (A) is the correct answer.

Q28 B

Under Article 124, judges of the Supreme Court, including the Chief Justice of India, are appointed by the President of India. By convention and the Collegium system the senior-most judge is recommended, but the formal appointing authority is the President. The Prime Minister, Law Minister and Vice-President do not hold this appointing power. Hence the answer is the President of India. Hence (B) is the correct answer.

Q29 D

The Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 replaced the Indian Penal Code, 1860 as India's principal substantive criminal law. The Code of Criminal Procedure was replaced by the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and the Indian Evidence Act by the Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam. The Civil Procedure Code, being civil law, was not affected. Hence the BNS replaced the Indian Penal Code, 1860. Hence (D) is the correct answer.

Q30 A

The correct spelling is 'conscientious', an adjective meaning diligent, painstaking and careful to do what is right. It is spelt c-o-n-s-c-i-e-n-t-i-o-u-s, sharing its opening with 'conscience'. Each of the other options corrupts the word in a small but decisive way: 'concientious' drops the 's' after the first 'c', 'consciencious' wrongly replaces the 't' with a 'c', and 'conscientous' omits the second 'i' before '-ous'. Spotting the 'science'-like middle and the '-tious' ending helps. So the correctly spelt word is 'conscientious'. Hence (A) is the correct answer.