Daily RC & CR Sheet — 6 November 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 — LITERARY FICTION · THE TOP SHELF (Q1–Q5)

My father kept the unclaimed clothes on the top shelf, folded in brown paper and tied with the same white thread he used for tacking. Each parcel carried a slip in his small, leaning hand: a name, a date and, usually, a sum still owing. When I came back to close the shop, the shelf was the first thing I saw, and the last thing I wanted to touch.

The landlord had given me a week. He stood in the doorway on the first morning, jingling keys he did not need, and asked whether I meant to sell the machines. I said I did not know. He said that the Singer alone would fetch something, and that sentiment had never paid anyone's rent. I agreed with him, which seemed to disappoint him; I think he had prepared a longer speech.

I began with the drawers, because drawers ask for nothing. Buttons sorted by colour, chalk worn to slivers, a receipt book whose last entry was eleven months old. Then, on the third day, I untied the first parcel. Inside was a child's school shirt, the collar turned so neatly that the frayed edge had vanished. The slip said Rafiq, class four, twelve rupees. Rafiq would be well past class four by now. Perhaps he had children of his own, in shirts that someone else had turned.

There were forty-one parcels. A wedding blouse with the hooks still unsewn. Trousers taken in at the waist and then, the chalk lines showed it, let out again, as if the customer had changed his mind about who he was going to be. A coat whose owner had paid in full and simply never come.

My father had not been a hopeful man. He read the newspaper aloud in a voice that expected the worst and was rarely surprised. Yet he had dusted this shelf every Monday; my mother told me so on the telephone, in the flat tone she kept for facts she did not wish to examine.

On the last evening the landlord came back. I had sold the machines. The parcels were stacked by the door, still tied. He asked what I intended to do with them. I told him I was waiting for a few people to come by.

1. The narrator says she began with the drawers 'because drawers ask for nothing'. This most strongly suggests that she

- ◯ **A.** had been told by the landlord that the drawers had to be emptied before anything else
- ◯ **B.** chose a task free of emotional claims, delaying the parcels she sensed would demand a response
- ◯ **C.** believed the drawers held the shop's most valuable items and wished to secure those first of all
- ◯ **D.** wanted to find the receipt book quickly so that she could total what customers still owed

2. Which of the following is most strongly implied about the narrator's father?

- ◯ **A.** He was a careless businessman who let debts pile up because he disliked asking for money
- ◯ **B.** He kept the parcels chiefly as proof of unpaid sums that he meant to recover through the landlord
- ◯ **C.** His gloomy reading of the news was a pose he dropped whenever his wife or daughter was present
- ◯ **D.** Beneath his gloomy manner he privately expected that some customers might still return

3. The narrator's final reply to the landlord is best read as

- ◯ **A.** a quietly ironic answer showing that she has inherited her father's patient, improbable waiting
- ◯ **B.** a sarcastic dismissal meant to punish the landlord for his earlier remark about sentiment and rent
- ◯ **C.** a literal statement that she has written to the forty-one customers and expects them very shortly
- ◯ **D.** an admission of defeat, since she has failed to find buyers for the parcels along with the machines

4. In describing trousers 'taken in at the waist and then … let out again', the narrator mainly

- ◯ **A.** displays her technical knowledge of tailoring to establish herself as a reliable narrator
- ◯ **B.** criticises the customer's indecision, which she blames for her father's long list of unpaid accounts
- ◯ **C.** uses a small physical trace to suggest an unseen customer's larger and unresolved life story
- ◯ **D.** introduces a comic interlude to relieve the tension before the father's character is described

5. As used in 'the collar turned so neatly that the frayed edge had vanished', the word 'turned' most nearly means

- ◯ **A.** unpicked and reversed, so that the worn side was hidden from view
- ◯ **B.** rotated to face the other way while the shirt was being worn
- ◯ **C.** folded down flat and pressed hard, so that it would lie neatly
- ◯ **D.** dyed a different shade, so that the older stains were concealed

READING COMPREHENSION — POLITICS & GOVERNANCE · WATCHING MORE, UNDERSTANDING LESS (Q6–Q10)

Few principles in public life enjoy such unanimous praise as transparency. Open the files, televise the debates, publish the minutes, and, so the argument runs, corruption will wither and citizens will at last see how they are governed. The instinct is sound. Yet a growing body of experience suggests that exposing every stage of a decision does not always expose the decision itself.

Consider what happens when a committee that once met privately is required to deliberate on camera. Members do not stop bargaining; they stop bargaining in the room. Compromise, which requires each side to concede something it has publicly promised never to concede, migrates to corridors, telephone calls and pre-meetings that no rule can reach. The formal session becomes a performance of positions already settled elsewhere. Observers gain a clear view of a stage on which nothing is decided.

This is not an argument for secrecy. It is an argument for distinguishing between two things that transparency campaigns tend to merge: openness about how officials arrive at a choice, and openness about what they chose and why. The first exposes del
which is messy, provisional and vulnerable to grandstanding. The second exposes reasons, which can be tested. A minister

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publish the grounds for a licensing decision, the evidence she relied on and the alternatives she rejected can be held to account far more effectively than one whose every tentative remark in a meeting is broadcast.

Courts have long understood this. Judges confer in private but must give reasoned judgments in public, and it is the judgment, not the conference, that appellate courts and citizens scrutinise. Few seriously propose that judicial conferences be televised, yet nobody calls the judiciary opaque on that account.

The practical lesson is that disclosure rules should be designed around accountability rather than visibility. A requirement that every decision record the options considered and the reasons for preferring one is less dramatic than a live camera, but it is harder to evade, because a missing or thin reason is itself visible. Visibility rewards the official who performs well; a duty to give reasons rewards the official who decides well. A democracy that confuses the two may find itself watching more and understanding less.

6. Which of the following best states the author's central claim?

- ◯ **A.** Transparency has failed as a principle, so committees should once again be allowed to meet in private
- ◯ **B.** Televising committee meetings has ended all bargaining, leaving the formal sessions empty of debate
- ◯ **C.** Disclosure should centre on reasons for decisions, not on broadcasting deliberations that move elsewhere
- ◯ **D.** Courts are more accountable than ministers because judges must publish their reasoned judgments

7. The sentence 'Observers gain a clear view of a stage on which nothing is decided' implies that

- ◯ **A.** the formal session is visible, but the real decisions have already been made in unseen settings
- ◯ **B.** observers are too poorly informed to understand the decisions being taken in front of them
- ◯ **C.** committees meeting on camera reach no decisions at all, so their work stalls indefinitely
- ◯ **D.** officials deliberately stage the public sessions in order to mislead the citizens who watch them

8. The paragraph about courts serves primarily to

- ◯ **A.** argue that judges, like committees, should be required to televise their private conferences in full
- ◯ **B.** criticise the judiciary for an opacity that citizens have wrongly been willing to tolerate
- ◯ **C.** concede that the author's proposal works for courts but cannot be extended to ministers
- ◯ **D.** show via an accepted institution that private deliberation can coexist with public accountability

9. The author would most likely endorse which of the following reforms?

- ◯ **A.** Streaming every internal meeting of a regulator live, including its informal pre-meetings
- ◯ **B.** Requiring a regulator to publish, for each ruling, the options it weighed and why it chose one
- ◯ **C.** Exempting regulators from disclosure entirely so that they can bargain candidly with the industry
- ◯ **D.** Publishing transcripts of all calls between officials so that corridor bargaining is exposed

10. Which finding would most undermine the author's claim that a duty to give reasons is 'harder to evade'?

- ◯ **A.** Committees that began meeting on camera went on holding private pre-meetings before each session
- ◯ **B.** Appellate courts overturn judgments with thin reasons far more often than judgments with full reasons
- ◯ **C.** Officials bound to give reasons routinely file boilerplate grounds, and these attract no scrutiny
- ◯ **D.** Citizens watch televised committee proceedings far more often than they read published decisions

SECTION — CRITICAL REASONING

CRITICAL REASONING — POLITICAL ECONOMY · THE SUBSIDY AUCTION (Q11–Q15)

Every few months another state government announces that it has won a large manufacturing plant. The press release lists the jobs, the investment figure and a smiling chief minister. What it rarely lists is the price: years of waived electricity duty, reimbursed state GST, land at a fraction of its market value and capital subsidies that can run to a quarter of the project cost. When the bill is added up, many of these victories look less like triumphs of policy than auctions in which the states bid against one another and the investor collects the difference.

The economics of the auction are straightforward. A firm deciding where to build a battery or semiconductor plant has usually already decided to build it in India; its choice among states turns on ports, power, skilled labour and courts that resolve disputes within a reasonable time. Incentives, in such cases, do not create the investment. They merely relocate it, and transfer public money to shareholders in the process. The state that wins may pay more per job than the plant will ever return in taxes; the state that loses has spent months of administrative attention on a bid it was never likely to win.

Defenders of competitive incentives argue that rivalry disciplines governments, forcing them to clear approvals faster and improve infrastructure. That is true of competition on fundamentals. It is not true of competition on subsidies, which are the cheapest thing a government can offer in the short run and the most expensive in the long run, because they are paid out of future budgets that the present minister will never have to defend.

The remedy is not to forbid states from courting investors but to change what they may compete with. A compact among the states, monitored through the GST Council or a similar forum, could cap capital subsidies as a share of project cost and require every incentive package to be published with an estimate of its cost per job. States would remain free to compete on land records, power reliability and dispute resolution, the things that actually make a location productive. Federalism would be better served by a race to the top than by an auction that every state can lose.

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

- ◯ **A.** Competition among states for investment harms federalism and should be prohibited by the Union
- ◯ **B.** Investment subsidies always cost a state more per job than its plant could ever return in taxes
- ◯ **C.** Firms choose among Indian states solely on the basis of ports, power, skills and court speed
- ◯ **D.** States should agree to cap and publish investment subsidies so that they compete on fundamentals

12. The claim that incentives 'merely relocate' investment depends on which of the following assumptions?

- ◯ **A.** A state that loses a bid gains nothing at all from the administrative effort it spent
- ◯ **B.** The firm's decision to invest in India was not itself driven by expected state incentives
- ◯ **C.** Capital subsidies are larger than electricity duty waivers in a typical incentive package
- ◯ **D.** The Union offers no national incentives that could take the place of the states' packages

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

◯ **A.** Subsidised plants drew supplier clusters whose taxes exceeded the subsidy's cost within a decade
◯ **B.** Several states already publish their incentive packages, though without any estimate of cost per job
◯ **C.** Chief ministers often announce investment figures larger than the amount eventually invested
◯ **D.** The GST Council has occasionally struggled to reach consensus on the tax rates for some goods

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

◯ **A.** States that offered the largest subsidy packages also improved their land records fastest
◯ **B.** Several states have recently set up single-window portals to speed up approvals for projects
◯ **C.** Surveyed investors ranked power and contract enforcement above subsidies, which seldom swayed them
◯ **D.** Investors have increasingly chosen coastal states, which also happen to offer the largest subsidy packages

15. The sentence 'That is true of competition on fundamentals' functions in the argument as

◯ **A.** the main conclusion, which the remainder of the argument is designed to support
◯ **B.** evidence that subsidies discipline governments into clearing approvals more quickly
◯ **C.** a rejection of the defenders' view that rivalry among state governments ever has any benefit
◯ **D.** a partial concession to an objection, confined to a kind of competition the author favours

CRITICAL REASONING — SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY POLICY · FUNDING BY LOT (Q16–Q20)

Science funding agencies take pride in peer review. A proposal is read by experts, scored, ranked and funded if it lands above a cut-off. The ritual is meant to ensure that public money goes to the best ideas. The trouble is that, near the cut-off, the ritual cannot do what it claims.

When the same set of proposals is sent to two independent panels, the panels agree reasonably well about which proposals are weak. They agree far less about which of the strong proposals is strongest. A proposal ranked fifth by one panel may be ranked twenty-fifth by another, and the difference often reflects which reviewers happened to be assigned rather than any property of the science. Yet the funding line, drawn through this zone of disagreement, turns a near-random difference into the difference between a funded laboratory and a closed one. Adding reviewers does not cure this, because more opinions about an uncertain question do not make the question less uncertain.

The ranking has a second cost. Reviewers asked to separate excellent proposals from one another tend to reward the familiar: projects that extend established lines of work, led by applicants with long records, using methods the panel already trusts. Bold proposals that might fail divide reviewers, and a divided score is a low score. Over time, applicants learn to write the proposal that offends no one.

Agencies should therefore stop pretending to a precision they do not have. Peer review should be used for what it does well, screening out proposals that are unsound, and the remaining fundable proposals should be selected by lottery. Several funders, including New Zealand's Health Research Council and the Swiss National Science Foundation, have already trialled such partial lotteries for parts of their budgets. A lottery is honest about uncertainty, removes the incentive to write safe proposals and spares reviewers weeks of spurious ranking.

The objection that a lottery would sometimes fund a merely good proposal over an excellent one assumes that the panel could tell the two apart. The evidence says that, above the threshold, it largely cannot. A system that cannot identify the best should at least stop penalising the boldest.

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

◯ **A.** Funders should use review only to screen out unsound proposals and choose among the rest by lottery
◯ **B.** Peer review is unreliable at every level and should be abandoned in favour of random allocation
◯ **C.** Panels agree on weak proposals but disagree on strong ones, so their rankings vary considerably
◯ **D.** New Zealand and Switzerland have shown that partial lotteries yield better science than close ranking

17. The argument that a lottery 'removes the incentive to write safe proposals' assumes that

◯ **A.** lotteries have funded more breakthroughs than ranking in every agency that has tried them
◯ **B.** reviewers favour applicants with long records chiefly because they know them personally
◯ **C.** a soundness screen would not reject bold, risky proposals as readily as close ranking does
◯ **D.** most applicants would rather lose a lottery than be ranked low by a panel of their peers

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

◯ **A.** Some scientists say that losing a lottery feels arbitrary and harms their sense of being judged fairly
◯ **B.** Top-ranked funded proposals later produced far more replicated findings than those near the cut-off
◯ **C.** Panels disagree about weak proposals more in some disciplines than the author seems to suggest
◯ **D.** Agencies running partial lotteries still spend some weeks of reviewer time screening proposals

19. Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the argument?

◯ **A.** Reviewers say that they value ranking proposals and regard it as an important professional duty
◯ **B.** Agencies adopting lotteries received more applications, which raised the cost of the screening stage
◯ **C.** Independent panels disagree about weak proposals almost as often as they do about strong ones
◯ **D.** In a lottery trial, applicants submitted markedly more unconventional proposals than under ranking

20. Which of the following is most similar in its reasoning to the author's argument?

◯ **A.** Doctors disagree about rare diseases, so patients with rare diseases should always seek a second opinion
◯ **B.** Judges agree on failing scripts but not on ranking passes, so prizes among passes should go by lot
◯ **C.** Critics disagree about the best novel of the year, so literary prizes should be abolished altogether
◯ **D.** Referees miss some fouls, so every match should be reviewed on video before its result is confirmed

RAPID FIRE — ONE-LINE RECALL 91 quick questions · not negatively marked

1. Where did the narrator's father keep the unclaimed clothes? .....

2. What were the unclaimed parcels wrapped in? .....

3. What did each parcel slip record? .....

4. How long did the landlord give the narrator to close the sho .....

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5. Which machine did the landlord say 'alone would fetch something'?

6. According to the landlord, what had 'never paid anyone's rent'?

7. Why did the narrator's agreement seem to disappoint the landlord?

8. Why did the narrator begin with the drawers?
9. How old was the last entry in the receipt book?
10. On which day did the narrator untie the first parcel?
11. What was inside the first parcel she opened?
12. Whose name was on the school-shirt slip, and what was owed?

13. How many unclaimed parcels were there?
14. What was unfinished on the wedding blouse?
15. What did the chalk lines on the trousers show?
16. What was unusual about the coat's owner?
17. How did the father read the newspaper aloud?
18. How often did the father dust the shelf of parcels?
19. What did the mother's 'flat tone' signal?
20. What had the narrator done with the machines by the last evening?

21. 'Turned' collar, in tailoring, means what?
22. What is 'tacking' thread used for?
23. From whose point of view is 'The Top Shelf' narrated?
24. What principle does the essay say enjoys 'unanimous praise'?

25. Where does bargaining migrate when committees deliberate on camera?
26. What does the formal session become once bargaining moves out?

27. What two kinds of openness does the author distinguish?
28. Which kind of openness exposes reasons 'which can be tested'?

29. Name three qualities the author ascribes to deliberation.
30. What three things should a minister publish for a licensing decision?

31. Where do judges confer, and where do they give judgments?

32. What do appellate courts scrutinise: the conference or the judgment?

33. Around what should disclosure rules be designed, per the author?

34. Why is a reasons requirement 'harder to evade'?
35. Visibility rewards the official who __ well.
36. A duty to give reasons rewards the official who __ well.
37. Complete the essay's warning: a democracy may end up 'watching more and __'.
38. What does 'grandstanding' mean?
39. What does 'on camera' mean in the essay?
40. Is the essay an argument for secrecy?
41. What is 'provisional', as used of deliberation?
42. Name two incentives the passage says states offer investors.

43. Capital subsidies can reach what share of project cost, per the passage?

44. The passage likens state incentive bidding to what?

45. Name the four fundamentals on which firms choose among states.

46. What do incentives do to investment, per the author, in such cases?

47. Who gains from the relocation, says the author?
48. What does the losing state waste in the bidding contest?
49. Defenders say rivalry forces governments to do what?
50. Why are subsidies 'most expensive in the long run'?
51. What does the author propose instead of a ban?
52. Through which body could the compact be monitored?
53. Each incentive package should be published with an estimate of what?

54. Name the three things states may still compete on.
55. What does the author prefer to an auction 'every state can lose'?

56. Two plant types the passage gives as examples?
57. Meaning of 'compact' in the passage?
58. What is a 'race to the bottom' in investment policy?
59. Is the author against states courting investors?
60. What do panels agree on 'reasonably well'?
61. What do panels agree on far less?
62. Example rank gap between two panels given in the passage?

63. What often explains such rank differences?
64. Why does adding reviewers not help?
65. What does the funding line turn a near-random difference into?

66. What do reviewers tend to reward when ranking excellent proposals?

67. Why do bold proposals score low?
68. What do applicants learn to write over time?
69. For what should peer review still be used?
70. How should the remaining fundable proposals be chosen?
71. Two funders named as trialling partial lotteries?
72. Three benefits the author claims for a lottery?
73. What does the author call reviewers' close ranking?
74. Which objection does the final paragraph answer?
75. What should a system that cannot identify the best stop doing?

76. Meaning of 'spurious' in the passage?
77. What is a 'partial lottery' in research funding?
78. Meaning of 'cut-off' in the passage?
79. How is a proposal handled under current peer review, in order?

80. What did the coat's slip show differently from the others?
81. What did the landlord jingle in the doorway?
82. What did the landlord ask on the first morning?
83. What state was the chalk in, found in the drawers?
84. How were the buttons in the drawers arranged?
85. How did the father's handwriting look on the slips?
86. What did the narrator imagine about Rafiq now?
87. How did the narrator learn of the Monday dusting?
88. Where were the parcels on the last evening?
89. The father was 'rarely surprised' by what?
90. What did the narrator say she was waiting for?
91. What does 'let out' mean for trousers?

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