

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) — THE SCIENCE OF WHY WE SLEEP (SCIENCE / HEALTH)

Q1-5

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

For most of human history, sleep was treated as an unproductive gap in the day — a stretch of lost time to be shortened wherever possible. Modern science tells a very different story. Far from being a passive shutdown, sleep is one of the most active and essential processes the body undertakes. During the hours we spend unconscious, the brain is busy consolidating memories, clearing metabolic waste, and recalibrating the systems that govern mood, appetite and immunity.

Sleep unfolds in cycles, each lasting roughly ninety minutes and moving through distinct stages. In the deepest stage of non-REM sleep, the brain produces slow electrical waves that appear to help transfer the day's experiences from short-term into long-term storage. In REM sleep, when most vivid dreaming occurs, the brain is almost as active as when awake; researchers believe this phase helps process emotion and knit together the creative associations that elude the waking mind.

The consequences of neglecting sleep are now well documented. Chronic sleep deprivation is linked to impaired concentration, weakened immunity, weight gain, and a heightened risk of cardiovascular disease and depression. A single night of poor sleep can measurably slow reaction times, with effects comparable to mild intoxication. Perhaps most strikingly, the brain's overnight 'cleaning' system, which flushes out proteins associated with neurodegenerative disease, works most efficiently during deep sleep — suggesting that rest may help protect the ageing brain.

Yet knowing all this has not made us sleep better. Artificial light, glowing screens, demanding work schedules and a culture that quietly celebrates busyness all conspire against rest. Some scientists argue that we are living through a slow-burning epidemic of sleeplessness whose costs are only beginning to be counted. The remedy they propose is neither expensive nor complicated: dimmer evenings, consistent bedtimes, and a renewed cultural respect for the simple, restorative act of closing one's eyes.

1. In the first paragraph, the word 'recalibrating' most nearly means:

- ☐ A. abandoning
- ☐ B. readjusting
- ☐ C. overloading in the circumstances of the case
- ☐ D. disguising

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

- ☐ A. Dreaming is the only important function that sleep performs for the human body.
- ☐ B. Human beings have always correctly understood the true biological value of sleep in the circumstances of the case
- ☐ C. Sleep is a passive shutdown that mainly serves to conserve the body's energy.
- ☐ D. Sleep is an active, restorative process whose neglect carries serious health costs.

3. It can be inferred from the passage that the brain's overnight 'cleaning' system:

- ☐ A. May help reduce the long-term risk of neurodegenerative disease.
- ☐ B. Operates most effectively during the REM stage of vivid dreaming.
- ☐ C. Functions equally well regardless of how deeply a person sleeps.
- ☐ D. Has been shown to reverse existing damage in the ageing brain.

4. The author's attitude towards modern sleeping habits is best described as:

- ☐ A. indifferent and detached from the issue
- ☐ B. openly hostile and scornful
- ☐ C. concerned but constructive
- ☐ D. nostalgic and quietly despairing

5. Which finding, if true, would most strengthen the author's claim that deep sleep helps protect the ageing brain?

- ☐ A. People who sleep fewer hours each night report feeling more productive at work.
- ☐ B. Adults who get more deep sleep show slower accumulation of disease-linked brain proteins.
- ☐ C. REM sleep occupies a larger share of total sleep time in infants than in adults in the circumstances of the case
- ☐ D. Bright evening light has become far more common over the past hundred years.

PASSAGE 2 (RC) — THE SECOND LIFE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY (SOCIETY / CULTURE)

Q6-10

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

Not long ago, the public library seemed like an institution in graceful decline. As bookshops multiplied and the internet placed a universe of text a click away, commentators confidently predicted that the neighbourhood library, with its hushed reading rooms and card catalogues, would quietly fade into irrelevance. That prediction has proved spectacularly wrong. Across many countries, libraries are busier than they have been in decades — not despite the digital age, but because of it.

The reinvention has been quiet but profound. Modern libraries lend far more than books. They offer free internet access to those who cannot afford it at home, a decisive advantage in a world where job applications, benefits claims and school assignments have all migrated online. They run coding clubs for children, language classes for new immigrants, and job-search workshops for the unemployed. Some lend tools, musical instruments, or even packets of seeds. In this sense the library has rediscovered an older purpose: not merely a warehouse of texts, but a shared civic space open to everyone regardless of income.



This shift matters most for the vulnerable. For an isolated pensioner, a library may be the only warm, welcoming place to spend an afternoon without being expected to buy anything. For a teenager without a quiet room at home, it offers space to study. For a jobseeker, it provides both the tools and the human help needed to navigate an unforgiving bureaucracy. Libraries have, in effect, become one of the last genuinely public places left in the commercial city.

Their success, however, remains precarious. Because their benefits are diffuse and hard to measure, libraries are perennially vulnerable when public budgets tighten. A service that quietly prevents loneliness or narrows the digital divide rarely produces the kind of dramatic statistics that protect funding. The challenge for the coming decade is not whether libraries can remain useful — they plainly are — but whether societies will choose to keep paying for a good whose value refuses to fit neatly on a spreadsheet.

6. The passage is primarily concerned with:

- ☐ A. Explaining why bookshops have completely outcompeted public libraries everywhere.
- ☐ B. Arguing that libraries ought to return to lending only printed physical books.
- ☐ C. Showing how libraries have been reinvented as vital public civic spaces.
- ☐ D. Describing the technology used to digitise old and fragile library collections.

7. As used in the final paragraph, the word 'diffuse' most nearly means:

- ☐ A. spread out and hard to pin down
- ☐ B. extremely brightly illuminated
- ☐ C. sharply and narrowly concentrated
- ☐ D. legally binding on the state

8. It can be inferred that libraries are especially vulnerable to budget cuts mainly because:

- ☐ A. They have stopped attracting any visitors at all in the digital age.
- ☐ B. They stubbornly refuse to offer any service beyond lending printed books in the circumstances of the case
- ☐ C. They generate very large profits that governments wish to capture.
- ☐ D. Their benefits are real but difficult to capture in measurable statistics.

9. The author's overall attitude towards public libraries is best described as:

- ☐ A. dismissive and quietly resigned
- ☐ B. appreciative but genuinely concerned
- ☐ C. strictly neutral and purely factual in the circumstances of the case
- ☐ D. amused, ironic and detached

10. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's claim that libraries remain vital?

- ☐ A. Several city libraries have recently expanded their evening and weekend opening hours.
- ☐ B. Many unemployed jobseekers say that library staff helped them complete online applications in the circumstances of the case
- ☐ C. Surveys show almost every library service is now used equally well through free municipal apps.
- ☐ D. A few small towns have this year opened brand-new and well-funded library buildings.

PASSAGE 3 (CR) — SHOULD INDIA ADOPT A UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME? (CRITICAL REASONING / ECONOMY)

Q11–15

READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q11–15.

India should adopt a Universal Basic Income — an unconditional cash payment made to every citizen, rich or poor alike. The case rests on three claims. First, India's existing welfare system is a patchwork of hundreds of overlapping subsidies and schemes, many of which leak badly: a large share of the money never reaches the intended beneficiaries, lost to corruption, misidentification and administrative waste. Replacing this tangle with a single direct cash transfer would cut out the middlemen and hand support straight to households.

Second, a basic income respects the dignity and judgement of the poor. Rather than deciding on their behalf that they need subsidised grain or fuel, the state would trust citizens to spend the money on whatever they most need — school fees, medicine, tools, or food. Evidence from cash-transfer pilots in several countries suggests recipients generally spend such money responsibly, and that fears of mass idleness are overblown.

Third, in an age of automation, a basic income offers a cushion against economic insecurity. As machines displace routine work, a guaranteed floor beneath every citizen would soften the shocks of a rapidly changing labour market and give people the freedom to retrain or take entrepreneurial risks.

The proposal is not without cost. A meaningful basic income for all Indians would consume a large share of government revenue, forcing either higher taxes or the dismantling of programmes that some genuinely depend upon. Critics also warn that paying the wealthy an income they do not need is a poor use of scarce public money. Supporters respond that universality is precisely the point: by avoiding the need to identify the poor, a universal scheme sidesteps the errors and stigma that plague targeted welfare, and the money paid to the rich can be clawed back through taxation. On balance, they argue, a basic income is the simplest and fairest way to guarantee every Indian a minimum of economic security.

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

- ☐ A. India should adopt a universal basic income for all of its citizens.
- ☐ B. India's current welfare schemes suffer from serious leakage and waste.
- ☐ C. Automation will inevitably destroy most routine jobs in the economy.
- ☐ D. Cash transfers are always spent more responsibly than subsidised goods.

12. The claim that a basic income 'respects the dignity of the poor' most directly assumes that:

- ☐ A. The poor are largely incapable of managing any money handed to them.
- ☐ B. Subsidised grain is in every case superior to an equivalent cash payment.
- ☐ C. Every welfare scheme currently running in India is entirely free of corruption.
- ☐ D. People are generally better judges of their own needs than the state is.



13. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the argument for a universal basic income?

- ☐ A. Cash-transfer pilots conducted abroad found that recipients generally spent the money responsibly.
- ☐ B. In large trials, most basic-income cash was spent on alcohol, leaving essential needs unmet.
- ☐ C. Some existing food subsidies are lost to corruption long before reaching the intended poor.
- ☐ D. Wealthy citizens would receive exactly the same monthly payment as the very poorest citizens.

14. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the argument?

- ☐ A. Some prominent economists disagree about how quickly automation will actually displace jobs.
- ☐ B. A meaningful basic income would require substantially raising taxes on the salaried middle class in the circumstances of the case.
- ☐ C. Direct cash transfers in India have already reached beneficiaries with far less leakage than subsidies.
- ☐ D. Most wealthy households would scarcely notice a small additional monthly government payment.

15. The supporters' reply that money paid to the rich 'can be clawed back through taxation' is most vulnerable to which objection?

- ☐ A. It assumes the tax system can efficiently recover those payments, which may not in fact hold.
- ☐ B. It concedes that the poor do not actually need any assistance from the state at all in the circumstances of the case.
- ☐ C. It proves that a basic income must always be targeted only at the very poorest.
- ☐ D. It shows that automation poses no genuine threat to future levels of employment.

PASSAGE 4 (CR) — SHOULD GENETIC SCREENING OF EMBRYOS BE PERMITTED? (CRITICAL REASONING / ETHICS)

Q16–20

READ THE ARGUMENT AND ANSWER Q16–20.

Should prospective parents be allowed to screen embryos genetically before implantation? Advances in reproductive technology now make it possible, during in-vitro fertilisation, to test embryos for genetic conditions and select which to implant. Supporters of permitting the practice advance a straightforward argument. If a technology can spare a future child from a devastating, incurable hereditary disease, they contend, then parents have not merely a right but a moral responsibility to use it. To knowingly bring into the world a child destined for avoidable suffering, when a healthy alternative embryo was available, seems difficult to defend.

The argument extends naturally from disease to broader traits. Once we accept that parents may select against a fatal illness, why not against a serious disability, or against a predisposition to a common disease, or eventually in favour of desirable characteristics such as height or intelligence? Defenders of screening insist that a clear line can be drawn between preventing grave suffering and mere enhancement, and that only the former should be permitted.

Opponents are unconvinced that any such line will hold. They warn of a slippery slope towards 'designer babies', in which the wealthy purchase genetic advantages for their children and existing inequalities are written into biology itself. They argue that a society which screens out disability sends a corrosive message about the worth of people already living with those conditions. And they question whether parents can ever truly know which traits will make for a flourishing life.

There is also a subtler worry. A child who has been genetically selected may grow up feeling like a product designed to meet a specification rather than a person accepted unconditionally. The relationship between parent and child, some philosophers argue, depends on an openness to whatever child happens to arrive. Whatever its medical promise, embryo screening forces a society to decide not only what counts as a disease, but what kind of people it wishes to bring into being.

16. The supporters' central claim in the passage is that:

- ☐ A. All forms of genetic enhancement of embryos should be freely permitted.
- ☐ B. In-vitro fertilisation should generally be discouraged on ethical grounds in the circumstances of the case.
- ☐ C. Parents can never predict which traits will produce a flourishing life.
- ☐ D. Parents may have a moral duty to screen embryos against grave hereditary disease.

17. The supporters' argument most directly assumes that:

- ☐ A. Every genetic disease can now be completely cured shortly after birth.
- ☐ B. Parents are under a legal requirement to undergo in-vitro fertilisation.
- ☐ C. A clear moral line can be drawn between preventing disease and mere enhancement.
- ☐ D. Personal wealth has no influence at all on access to reproductive technology in the circumstances of the case.

18. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the supporters' position?

- ☐ A. In practice, no workable line has ever held between screening for disease and screening for enhancement.
- ☐ B. Many hereditary diseases are known to cause severe, prolonged and clearly incurable suffering.
- ☐ C. Some prospective parents choose to decline all forms of genetic testing during pregnancy.
- ☐ D. In-vitro fertilisation remains an expensive, uncertain and physically demanding medical procedure in the circumstances of the case.

19. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the opponents' 'slippery slope' warning?

- ☐ A. Screening for fatal diseases has already helped some families to avoid great suffering in the circumstances of the case.
- ☐ B. Clinics in some countries already offer selection for non-medical traits such as height.
- ☐ C. Most parents say that they would only ever screen against a serious illness.
- ☐ D. Genetic testing during IVF adds relatively little to the procedure's overall cost.

20. The passage's closing worry — that a selected child may feel 'like a product' — depends most heavily on which idea?

- ☐ A. That genetic screening is always medically unsafe for the developing embryo.
- ☐ B. That wealthy parents will inevitably come to dominate access to the technology.
- ☐ C. That no hereditary disease is genuinely serious enough to be worth preventing.
- ☐ D. That a good parent-child bond rests on accepting a child unconditionally.

SECTION C — RAPID-FIRE GK & CURRENT AFFAIRS

Q21–33

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



21. What is the capital city of Australia?

- ☐ A. Sydney
- ☐ C. Canberra

- ☐ B. Melbourne
- ☐ D. Perth

22. The official currency of Japan is the:

- ☐ A. Yen
- ☐ C. Baht

- ☐ B. Won
- ☐ D. Ringgit

23. The Wimbledon tennis championship is traditionally played on which type of court surface?

- ☐ A. Clay
- ☐ C. Hard court

- ☐ B. Grass
- ☐ D. Carpet

24. Who is the author of the novel 'The God of Small Things'?

- ☐ A. R. K. Narayan
- ☐ C. Salman Rushdie

- ☐ B. Vikram Seth
- ☐ D. Arundhati Roy

25. Which gas released by human activity is most responsible for the enhanced greenhouse effect?

- ☐ A. Oxygen
- ☐ C. Carbon dioxide

- ☐ B. Nitrogen
- ☐ D. Hydrogen

26. The 2024 Summer Olympic Games were hosted by which city?

- ☐ A. Paris
- ☐ C. Tokyo

- ☐ B. Los Angeles
- ☐ D. Brisbane

27. Choose the word most similar in meaning to 'meticulous':

- ☐ A. Careless
- ☐ C. Hasty

- ☐ B. Thorough
- ☐ D. Generous

28. Choose the word most opposite in meaning to 'benevolent':

- ☐ A. Kind
- ☐ C. Cheerful

- ☐ B. Generous
- ☐ D. Malicious

29. The idiom 'to bite the bullet' most nearly means to:

- ☐ A. postpone an important decision
- ☐ B. waste valuable resources needlessly
- ☐ C. endure something painful with courage
- ☐ D. speak carelessly without thinking

30. Which writ is issued by a court to secure the release of a person who has been unlawfully detained?

- ☐ A. Habeas Corpus
- ☐ C. Certiorari

- ☐ B. Mandamus
- ☐ D. Quo Warranto

31. The 'basic structure' doctrine of the Indian Constitution was propounded by the Supreme Court in which case?

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

32. Mount Everest lies on the border between Nepal and which other country?

- ☐ A. India
- ☐ C. Pakistan

- ☐ B. Bhutan
- ☐ D. China

33. The Nobel Prize in Literature is awarded each year by an academy based in which country?

- ☐ A. Norway
- ☐ C. Sweden

- ☐ B. Switzerland
- ☐ D. Denmark

