Daily RC & CR Sheet — 27 October 2026

20 Qs · 35 Min
+1 / −0.25

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 — PHILOSOPHY & IDEAS · MORAL LUCK AND THE LIMITS OF CONTROL (Q1–Q5)

We tend to hold that a person can be fairly judged only for what lay within her control. The intuition is old and sturdy. It underwrites our excuse of the infant, the sleepwalker and the coerced, and Kant elevated it into the claim that a good will shines like a jewel whatever it manages to accomplish. Yet the principle, applied consistently, begins to dissolve the very practice it was meant to refine.

Consider two drivers who are equally careless in glancing at a phone. One passes an empty crossing; the other meets a child who has stepped out unseen. The recklessness is identical and the control identical, yet the second driver will be condemned, will condemn himself, and may be imprisoned. Thomas Nagel called this phenomenon moral luck. Resultant luck, the kind just described, is only one species. There is also constitutive luck, the temperament and upbringing that make one person generous and another sullen, and circumstantial luck, the tests that history happens to set. The man who would have collaborated under occupation but never lived under one escapes a verdict he might have earned.

Responses divide. The first denies that luck should matter and urges us to revise our reactions, judging intention alone. This is coherent but costly, because it asks us to feel no differently towards the surgeon who kills through negligence than towards one who merely might have. The agent's own regret seems to rebut the proposal: a driver who has killed finds no consolation in being told that he is exactly as blameworthy as his luckier twin. The second response accepts that moral assessment is hostage to fortune and treats the control principle as a regulative ideal rather than a law. Bernard Williams pressed this further, suggesting that an agent's identity is partly constituted by what happened through him, so that detaching person from outcome is not a purification but an amputation.

Neither camp is entirely comfortable, and perhaps that is the instructive result. The problem of moral luck does not show that morality is an illusion. It shows that our concept of responsibility is stitched from two threads, a demand for fairness that looks inward at the will and a demand for accountability that looks outward at consequences, and the stitching shows. A mature ethics may have to live with the seam rather than pretend to remove it.

1. Which of the following best captures the central argument of the passage?

◯ **A.** Moral judgement should rest wholly on intention, because outcomes lie outside an agent's control and therefore cannot properly bear on blame, whatever the consequences that may follow from it

◯ **B.** The demand that blame track control, applied consistently, collides with our actual judgements and exposes two uneasy strands within responsibility

◯ **C.** Resultant luck is the only genuine form of moral luck, and the other forms Nagel describes are disguised versions of the same phenomenon

◯ **D.** Kant's account of the good will has been refuted by the observation that agents regret outcomes which they never intended to bring about

2. Which of the following can be most reasonably inferred from the passage?

◯ **A.** A driver who kills a pedestrian and a driver who narrowly misses one should receive identical legal punishment, since their conduct was identical

◯ **B.** Bernard Williams rejected the control principle altogether and held that every judgement about the outcome of an action is a matter of luck

◯ **C.** Anyone who adopts the proposal to judge intention alone will, sooner or later, come to feel the same regret that an agent feels after causing harm

◯ **D.** The control principle explains some of our familiar excuses, yet extended to outcomes it would require changes in judgements most people are reluctant to make

3. The author's attitude towards the problem of moral luck is best described as

◯ **A.** analytical and even-handed, treating the unresolved tension as instructive rather than as a defect that must be eliminated at once

◯ **B.** quietly partisan, favouring the second response while presenting the discussion as though both sides were being weighed equally

◯ **C.** dismissive, regarding the problem as an ingenious puzzle that has little bearing on how responsibility is really assigned in practice

◯ **D.** alarmed, warning that the control principle threatens to undermine the foundations of every system of justice that now operates

4. In the first paragraph, the phrase 'the very practice it was meant to refine' uses 'refine' to mean

◯ **A.** to purify a substance by removing the impurities that are mixed into it

◯ **B.** to make more elaborate and ornate by adding detail and decoration to it

◯ **C.** to improve by making more precise and more defensible than it was before

◯ **D.** to restrict within narrower limits so that fewer cases fall under its scope

5. The author's reference to the driver who has killed, in the third paragraph, serves mainly to

◯ **A.** suggest that regret is an irrational response which a fully reflective agent would eventually learn to set aside

◯ **B.** offer evidence from the agent's own reactions that the proposal to ignore outcomes does not fit how people actually respond to what they cause

◯ **C.** show that constitutive luck is more troubling than resultant luck because it shapes the very character of the person who acts

◯ **D.** support Williams's claim about identity by showing that the driver's regret amounts to a form of knowledge about himself and about the person he has become

READING COMPREHENSION — ECONOMICS · WHY SERVICES KEEP GETTING DEARER (Q6–Q10)

Why does a haircut cost so much more than it did a century ago, when the barber's task has not changed at all? William Ba
William Bowen posed a version of the question about the string quartet. Four musicians are needed to play a Beethoven quar

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as in 1850, and no cleverness can shorten the piece or dispense with a player. Their answer, now called Baumol's cost disease, is that the problem lies not in the quartet but in the factory next door.

Suppose an economy has two sectors. In manufacturing, machines and better methods allow each worker to produce more every year, and wages rise in step with that output. In the performing arts, or in teaching and nursing, output per worker is stubbornly fixed, because the labour is the product. Yet the quartet's cellist can switch professions, so employers in the stagnant sector must raise pay to keep her, even though her contribution has not grown. Costs in that sector therefore climb faster than prices in general, not through mismanagement or greed but because wages in an economy tend to move together. The disease is thus a relative-price phenomenon: services grow dearer relative to goods.

First, the argument does not predict that society grows poorer. Since manufactured goods become cheaper, the average household can afford the dearer services, and labour drifts towards them; a rising share of health and education in national spending can reflect rising prosperity rather than waste. Second, the stagnation is not absolute. Online lectures, diagnostic software and standardised protocols have lifted measured productivity in some services, and the cure for the disease, where one exists, lies in such innovation. Yet these gains come with their own ambiguity, since a teacher who handles a class of two hundred may have raised productivity on paper while lowering what each pupil receives.

The policy consequences are sobering. Public budgets that fund services will find that the same quantity of service consumes a growing fraction of revenue even if nothing is wasted, which makes the familiar instruction to control costs partly futile. A government that treats every rise in per-pupil expense as proof of inefficiency will cut quality to chase a target that the structure of the economy keeps moving. The better question is not whether the bill is growing but whether the quality delivered for it is growing too.

6. Which of the following best expresses the main point of the passage?

◯ **A.** Rising costs in labour-intensive services arise largely from wages moving together across sectors whose productivity grows unequally, and not necessarily from waste

◯ **B.** Manufacturing has become so productive that societies can no longer afford to employ people in teaching, nursing or the performing arts, and that conclusion applies to every society whatever its level of income

◯ **C.** Governments should abandon efforts to restrain spending on public services, because such efforts only reduce the quality that pupils receive

◯ **D.** Online technology has already cured the cost disease in education and health, leaving only the performing arts to suffer its effects

7. Suppose that productivity in manufacturing stopped growing and wages there stopped rising, while productivity in services stayed as it is. According to the reasoning of the passage, which of the following would most likely follow?

◯ **A.** Services would become cheaper in absolute terms as workers returned from the stagnant sectors to the factories that had paid them well

◯ **B.** The cost disease would intensify, because employers in services would have to raise pay faster to compensate for the stalled factories

◯ **C.** The relative price gap between services and goods would stop widening, since the pressure on service wages came from manufacturing gains

◯ **D.** Public budgets for education and health would still absorb a growing share of revenue, because wages in all sectors remain linked to one another

8. The passage suggests that the instruction to 'control costs' in public services is

◯ **A.** harmful in every case, since services of good quality cannot be delivered without extravagant spending on salaries and facilities

◯ **B.** sound in principle but disregarded by governments, which prefer to expand spending rather than demand efficiency from providers

◯ **C.** unnecessary, because productivity in services has recently grown faster than productivity in manufacturing and so lowers costs

◯ **D.** a limited guide, since a rising per-unit expense alone does not prove inefficiency and chasing it may sacrifice the quality delivered

9. As used in the final paragraph, 'sobering' most nearly means

◯ **A.** free from the influence of alcohol or similar intoxicants

◯ **B.** prompting a serious and realistic appraisal of the facts

◯ **C.** unexpectedly encouraging for those who had feared the worst

◯ **D.** restrained to the point of dullness in tone and expression

10. The example of the teacher who handles a class of two hundred is used mainly to

◯ **A.** show that online teaching has failed to raise productivity in any measurable manner within the education sector, even when pupils' results are taken into account

◯ **B.** argue that stagnation in services is absolute and cannot be relieved by any form of innovation or reorganisation

◯ **C.** caution that measured gains in service productivity may overstate real gains when the quality of what is delivered is not counted

◯ **D.** support the view that salaries of teachers should be raised to reflect the greater number of pupils each of them must handle

SECTION — CRITICAL REASONING

CRITICAL REASONING — ETHICS · THE PRICE OF PENANCE (Q11–Q15)

When a bank found guilty of misleading depositors announces a large donation to a financial literacy programme, the press release tends to be received as a sign of conscience. It should be received as a transaction. The practice of moral offsetting, in which a wrong in one account is balanced by a good in another, rests on the assumption that ethical value is fungible: that a quantity of harm done here can be cancelled by an equal quantity of benefit conferred there. Ordinary morality does not work this way. A man who breaks a promise to his friend has not repaired the breach by giving blood on the same afternoon, however sincerely and however usefully.

The deeper trouble is what offsetting does to the person or institution that relies on it. In a series of laboratory studies, participants who were told they could compensate for a lie by donating a small sum went on to lie more often than those who had no such option. Researchers interpreted this as licensing: once a wrong carries a known price, it becomes a purchasable service rather than a prohibition. Corporate practice follows the same logic. Firms that budget for regulatory penalties as a cost of operating, and pair them with visible philanthropy, are not showing contrition. They are pricing misconduct and finding the price tolerable.

Defenders reply that offsets at least leave the world better than inaction, and that the beneficiaries of a donation do not care about the donor's motives. The point is fair as far as it goes, but it answers a question nobody asked. No one denies that the school gets

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question is whether the habit of offsetting makes the donor more or less likely to commit the next wrong. Where the evidence suggests less caution, the net result may well be negative, because the harms of the original conduct fall on people other than those who receive the donation. Depositors are not helped by a literacy programme they will never attend.

If this is right, regulators and courts should not treat voluntary donations as mitigating factors when judging misconduct, and the public should withhold the moral credit it now extends. Wrongs are answered by restitution to those who suffered them and by a change in conduct, not by generosity directed elsewhere.

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

◯ **A.** Moral offsetting is ineffective as a practice because the beneficiaries of donations do not care about the motives of the donor
◯ **B.** Corporations that donate after misconduct are insincere and should be punished more severely than corporations that do not donate
◯ **C.** Ethical value can be exchanged only in laboratory conditions and cannot be exchanged in the ordinary conduct of institutions
◯ **D.** Balancing a wrong with a good elsewhere does not answer the wrong, so courts and the public should not credit such donations in judging misconduct

12. Which of the following is an assumption on which the editorial's argument depends?

◯ **A.** The tendency shown by laboratory participants to repeat a wrong once compensation is possible is also found in institutions that pair misconduct with donations
◯ **B.** Donations made after a finding of misconduct are always made with the intention of softening public criticism of the donor and with no other purpose in view at all
◯ **C.** Regulatory penalties are usually set at a level lower than the profits that the misconduct has already brought to the firm
◯ **D.** The beneficiaries of such donations are generally unaware of the misconduct that preceded the gift that they have received

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

◯ **A.** Most beneficiaries of corporate donations are unable to tell whether the donor has been found guilty of misconduct in the past
◯ **B.** Laboratory participants who donated after lying reported feeling more guilty than those who lied and made no donation at all
◯ **C.** A large field study found that firms making donations after a violation were no more likely to violate again than comparable firms which made none
◯ **D.** Several regulators now accept voluntary donations as a mitigating factor, and their decisions are rarely overturned on appeal in the courts that review them

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

◯ **A.** Charitable foundations established by firms after violations spend a smaller share of their income on administration than foundations in general
◯ **B.** Firms that had a policy of making a donation whenever they were fined went on to record more regulatory violations than comparable firms without such a policy
◯ **C.** Public opinion surveys show that consumers think more favourably of firms that donate after a violation than of firms that remain silent
◯ **D.** Most laboratory participants who lied and then donated said afterwards that they would not have donated if no lie had been told

15. The reasoning in the editorial is most closely paralleled by which of the following?

◯ **A.** Because most candidates who copy in examinations also neglect revision, boards wishing to reduce copying should require proof of revision before candidates are allowed to sit the paper
◯ **B.** Allowing candidates to retake a failed paper is fair because it gives those who copied a second chance, so boards should treat retakes as a reward for effort when judging copying
◯ **C.** Some candidates earn bonus marks by writing essays while others do not; since bonus marks are not open to all alike, boards cannot claim that marks measure ability exactly
◯ **D.** Letting candidates win back marks lost for copying through a bonus essay puts a price on copying; since candidates offered this option copied more, boards should not count bonus essays as mitigation in cases of copying

CRITICAL REASONING — EDUCATION · ONE DISTRICT, ONE CURRICULUM, ONE VERDICT (Q16–Q20)

When the state's Board of Secondary Education released its results last month, the headline figure was a pass rate of 81 per cent in the district of Rampur, up from 69 per cent five years earlier. Officials were quick to credit the activity-based curriculum introduced there in that same year, which replaced end-of-chapter recall questions with project work, group problem-solving and short oral assessments. Sceptics have countered that pass rates are a blunt instrument, but the comparison with neighbouring districts is harder to dismiss. Over the same five years, the three adjacent districts, which kept the traditional syllabus, saw their pass rates rise by only three points on average.

The sceptics' remaining objection is that the Board's papers may have grown easier. This is implausible. The Board sets one paper for all districts, and a change in difficulty would have lifted results in the neighbouring districts as well. It did not. Nor can the gain be put down to better-prepared entrants, since the district's Class VIII results, recorded before the curriculum reached the secondary level, were no stronger than those of its neighbours. Rampur's students arrived in Class IX much like everybody else's, and left it better.

It is also worth noting what the curriculum cost. Teachers in the district received a two-week training programme, and per-pupil spending rose by less than four per cent, a modest sum beside the gain in outcomes. Teachers interviewed during the transition spoke of initial confusion followed by a gradual preference for the new methods, particularly the oral assessments, which they said revealed misunderstandings that written tests concealed. Parents, for their part, reported that children discussed schoolwork at home more than before.

None of this is conclusive in the way a controlled trial would be. But policy is rarely made with controlled trials, and the weight of evidence here points in a single direction. The district gained far more than its neighbours, the Board's papers cannot explain the difference, and the entry-level data rule out the most obvious alternative. The most reasonable explanation of Rampur's improvement is the curriculum itself, and the state would be unwise to ignore what it suggests for schools elsewhere.

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

◯ **A.** The activity-based curriculum is the most reasonable explanation of the improvement in Rampur's pass rate, and the sta take note of it for other schools

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◯ **B.** Pass rates are a more reliable measure of school quality than the oral assessments that teachers in Rampur have come to prefer over written tests, whatever the Board's papers may have demanded
◯ **C.** The Board's papers have grown easier over the five years, which explains why results rose in Rampur and in the neighbouring districts alike
◯ **D.** Controlled trials are of little use in education, because policy must be made on the basis of comparisons between neighbouring districts instead

17. Which of the following is an assumption on which the argument depends?
◯ **A.** Pass rates rose more in Rampur than in the neighbouring districts because Rampur began the five years with fewer students than they had
◯ **B.** No other change specific to Rampur during the five years, such as a new programme of support for students, accounts for the larger gain
◯ **C.** Teachers in all four districts would prefer the oral assessments to written tests if they were given a free choice between them
◯ **D.** The two-week training programme was the single most expensive element in the cost of introducing the new curriculum in the district

18. Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the argument?
◯ **A.** Teachers in Rampur reported that the initial confusion over the new methods lasted longer than they had expected before it eased
◯ **B.** The neighbouring districts, though they kept the traditional syllabus, introduced new textbooks during the same five years
◯ **C.** Parents in Rampur said that they were more satisfied with the district's schools than they had been five years earlier
◯ **D.** During the five years, Rampur alone among the four districts received a large state-funded programme of free remedial tuition for Class IX and X students

19. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the argument?
◯ **A.** Rampur's pass rate in Class VIII rose by nearly as much as its secondary pass rate during the same five years
◯ **B.** Several teachers in the neighbouring districts attended the training programme held in Rampur and later discussed it with colleagues
◯ **C.** Within Rampur, schools that applied the curriculum in full showed larger gains in pass rates than schools that applied it only in part
◯ **D.** The state announced that it would extend the curriculum to every district in the following year at a cost of four per cent per pupil, after a review of the results

20. Which of the following identifies a questionable aspect of the reasoning in the argument?
◯ **A.** It eliminates a few alternative explanations and then treats the remaining one as established, although other explanations that were never examined may still be possible
◯ **B.** It relies on the opinions of teachers and parents to establish a conclusion that can only be supported by examination results
◯ **C.** It assumes that a rise in pass rates is by itself a better measure of the quality of schooling than the oral assessments are
◯ **D.** It treats the fact that the curriculum was inexpensive as a sufficient reason to conclude that it was also effective in raising results, without looking at any evidence about the results themselves

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