

Daily Reading Comprehension & Critical Reasoning

Rotated-genre RC passages and real-argument Critical Reasoning — CLAT-2026 grade. Read each passage and answer from the passage only.
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SECTION — READING COMPREHENSION

READING COMPREHENSION — HISTORY · THE PROSE OF COUNTER-INSURGENCY: READING THE REBEL IN THE COLONIAL ARCHIVE (Q1-Q5)

When historians reconstruct the Santhal hool of 1855, or the indigo disturbances that swept lower Bengal four years later, they work almost entirely from papers produced by the people the rebels were fighting. Magistrates' depositions, army despatches, planters' memorials, the judicial proceedings that followed the suppression: these survive in bulk and in order. The insurgent himself left almost nothing in writing. Whatever we can know of his intention, we know from inside the sentence of his prosecutor.

The difficulty this creates is deeper than bias, and it is not cured by discounting the official's exaggerations. The archive is not merely partial; it is structured. Official prose does not simply misreport a rising, it converts the rising into a category on which the state can act - 'disturbance', 'outrage', 'fanaticism', 'the work of instigators'. Once the rebellion has been described as the product of agitators working upon a credulous peasantry, the peasant's own reasoning has been removed from the record. His politics becomes weather: something that breaks out, subsides, and is measured afterwards by the damage it left behind.

A generation of historians proposed a remedy: read the document against the grain. Take the words the official used against the rebel and invert them. The magistrate's alarmed talk of contagion is a report, in hostile language, of the speed with which scattered villages made common cause; his complaint that the rising had no leader worth arresting is evidence that it had many. The technique has been extraordinarily productive, and it has recovered a peasantry that plans, deliberates, and chooses its targets with care.

It also carries a temptation, and the temptation is not trivial. Nothing in the act of inversion guarantees that the voice recovered is the rebel's rather than the historian's; an archive read only for what it suppresses can be made to yield whatever the reader already believed. The corrective is not to abandon the record but to discipline the reading - to set the official file against ballads, oral tradition, revenue registers, and the rebels' own parwanas where these survive, and to say plainly where the evidence runs out. A history that marks its gaps is a stronger history than one that fills them with the convictions of the person writing it.

1. Which of the following best states the central claim of the passage?

- ☐ A. The colonial record can be used to recover insurgent politics only if its categories are read critically and its silences openly admitted
- ☐ B. The colonial record is so thoroughly distorted by official interest that no dependable account of peasant insurgency can now be written from it
- ☐ C. The colonial record should be replaced wherever possible by ballads and oral traditions, which alone preserve the rebel's understanding of his acts
- ☐ D. The colonial record shows that peasant risings were in fact instigated by outsiders, a finding that later historians have been reluctant to accept

2. It can be inferred that the author regards official words such as 'contagion' and 'fanaticism' as

- ☐ A. deliberate falsehoods invented by magistrates who knew perfectly well what the rebels intended by their acts
- ☐ B. neutral administrative shorthand whose recurrence tells the historian very little about the character of the rising
- ☐ C. evidence, in hostile language, of the very solidarity that the official prose was attempting to explain away
- ☐ D. proof that officials privately sympathised with the peasants while writing for a hostile metropolitan readership

3. The author's attitude towards the practice of reading the archive 'against the grain' is best described as

- ☐ A. unreserved endorsement of a method that has at last restored the peasant to his rightful place in history
- ☐ B. qualified approval, tempered by a warning that the method may substitute the historian's voice for the rebel's
- ☐ C. cool dismissal of a fashionable technique that has produced very little which earlier historians had not said
- ☐ D. studied neutrality, the author preferring to describe the scholarly debate rather than take a position within it

4. In context, the statement that the peasant's 'politics becomes weather' most nearly means that his actions are

- ☐ A. recorded as seasonal events tied to the agricultural calendar rather than to any grievance about rent or revenue
- ☐ B. treated as unusually destructive, in the way that a violent storm does more damage than ordinary seasonal rainfall
- ☐ C. understood as straightforward responses to genuine hardship such as drought, famine and the failure of the harvest
- ☐ D. represented as an impersonal outbreak rather than as conduct undertaken for reasons its authors could state

5. Which of the following best describes the function of the final paragraph within the argument of the passage?

- ☐ A. It concedes that the method described earlier has failed and proposes a return to older documentary history
- ☐ B. It introduces fresh evidence from Santhal proclamations which settles the dispute described in the earlier paragraphs
- ☐ C. It identifies a risk internal to the method just defended and sets out the discipline that keeps it honest
- ☐ D. It generalises from the Indian case to argue that state archives everywhere are equally unusable for social history

READING COMPREHENSION — ARTS & CULTURE · TRANSLATED INTO LEGIBILITY: WHAT THE PRIZE CIRCUIT ASKS OF THE INDIAN-LANGUAGE NOVEL (Q6-Q10)

A novel written in Malayalam or Marathi now has a route to readers in Berlin and Boston that it did not have twenty years ago. Translation grants, international longlists and the prizes that follow have made a handful of Indian-language writers genuinely visible, and their publishers, in India as much as abroad, have discovered that a book can be sold twice. It would be graceless to pretend that this is not, in the plainest sense, a gain.

The question worth pressing is what kind of book travels. The circuit does not reward all novels equally. It rewards the novel that arrives pre-explained - that carries its context in its luggage, glossing the festival, the caste, the field system for a reader a know none of it. It rewards the sociologically legible book, the one that can be summarised in a single sentence about a common injustice, because such a sentence is what a jury citation and a review headline are made of. What it quietly declines to reward



formally restless novel, the one saturated in local reference, the one whose difficulty is not a barrier to be smoothed away but the very substance of what it has to say. A writer learns this. The learning need not be cynical, and it is rarely conscious; it works through the choice of what to attempt next.

Two answers are usually made, and neither is empty. The first is that visibility is not nothing: the alternative to an imperfect circuit was never a perfect one, it was neglect, and a translated novel with ten thousand readers abroad has altered the standing of its language at home. The second is that every literary culture has always had gatekeepers, and that a metropolitan jury is no worse than the regional literary establishment it has partly displaced.

Both are true, and neither answers the objection. The complaint is not that a filter exists; it is that this particular filter is described as a mirror. When a shortlist is presented as a survey of what Indian writing now is, rather than as a record of what one apparatus was equipped to notice, the omissions become invisible - and a literature is slowly persuaded to resemble its own export catalogue.

6. Which of the following best captures the main argument of the passage?

- ☐ A. The international prize circuit has plainly failed Indian-language fiction, and serious writers would do better to refuse translation altogether
- ☐ B. The prize circuit has genuinely helped Indian-language fiction, but it selects for one kind of book and is wrongly taken for a mirror
- ☐ C. The regional literary establishment judged Indian-language fiction more fairly than the metropolitan juries that have now partly displaced it
- ☐ D. The formal difficulty of a novel is the surest measure of its worth, and prize juries have consistently proved unable to see this

7. The phrase 'carries its context in its luggage' most nearly describes a novel that

- ☐ A. is written by an author who has emigrated and now composes chiefly for readers in a foreign country
- ☐ B. draws its material from travel, migration and the movement of people between one region and another
- ☐ C. is heavily annotated by its translator, with footnotes and a glossary appended at the end of the volume
- ☐ D. explains its own social world as it goes, for a reader assumed to bring nothing at all to it

8. It can be inferred that the author would regard a shortlist announced as 'the best of Indian writing this year' as

- ☐ A. misleading, because it presents the output of one selection apparatus as a description of a whole literature
- ☐ B. acceptable, provided that the jury includes readers of at least three of the Indian languages actually being judged
- ☐ C. harmless, since every literary culture has always used prizes and no reader takes such a phrase literally anyway
- ☐ D. accurate, because the translated novels that reach such lists are in fact the strongest work of that year

9. The author's stance towards the two 'answers' set out in the third paragraph is best described as

- ☐ A. dismissive; the author treats both as evasions manufactured by publishers with a commercial stake in translation
- ☐ B. persuaded; the author concedes that the two answers together dispose of the objection raised earlier in the passage
- ☐ C. conceding their truth while denying that they meet the objection, which concerns a claim rather than a filter
- ☐ D. undecided; the author sets the two answers beside the objection and leaves the reader to settle the matter

10. The second paragraph functions in the passage chiefly to

- ☐ A. specify the mechanism by which the circuit's preferences reach into what a writer chooses to attempt next
- ☐ B. establish that translated Indian fiction now sells rather better abroad than it has ever sold within India itself
- ☐ C. refute the claim, made in the opening paragraph, that the wider reach of translation has benefited Bhasha writers
- ☐ D. illustrate, with named examples, the kinds of novel that international juries have persistently overlooked in recent years

SECTION — CRITICAL REASONING

CRITICAL REASONING — EDUCATION · THE EXAMINATION MAKES THE COACHING CLASS (Q11–Q15)

The state's coaching industry has tripled its enrolment in ten years. The figure is usually read as evidence of parental ambition, or of teachers who no longer teach. It is better read as evidence about an examination.

Consider what our Class X board result now decides. It determines which stream a child may enter in Class XI, which state-funded junior colleges will admit her, and, in a system where the science stream is rationed, whether certain careers remain open to her at all. A single three-hour paper, written once, carries all of that weight. A household that can convert income into marks will do so; the coaching class is simply the market's answer to a question the board itself asked.

The evidence that the examination, rather than some general decline in schooling, drives this is available within the state. Two districts have run a pilot for four years in which the Class X result is composed of teacher-marked coursework, practical work and a portfolio, assembled across two years and moderated by an external panel that re-marks a sample from every school and adjusts that school's distribution where it is out of line. In those two districts, enrolment in Class IX and X coaching has fallen by roughly forty per cent, and Class XI admissions have proceeded without dispute.

The standard objection is that internal assessment is soft, that heads will inflate their own schools' results, and that the currency will debase. The objection is serious, and it is exactly what moderation exists to answer: a school whose marks drift from its moderated sample is corrected, and repeated drift is a disciplinary matter. Four years of pilot data show no inflation surviving moderation.

Against that stands the cost of the present arrangement, which is not neutral between children. It converts household income into a public credential, and it does so at the single point where the state's own scarce seats are handed out. A board that is troubled by coaching should stop describing it as a moral failure of families and recognise it as a predictable response to the instrument the board has built. The state should therefore replace the terminal Class X examination with moderated school-based assessment, and should do so across all districts rather than merely extending the pilot.

11. Which of the following most accurately states the main conclusion of the argument?

- ☐ A. Coaching enrolment in the state has tripled in ten years because households are able to convert income into examination marks
- ☐ B. Internal assessment is not vulnerable to inflation once an external panel re-marks a sample and adjusts each school's distribution
- ☐ C. The Class X board result should count for rather less in deciding which stream a child may enter in Class XI
- ☐ D. The terminal Class X examination should be replaced state-wide by moderated school-based assessment

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

- ☐ A. No household in the two pilot districts engaged private tutors at any stage during the four years of the pilot



- ☐ B. Coaching demand attaches to the form of the assessment rather than to the scarcity of the seats being rationed
- ☐ C. Teachers in the pilot districts were given substantial additional training before they began marking coursework and portfolios
- ☐ D. The external moderating panel re-marked every script rather than a sample drawn from each of the participating schools

13. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the argument?

- ☐ A. Coaching enrolment across the state as a whole fell by roughly eight per cent over the same four-year period
- ☐ B. The moderating panel in the pilot districts costs the board about four times what invigilating the board examination costs
- ☐ C. In the pilot districts, coaching for entrance examinations gained very nearly the number that Class IX-X coaching lost
- ☐ D. A survey found that most parents in the pilot districts could not describe how the portfolio was going to be marked

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

- ☐ A. Parents in the pilot districts reported abandoning tuition because a portfolio built across two years could not be crammed
- ☐ B. The two pilot districts were selected because their earlier Class X pass rates sat closest to the state average
- ☐ C. The state's coaching centres are concentrated in towns, while most of the state's Class X candidates study in villages
- ☐ D. The external moderating panel was staffed by teachers drawn from schools outside the district that was being moderated

15. Which of the following arguments is most closely parallel in its reasoning to the argument in the passage?

- ☐ A. Injuries rise on rainy nights, so the city's roads should be resurfaced before the monsoon begins in earnest each year
- ☐ B. Traffic fines rose sharply after cameras were installed, so the cameras themselves must have made the city's drivers worse
- ☐ C. Students who read newspapers score higher in the language paper, so every classroom in the school should receive a newspaper
- ☐ D. Litter fell wherever bins were added; littering answers bin placement rather than civic character, so bins should go city-wide

CRITICAL REASONING — ETHICS · THE CONDITIONAL GIFT: WHY A DONATED ORGAN MAY NOT CARRY INSTRUCTIONS (Q16–Q20)

The committee was asked to advise on a case that recurs in every transplant programme. A family, consenting to the retrieval of organs from a relative declared brain-dead, attached a condition: the liver was to go to a recipient of their own community. The patient at the head of the state waiting list, matched on blood group, tissue type and time waited, belongs to another. The coordinator's question was practical - may the condition be honoured, given that the family may otherwise withdraw consent and the organ be buried?

Our advice is that it may not, and the reason is not squeamishness about the family's motives.

A place on the deceased-donor list is not a favour. It is an entitlement generated by a public system: the list is maintained by the state, the retrieval is done in public hospitals, and the matching runs on criteria - clinical urgency, compatibility, time waited - chosen precisely because they are things for which a patient is answerable to nobody's opinion. To accept the family's condition is not merely to move one organ from one bed to another. It is to make the allocating institution the instrument of a distinction it exists in order to refuse. The patient displaced is not unlucky; she is passed over, by a public body, on a ground that the body has itself declared irrelevant.

Nor can the condition be quarantined. A rule that admits one donor's preference has no principled answer to the next family, whose condition is coarser, and the list's authority rests on the belief of every family on it that nothing but the criteria is operating.

We do not pretend the cost is theoretical. Refusal may mean that nobody is transplanted this week, and that is a death weighed against a principle. But an institution that suspends its rule whenever the price of keeping it becomes visible does not have a rule; it has a preference that it abandons under pressure, and those who pay for that over a decade are simply less identifiable than the patient in front of us tonight.

One distinction should be preserved. A living donor may give a kidney to a named person, a sister or a friend, because nothing is taken from a queue: that organ would not otherwise have existed for allocation. What may not be done is to enter the public pool and then direct its contents.

16. Which of the following best expresses the conclusion of the committee's opinion?

- ☐ A. Families of brain-dead donors should be counselled far more carefully, so that conditional offers are less likely to be made
- ☐ B. The waiting list should be reordered so that clinical urgency outweighs time waited whenever the two criteria come into conflict
- ☐ C. Conditions attached to a deceased donor's organ must be refused, though living directed donation remains permissible
- ☐ D. The transplant coordinator, and not the ethics committee, should decide whether a conditional offer may be accepted tonight

17. The committee's argument rests on which of the following assumptions?

- ☐ A. A patient's place on the public list is not something about which a donor's family is entitled to make conditions
- ☐ B. Families who attach conditions to a donation are moved by hostility rather than by loyalty to their own community
- ☐ C. The liver offered in this case would in fact have been medically suitable for the patient the family preferred
- ☐ D. Refusing the condition will, in this particular case, cause the family to reconsider and to consent without any condition

18. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the committee's reasoning?

- ☐ A. Several other states permit conditional donation and report no fall in the number of families consenting to retrieval
- ☐ B. The patient at the head of the list has been waiting eleven months, longer than any other candidate in the state
- ☐ C. The family's condition was first proposed by a hospital counsellor rather than being raised by the family on its own
- ☐ D. Where conditional offers are refused, families in comparable programmes withdraw consent so often that the pool shrinks

19. The committee's distinction between a living donor's directed gift and a conditional deceased donation depends on which principle?

- ☐ A. A gift becomes morally binding on its recipient only when the donor survives to witness the transfer completed
- ☐ B. What makes a preference objectionable is that a public allocating body enacts it, not that a private person holds it
- ☐ C. Living donors take a bodily risk that deceased donors do not, and such risk earns the right to name a recipient
- ☐ D. An organ retrieved after death belongs to the state, whereas an organ from a living donor still belongs to its donor

20. Which of the following, if true, would most undermine the committee's claim that the condition cannot be quarantined?

- ☐ A. Most families who attach conditions do so at the suggestion of relatives rather than after any deliberation of their own
- ☐ B. A statute already lists the only conditions a donor family may attach, and courts have refused to extend that list
- ☐ C. The number of conditional offers received by the state's transplant authority has fallen steadily over the past decade
- ☐ D. Conditions naming a community are far more common in this state than conditions naming one particular individual



1. What is a historiographical argument? _____
2. What does it mean to read a document 'against the grain'? _____
3. Define 'archive' as used in historical writing. _____
4. Meaning of 'insurgent'. _____
5. Meaning of 'deposition' in a legal-historical context. _____
6. Meaning of 'credulous'. _____
7. Meaning of 'triangulate' when applied to evidence. _____
8. What is 'presentism' in historical method? _____
9. Meaning of 'polemic'. _____
10. Meaning of 'legible' as used in cultural criticism. _____
11. Meaning of 'gatekeeper'. _____
12. What is 'canon' in literary studies? _____
13. Meaning of 'allusive'. _____
14. Meaning of 'Bhasha' literature in the Indian context. _____
15. What is 'metonymy'? _____
16. What is 'litotes'? _____
17. What is an 'oxymoron'? _____
18. What is 'irony' as a literary device? _____
19. Define 'juxtaposition'. _____
20. Define 'register' in prose style. _____
21. What is the 'post hoc' fallacy? _____
22. What is the 'slippery slope' fallacy? _____
23. What is 'begging the question'? _____
24. What is a 'straw man'? _____
25. What is the 'false dilemma'? _____
26. What is 'equivocation' in logic? _____
27. Difference between a necessary assumption and a sufficient assumption. _____
28. What is the standard test for a necessary assumption? _____
29. What does a 'weakeners' have to attack? _____
30. Difference between 'inference' and 'assumption'. _____
31. Meaning of 'expressive harm' in ethics. _____
32. Meaning of 'distributive justice'. _____
33. Meaning of 'morally arbitrary' characteristic. _____
34. A claim assumed true without proof, on which an argument rests _____
35. Attacking the arguer instead of the argument _____
36. Assuming what you set out to prove _____
37. Treating correlation as if it established causation _____
38. Presenting only two options when more exist _____
39. Misrepresenting a position to refute it more easily _____
40. Concluding a thing is true because it has not been disproved _____
41. Generalising from an unrepresentative sample _____
42. A word or phrase whose meaning shifts mid-argument _____
43. Assuming what is true of the parts is true of the whole _____
44. The mistaken belief that a measure IS the thing it measures _____
45. An unnoticed third factor explaining an apparent link _____
46. Writing that pretends objectivity while carrying a stance _____
47. The source-criticism method of reading a document against its author's intent _____
48. An account written by someone present at the events _____
49. The study of how history is written and by whom _____
50. Judging the past by the standards of the present _____
51. A deliberate understatement for effect _____
52. Attributing human qualities to an abstraction _____
53. Two contradictory terms joined deliberately _____
54. A comparison made without 'like' or 'as' _____
55. A reference to another text or event assumed known _____
56. Language whose surface meaning inverts the intended one _____
57. The attitude a writer takes toward the subject _____
58. The central claim a passage exists to establish _____
59. A point granted to the opposing side before rebutting it _____
60. Evidence offered in support of a conclusion _____
61. Narrowing a claim so it survives an objection _____
62. An argument's move from particular cases to a general rule _____
63. An argument whose conclusion follows necessarily from its premises _____
64. Capable of being annulled at the option of one party _____
65. Of no legal effect from the outset _____
66. A judicial order requiring performance of a duty _____
67. Bring the body — the liberty writ _____
68. By what authority — the office writ _____
69. An order to a lower court to send up the record _____
70. An order restraining a body from exceeding jurisdiction _____
71. A binding earlier decision on the same point of law _____
72. The part of a judgment that binds _____
73. An observation not necessary to the decision _____
74. On the face of it _____
75. A friend of the court assisting on law _____
76. The guilty mind element of an offence _____
77. The prohibited act element of an offence _____
78. Beyond one's legal power _____
79. A case sent back to a lower court _____
80. To set aside a judgment or order _____
81. To challenge or call into question _____
82. To destroy the legal validity of _____
83. To repeal formally _____
84. Admitting no debate; final _____
85. Burdensome or heavy in obligation _____
86. Full and unqualified in authority _____
87. Relevant to the matter at hand _____
88. Superficially plausible but actually wrong _____
89. To draw a boundary around; to limit _____
90. Harmful or hostile to _____
91. Restraint in enforcing a right _____
92. Incapable of being defended _____
93. Removal from office or possession _____
94. A burden or claim attaching to property _____
95. Not easily managed or solved _____
96. Overall control and direction _____
97. A formal pardon for offences _____
98. A temporary official suspension of an activity _____
99. Given or owed in return _____
100. Developing domestic capacity in place of imports _____

