Daily RC & CR Sheet — 16 October 2026

20 Qs · 35 Min
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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. Free daily practice — clatgurukul.com/daily · Pass this sheet to a friend.

SECTION — READING COMPREHENSION

READING COMPREHENSION — HISTORY · THE DECLINE OF THE INDUS VALLEY CIVILISATION (Q1–Q5)

The Harappan Civilisation, which flourished between approximately 2600 and 1900 BCE, represented one of the ancient world's most sophisticated urban cultures. At its zenith, it covered nearly 700,000 square kilometres across present-day Pakistan and northwestern India, encompassing major urban centres such as Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh, Harappa in Punjab, Dholavira in Gujarat, and Rakhigarhi in Haryana. What distinguished the Harappans was their remarkable material uniformity: orthogonal street grids, standardised baked-brick construction in consistent ratios, elaborate underground drainage systems that astonish modern engineers, standardised weights and measures facilitating inter-city trade, and a still-undeciphered script deployed on seals and tablets. Conspicuously absent were the monumental royal tombs and grand temples typical of contemporary Mesopotamian and Egyptian polities, suggesting a more diffuse or less theatrically stratified social order.

The civilisation entered decline between roughly 1900 and 1700 BCE, and scholars have proposed several interconnected explanations. Giosan and colleagues, writing in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences in 2012, marshalled geomorphological and palaeoclimatological evidence to argue that a prolonged weakening of the South Asian monsoon fundamentally undermined the agricultural surplus on which dense urban populations depended. Closely related to this was the gradual shifting and eventual drying of the Sarasvati, or Ghaggar-Hakra, river system, which had nourished a dense corridor of Harappan settlements. Trade contraction with Mesopotamia, evidenced by a sharp drop in Harappan artefacts appearing in Mesopotamian contexts after approximately 1900 BCE, further weakened the economic integument that sustained the urban system. Perhaps most tellingly, standardised weights — the practical signature of a coordinated administrative apparatus — largely disappeared from the archaeological record after 1900 BCE, suggesting that social fragmentation was dissolving the institutions that had produced and enforced uniformity.

One explanation once popular in colonial-era scholarship — that a violent Aryan invasion triggered the collapse — has been largely abandoned. Skeletal evidence from Rakhigarhi and Harappa demonstrates substantial population continuity across the Harappan and post-Harappan phases, making a wholesale population replacement implausible. Rather than a sudden catastrophe, the current scholarly consensus favours a protracted, multi-causal decline, with a Late Harappan phase persisting between roughly 1900 and 1300 BCE, during which populations migrated eastward toward the Gangetic Plain, where agricultural conditions proved more resilient. The Harappan decline thus emerges as a case study in how climate stress, ecological change, and social fragmentation can compound one another without any single cause being sufficient to explain the whole.

1. What is the primary purpose of the passage?

◯ **A.** To present multiple scholarly theories for the decline of the Harappan Civilisation and note the evidence behind each
◯ **B.** To argue that climate change was the sole factor in the collapse of the Indus Valley Civilisation
◯ **C.** To demonstrate that the Aryan migration theory was always implausible given the archaeological record
◯ **D.** To describe and catalogue the administrative and engineering achievements of Harappan urban planners as evidence of civilisational sophistication

2. Based on the passage, what does the disappearance of standardised weights after 1900 BCE most strongly suggest?

◯ **A.** The Harappan script became unreadable, making weight-setting impossible for traders
◯ **B.** Trade with Mesopotamia ended abruptly following the breakdown of inter-regional commercial networks, which removed the practical administrative need for standardised weights and measures across Harappan cities
◯ **C.** Social fragmentation was underway — the coordinated economic system that produced standardised weights was breaking down
◯ **D.** A new ruling class with different measurement systems had taken political control of urban centres

3. Which inference is best supported by the skeletal evidence the passage describes?

◯ **A.** Aryan migration introduced an entirely new genetic stock from the northwest and systematically displaced and replaced the original Harappan population across the affected archaeological zones
◯ **B.** Post-Harappan populations at Rakhigarhi and Harappa were largely continuous with Harappan populations, suggesting no violent replacement
◯ **C.** The Late Harappan phase shows a new ethnic group that absorbed surviving Harappans into a blended society
◯ **D.** Skeletal data remains too fragmentary to draw any conclusions about migration or invasion

4. A student says the Giosan 2012 study proves climate was the cause, making all other theories secondary. Which response best evaluates this against the passage?

◯ **A.** Correct — the most recent peer-reviewed study necessarily supersedes all earlier theories of IVC decline as a matter of established scientific consensus
◯ **B.** Incorrect — the Giosan study explicitly disproves all other causal factors
◯ **C.** Partially correct — climate dominated but trade contraction is equally documented
◯ **D.** Incorrect — the passage treats climate as one of several factors; no single cause is endorsed

5. In the context of IVC decline, 'fragmentation' as used in the passage most nearly means:

◯ **A.** A breakdown of the coordinated administrative and economic systems that had unified Harappan urban centres
◯ **B.** The physical splitting of large Harappan cities into smaller satellite settlements across the subcontinent
◯ **C.** The replacement of centralised political governance by a set of competing and mutually hostile local rulers dispersed across the Indus corridor
◯ **D.** The deterioration of public infrastructure resulting from a prolonged shortage of skilled labour

READING COMPREHENSION — ARTS & CULTURE · THE REINVENTION OF BHARATANATYAM (Q6–Q10)

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What is today performed as Bharatanatyam on concert stages across India and internationally was, for much of its history, a temple art practised exclusively by devadasi communities — women ritually dedicated to the service of the deity and to the practice of Sadir, as the form was then known. In Tamil Nadu's great Shaiva temples, Sadir was integral to liturgical life, its movements codifying devotional emotion through abhinaya, its rhythmic footwork an offering to the god. This world was fundamentally disrupted by the convergence of British colonial moral regulation and the indigenous Anti-Nautch movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which stigmatised devadasi performance as immoral and licentious. The campaign succeeded in delegitimising the tradition's practitioners, accelerating the form's decline in its original temple context even as debates raged about its cultural value.

The response came from an unlikely direction. E. Krishna Iyer (1897–1968), a lawyer and freedom fighter, publicly performed Sadir in female costume in order to strip it of its association with a stigmatised community and argue for its intrinsic artistic merit. Through the Madras Music Academy, which he helped shape, he opened institutional space for the form's rehabilitation. It was Rukmini Devi Arundale (1904–1986), however, who effected the more decisive transformation. A Theosophist and aesthetic visionary, she founded Kalakshetra in Chennai in 1936 and set about constructing a codified pedagogical curriculum grounded in the Natya Shastra and the Abhinaya Darpana. She renamed the form Bharatanatyam, a title encoding multiple meanings: BHAva, RAga, and TAla — the expressive, melodic, and rhythmic pillars of the art — and the Sanskrit nATyam meaning dance; and simultaneously evoking Bharat, or India itself.

The form's classical architecture distinguishes nritta, the pure rhythmic movement expressing no narrative, from nritya, expressive movement employing abhinaya to convey poetic meaning, and natya, the fully dramatised narrative mode. Recognised by the Sangeet Natak Akademi as one of India's classical dance forms, Bharatanatyam is now taught worldwide. Yet the revival has attracted rigorous scholarly scrutiny. Researchers including Avanthi Meduri and Ananya Chatterjea have argued that Rukmini Devi's reconstruction sanitised the form's erotic and ecstatically devotional registers in favour of a refined, Brahminical concert-stage aesthetic distinct from original devadasi practice, raising enduring questions about whose cultural inheritance is performed when Bharatanatyam is staged today.

6. The passage implies that the Anti-Nautch movement had which primary effect on Bharatanatyam?

◯ **A.** It directly targeted and suppressed the living Natya Shastra performance tradition as practised within Tamil Shaiva temples across the entire region
◯ **B.** It stigmatised devadasi performance as immoral and contributed to the form's decline in its original context
◯ **C.** It encouraged the colonial government to formally ban the devadasi system by statute
◯ **D.** It led directly to E. Krishna Iyer's codification of Sadir as a concert-stage performance form

7. What does the passage suggest was the primary motivation for Rukmini Devi Arundale's work at Kalakshetra?

◯ **A.** To preserve the original erotic and devotional dimensions of Sadir as practised by devadasi communities
◯ **B.** To create employment opportunities for devadasis displaced by colonial moral regulation
◯ **C.** To establish a UNESCO-recognised classical dance curriculum accessible to international students
◯ **D.** To systematise and teach the form within a codified framework drawing on classical Sanskrit texts

8. According to the passage, what does the criticism by Avanthi Meduri and Ananya Chatterjea primarily target?

◯ **A.** The renaming of Sadir as Bharatanatyam, which they argue deliberately erased Tamil regional cultural identity in favour of an imposed pan-Indian Sanskritic framing
◯ **B.** E. Krishna Iyer's choice to perform in female costume, which they see as appropriative
◯ **C.** The argument that Rukmini Devi's concert-stage reconstruction altered or sanitised aspects of original devadasi practice
◯ **D.** The Sangeet Natak Akademi's failure to recognise devadasi practitioners as authentic custodians of the tradition

9. Which statement best characterises the relationship between the Anti-Nautch movement and the 20th-century revival as the passage presents it?

◯ **A.** Suppression of the form compelled reformers to reconstruct it as a classical art — stigmatisation produced revival
◯ **B.** The Anti-Nautch movement and the revival were entirely separate phenomena with no causal link between them
◯ **C.** The Anti-Nautch movement strengthened devadasi performance by forcing practitioners to refine their craft
◯ **D.** The revival succeeded precisely by faithfully reproducing the Anti-Nautch era's original devadasi performance conventions and aesthetic registers on the concert stage

10. The dual etymology of 'Bharatanatyam' as described in the passage most likely reveals which ideological aim of the revival?

◯ **A.** That the revival was primarily a nationalist cultural project undertaken to replace existing colonial forms with indigenous ones, drawing on classical Sanskrit texts as its primary authoritative reference
◯ **B.** That the name invoked classical textual authority and pan-Indian identity, conferring scholarly legitimacy and national prestige
◯ **C.** That Rukmini Devi distanced the form from Tamil origins by imposing a pan-Indian Sanskrit name
◯ **D.** That the form's classical status rests entirely on the Natya Shastra's authorship, not Tamil practice

SECTION — CRITICAL REASONING

CRITICAL REASONING — ETHICS · CORPORATE ETHICS DISCLOSURE AND THIRD-PARTY VERIFICATION (Q11–Q15)

India's largest listed corporations annually publish glossy Corporate Social Responsibility reports and ethics disclosures documenting their commitments to fair labour, environmental stewardship, and board diversity. Unlike financial disclosures regulated under SEBI's listing obligations, however, these ethics disclosures carry no mandatory requirement for independent verification. The result is a regime of self-certification: corporations select the metrics they report, frame data in the most favourable light, and face no external check on whether their narratives reflect ground reality. This dynamic — increasingly termed ethics-washing — produces documents designed to manage reputational risk rather than communicate genuine compliance.

The practical consequences are not trivial. An IIM Ahmedabad study published in 2024 examined 200 listed Indian companies over five years and found that corporations producing the most voluminous and elaborate ethics disclosures were no more compliant with labour laws, environmental standards, or board diversity requirements than those with minimal disclosures. The correlation between disclosure quality and actual compliance was effectively zero. The authors concluded that the current voluntary disclosu rewards rhetoric, not performance, and that investors and civil society organisations relying on these documents to make cons decisions — allocation of capital, reputational endorsements, supply-chain partnerships — are being systematically misled.



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The solution is structural. India already possesses the institutional model: mandatory independent financial auditing, required under the Companies Act and overseen by the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India, exists precisely because legislators recognised that investors cannot independently verify complex corporate financial claims. The same informational asymmetry applies to ethics disclosures. If a company asserts that it has zero child labour incidents, pays all workers above minimum wage, and achieves gender parity on its board, neither investors nor regulators can evaluate these claims without independent attestation. The argument that ethics cannot be measured as precisely as financial data underestimates the sophistication of third-party social auditing, which has matured considerably as a profession. Parliament should therefore amend the Companies Act to require all listed companies to obtain mandatory third-party verification of their annual ethics disclosures, aligning accountability standards across financial and non-financial reporting and restoring the informational integrity on which legitimate markets depend.

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

◯ **A.** Large corporations engage in ethics-washing because there is currently no statutory penalty for misleading disclosures
◯ **B.** SEBI should extend its financial auditing framework to cover non-financial sustainability disclosures directly
◯ **C.** Parliament should require mandatory independent third-party verification of ethics disclosures by listed companies
◯ **D.** The IIM Ahmedabad 2024 study should be replicated across multiple sectors before any legislative intervention

12. Which of the following most directly supports the analogy between financial audits and ethics-disclosure verification?

◯ **A.** The same informational asymmetry that financial audits were designed to address is equally present in ethics disclosures
◯ **B.** Financial audits are governed by the ICAI, which could simply extend its existing remit to cover ethics reports
◯ **C.** Several countries have already mandated ESG verification and recorded improved compliance outcomes thereafter
◯ **D.** The Companies Act already contains specific provisions enabling and encouraging voluntary ethics-related and CSR disclosures by all listed companies on an annual basis

13. Which assumption is MOST necessary for the argument's conclusion to hold?

◯ **A.** That mandatory third-party verification will completely and permanently eliminate all recognised forms of corporate ethics-washing and reputational misrepresentation
◯ **B.** That the IIM Ahmedabad 2024 study was conducted using methodologically sound research protocols
◯ **C.** That compliance with labour laws is the most important dimension of corporate ethics to measure
◯ **D.** That mandatory verification would produce more accurate reporting, not merely raise the cost of inaccurate reports

14. Which of the following, if true, would MOST strengthen the argument's central claim?

◯ **A.** The IIM Ahmedabad study was funded by an industry lobby opposed to mandatory CSR reporting
◯ **B.** A UK pilot showed 45% fewer overstated claims and 30% higher measured compliance after mandatory ethics verification
◯ **C.** SEBI has recently issued a consultation paper on proposed non-financial auditing standards for Indian companies
◯ **D.** Several law professors have argued in peer-reviewed journals that ethics audits are legally and operationally feasible

15. Which of the following, if true, MOST weakens the argument?

◯ **A.** Some Indian corporations already voluntarily commission third-party ethics auditors without any legal requirement
◯ **B.** The Companies Act already imposes specific statutory penalties for any false or materially misleading statements or omissions in a company's annual statutory reports and disclosures
◯ **C.** Harvard Business School research found mandatory ethics verification produced no compliance gains — absorbed as compliance theatre
◯ **D.** The analogy to financial audits ignores that ethics cannot be quantified as precisely as financial data

CRITICAL REASONING — EDUCATION · AGAINST ISOLATED CODING CLASSES (Q16–Q20)

Several Indian state governments have recently made coding a mandatory subject from Class 6 onwards, positioning it as the educational foundation of a future digital economy. The aspiration is legitimate: the capacity to think algorithmically — to decompose problems, identify logical dependencies, and construct systematic solutions — is genuinely valuable across disciplines and professions. The difficulty is that mandatory coding classes, as typically designed, do not reliably teach this capacity. They teach syntax.

A substantial body of educational research distinguishes between computational thinking — the transferable cognitive skill — and programming, which is the expression of that skill in a particular language or environment. The research consistently shows that computational thinking is more effectively cultivated through mathematics, structured logical puzzles, and deductive reasoning exercises than through the rote acquisition of a programming language. A student who solves a lateral sequence problem by constructing an explicit deductive argument has internalised a reasoning structure that travels with her into law, medicine, engineering, and management. A student who has learned to write a for-loop in Python has acquired a paradigm-dependent technique: when Python is superseded, or when the student enters a domain using a different paradigm, the specific skill transfers poorly. The loop dissolves; the deductive habit endures.

Mandatory coding classes therefore risk producing a false sense of digital literacy. Students who complete a semester of Scratch or Python emerge believing they have acquired transferable analytical skills, while they have in fact acquired platform familiarity. Employers in technology, finance, and consulting who seek genuine problem-solvers routinely report that candidates skilled in programming syntax frequently struggle with unstructured logical challenges that require first-principles reasoning — precisely the capacity a mathematics-and-logic curriculum is designed to build. The computational thinking objective does not require a new subject. It requires the enrichment of existing mathematics and logic instruction with problem-decomposition tasks, algorithmic thinking exercises, and structured deduction. Creating a parallel coding class as a substitute is an expensive administrative response to a genuine educational challenge that misidentifies the mechanism by which the desired skill is actually acquired.

16. Which of the following best captures the argument's main conclusion?

◯ **A.** Coding should be taught in secondary school only after students have mastered advanced mathematics first
◯ **B.** State governments should consult educational researchers before mandating any new curriculum addition
◯ **C.** Python and Scratch are pedagogically inferior programming environments that should be comprehensively replaced with genuinely language-agnostic computational thinking platforms
◯ **D.** Computational thinking should be taught through mathematics and logic instruction rather than isolated syntax-specif programming classes

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17. The argument relies most directly on which assumption?

◯ **A.** That educational research on computational thinking is replicable across all demographic groups in India
◯ **B.** That maths and logic develop transferable reasoning at least as well as coding does
◯ **C.** That Python and Scratch will become obsolete programming languages within the next decade
◯ **D.** That teachers who currently teach mathematics are already capable of teaching computational thinking

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

◯ **A.** Several countries that mandated coding curricula have seen improved employment outcomes for their graduates
◯ **B.** Mathematics curricula in Indian schools already contain logic puzzles and deductive reasoning exercises
◯ **C.** A meta-analysis of 47 studies showed programming students transferred reasoning to novel domains more than maths-only students
◯ **D.** Coding classes are consistently popular with students and demonstrably increase engagement and overall motivation in STEM subjects across all age groups and school types

19. Which fact would most STRENGTHEN the argument's central claim?

◯ **A.** A longitudinal study found maths-track students matched coding peers on programming tests yet outperformed them on abstract reasoning
◯ **B.** Several successful technology entrepreneurs have publicly stated they learned to code as children in school
◯ **C.** Coding as a mandatory subject consistently increases school enrolment rates in rural and semi-urban areas where digital access remains persistently limited across educational institutions
◯ **D.** The National Education Policy 2020 mentions computational thinking as a desired learning outcome for students

20. What is the author's primary objection to the current mandatory coding curriculum?

◯ **A.** It uses programming languages like Python and Scratch that are pedagogically outdated and unlikely to remain technically relevant or widely used professionally within the next decade
◯ **B.** It is implemented without adequate teacher training for the programming-specific content it requires
◯ **C.** It is too expensive to implement uniformly and equitably across rural and urban schools
◯ **D.** It teaches narrow, syntax-specific programming skills instead of the transferable reasoning abilities that constitute genuine computational thinking

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