Daily RC & CR Sheet — 9 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 — ARTS & CULTURE · THE SOUND OF THEN (Q1–Q5)

In the second half of the twentieth century a movement in Western classical music set out to recover how old music had actually sounded. Its performers traded steel strings for gut, modern flutes for wooden ones, and today's concert pitch for the lower tunings common in the eighteenth century. Orchestras shrank to the size Bach or Handel might have commanded, and tempos quickened as scholars read old treatises on ornament and phrasing. The movement called itself "authentic", and for a time the word did a great deal of work: it implied that other performances, however beautiful, were in some sense false.

The claim invited an obvious objection. We can rebuild a harpsichord, but we cannot rebuild an audience. Listeners in 1720 had never heard a piano, a recording or a symphony orchestra of a hundred players; the sounds that struck them as brilliant or harsh strike us against a lifetime of different noises. Even a perfect copy of an instrument plays into a modern ear. The documents that guide performers are thin, too. Composers rarely wrote down what every musician of their day took for granted, so the scholar who reconstructs a style must fill the silence with inference, and inference has a way of reflecting the taste of the person drawing it.

Critics pressed further. Some observed that the brisk, light textures of the new recordings sounded remarkably like the modernist aesthetic of the decades that produced them: clean, unsentimental, suspicious of excess. On this view the movement had not escaped its own time at all; it had dressed contemporary taste in period costume.

Yet the critique, however sharp, did not demolish the practice. What it removed was a slogan. Performers gradually dropped "authentic" in favour of the humbler label "historically informed", conceding that they could never reproduce the past but insisting that the evidence still mattered. And it did matter. Gut strings and smaller ensembles exposed inner voices that heavy modern forces had buried; dance rhythms that had hardened into solemn marches regained their spring. Many musicians who never touched a period instrument absorbed these lessons into ordinary concert life.

The episode suggests that the value of historical research in the arts lies less in recovering an original than in unsettling habit. The past cannot be heard again, but asking how it sounded can make the familiar strange, and that is often where interpretation begins.

1. The author's primary purpose in the passage is to
- ◯ **A.** argue that period instruments reveal composers' intentions more faithfully than modern orchestras ever can
- ◯ **B.** show how a critique stripped a movement of its grand claim yet left its real worth standing
- ◯ **C.** demonstrate that historical research in music only ever projects each era's own taste onto the past
- ◯ **D.** explain why modern listeners have come to prefer light, brisk textures over heavy orchestral sound

2. The objection that 'we cannot rebuild an audience' implies that
- ◯ **A.** how a sound strikes its hearers depends partly on the sounds they have heard before
- ◯ **B.** audiences of the eighteenth century disliked the harsh tone of the instruments of their day
- ◯ **C.** copies of old instruments are never accurate enough to reproduce the sound of the originals
- ◯ **D.** modern listeners are less capable than earlier audiences of judging the quality of a performance

3. The author's attitude towards the historically informed movement is best described as
- ◯ **A.** dismissive, since critics showed its recordings merely reflected the modernist taste of their own decades
- ◯ **B.** celebratory, since its research at last recovered the way the music sounded when first performed
- ◯ **C.** appreciative of its discoveries while sceptical of the claim to authenticity it first advanced
- ◯ **D.** detached, since the passage reports the debate between performers and critics without taking sides

4. As used in the fourth paragraph, 'spring' most nearly means
- ◯ **A.** a season of renewal after decline
- ◯ **B.** the source a tradition flowed from
- ◯ **C.** a coiled tension awaiting release
- ◯ **D.** a lively, buoyant quality of motion

5. The third paragraph functions mainly to
- ◯ **A.** extend the critique by suggesting the movement mirrored the very era it claimed to have escaped
- ◯ **B.** supply evidence that brisk, light tempos were in fact the normal style of the eighteenth century
- ◯ **C.** introduce a criticism that the author goes on to refute completely in the paragraph that follows
- ◯ **D.** explain why modernist composers of the twentieth century came to reject the music of earlier ages

READING COMPREHENSION — ENVIRONMENT & NATURE · THE SLIDING STANDARD (Q6–Q10)

In 1995 the fisheries scientist Daniel Pauly gave a name to a problem that had long troubled his field. Each generation of researchers, he observed, accepted as the natural state of a fishery the stock size and mix of species it found at the start of its career, and measured decline against that. When the next generation arrived, it took the already diminished stock as its own starting point. Over decades the standard quietly slid, and losses that would have alarmed an earlier observer came to look like ordinary fluctuation. Pauly called it the "shifting baseline syndrome".

The idea travelled well beyond fisheries because it described something about memory rather than fish. A village elder may recall rivers thick with otters; her grandson, who has never seen one, does not experience their absence as a loss. Nothing in his surroundings tells him that anything is missing. Studies of fishing communities have found the same pattern: older fishers name species and catches that younger ones regard as exaggerations, and the young fishers' sense of a "good day" is calibrated to a sea already emptied.

The syndrome matters because restoration needs a target. If conservationists aim to return a wetland to "how it was", th
question is: how it was when? Choose the condition of twenty years ago and the plan may lock in most of the damage. R

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further and the evidence thins: old catch logs, travellers' accounts, museum specimens, even restaurant menus that list fish no longer landed. Such sources are patchy and need careful reading, but they are often the only witnesses to an abundance that no living scientist has measured.

There is a risk on the other side, too. A baseline set in some pristine past can become an impossible standard, condemning every present landscape as a ruin and making any achievable improvement look trivial. Ecosystems were never static, and many that people value today were shaped by centuries of human use.

The useful lesson, then, is not that the oldest baseline is the true one. It is that every baseline is a choice, and one that should be made openly, with its date and its evidence declared, rather than inherited without notice from whatever one generation happened to see first.

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

- ◯ **A.** Old records of abundance are a more reliable guide to restoration than any modern ecological survey
- ◯ **B.** Each generation of fisheries scientists has underestimated the damage earlier fishing did to the seas
- ◯ **C.** Any baseline for judging nature's decline is a choice that should be made openly and with evidence
- ◯ **D.** Restoration should aim to return ecosystems to the condition they were in before human use began

7. The example of the village elder and her grandson is used chiefly to show that

- ◯ **A.** older people tend to exaggerate the abundance of the wildlife they remember from their own youth
- ◯ **B.** a loss can go unfelt by those who never knew what was there before it disappeared
- ◯ **C.** otters vanished from village rivers within one generation, mainly as a result of overfishing
- ◯ **D.** personal memories are a more reliable record of nature than the data collected by scientists

8. As used in the second paragraph, 'calibrated' most nearly means

- ◯ **A.** deliberately reduced to fit
- ◯ **B.** precisely measured in units
- ◯ **C.** accurately written down
- ◯ **D.** adjusted to a standard

9. Which of the following restoration targets would the author most likely endorse?

- ◯ **A.** a river's condition in a dated 1950s survey, with the survey's limits stated in the plan
- ◯ **B.** the richest condition of the river attested by any record, however old or incomplete
- ◯ **C.** the river's condition when the present monitoring team began its work twenty years ago
- ◯ **D.** the river's condition before any human settlement, as estimated from the regional geology

10. The fourth paragraph serves mainly to

- ◯ **A.** show that historical sources about past abundance are too patchy to guide any restoration
- ◯ **B.** argue that human use has improved most of the ecosystems that people now value highly
- ◯ **C.** warn against an error opposite to the one the shifting baseline syndrome describes
- ◯ **D.** abandon the case for older baselines in favour of keeping ecosystems as they are now

SECTION — CRITICAL REASONING

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

The state health department has proposed paying blood donors Rs 500 for each donation. Its aim is to close a shortfall that, in the summer months, leaves many district blood banks with less than a week's supply, and it argues that a modest payment will bring in donors whom appeals to conscience have failed to reach. The proposal is well meant. It is also a mistake, and the state should drop it.

More than half a century ago the social scientist Richard Titmuss compared Britain, where blood was freely given, with the United States, where much of it was bought. He found the commercial system not only more wasteful but less safe: a person who sells blood has a reason to conceal an illness that would disqualify him, while a volunteer has none. More troubling still, Titmuss argued, payment changes the meaning of the act. What was a gift to a stranger becomes a sale, and people who gave from a sense of civic duty may stop giving once their generosity has a price attached.

Our own experience bears him out. In 2023 a private hospital chain began paying donors in three of the state's districts. Within a year, voluntary donations at government camps in those districts had fallen by nearly a third. The chain's paid donors did not make up the difference: total collection across the three districts was lower in 2024 than in 2022, before any payment began.

The department's defenders say that altruism is not enough, that the shortages are real, and that patients cannot wait for civic virtue to revive. They are right about the shortages. But a policy that buys blood while driving away those who give it freely will deepen the very problem it means to solve, and will add a fresh risk to the blood supply besides.

The better course is to make giving easier rather than to make it paid. Many willing donors are lost not through indifference but through inconvenience: camps held during working hours, centres far from public transport, and no reminder when a donor becomes eligible again. Evening camps, mobile units at large workplaces and colleges, and a simple text-message reminder for lapsed donors cost far less than Rs 500 a unit, and they leave untouched the motive on which the whole system finally depends.

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

- ◯ **A.** Summer shortages in district blood banks are less serious than the health department believes
- ◯ **B.** Titmuss showed that paid blood donation is less safe than a wholly voluntary donation system
- ◯ **C.** Payment always destroys the civic motives that lead people to give their blood to strangers
- ◯ **D.** The state should not pay blood donors but should make voluntary donation easier instead

12. The argument's use of the three-district figures to judge the state-wide proposal assumes that

- ◯ **A.** private hospital chains will soon open paid donation centres in every district of the state
- ◯ **B.** donors in those three districts responded to payment much as donors elsewhere in the state would
- ◯ **C.** paid donors in those three districts were likelier than volunteers to hide disqualifying illnesses
- ◯ **D.** the department's proposed payment of Rs 500 is larger than the sum the hospital chain had paid

13. Which of the following, if true, would most weaken the author's use of the three-district evidence?

- ◯ **A.** In 2023 the state halved the number of government camps in those districts for lack of staff

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◯ **B.** The hospital chain's paid donors were screened with the same tests used at government camps
◯ **C.** Several states relying wholly on voluntary donors also report shortages of blood every summer
◯ **D.** Voluntary donors in those three districts were older, on average, than the chain's paid donors

14. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the claim that payment drove volunteers away?
◯ **A.** The hospital chain stopped paying its donors in 2025 after its costs rose faster than it had expected
◯ **B.** Paid donors at the hospitals gave blood more often each year than volunteers at government camps
◯ **C.** Lapsed volunteers in the three districts mostly said paid donation nearby made unpaid giving feel pointless
◯ **D.** Blood banks in those three districts reported their shortages mainly in the summer months of both years

15. The author's claim that paying donors would add 'a fresh risk to the blood supply' is most vulnerable to the criticism that it
◯ **A.** confuses the total amount of blood collected with the number of people who donate it
◯ **B.** assumes that volunteers never conceal illness, though the passage gives no figures on this
◯ **C.** relies on figures from only three districts to reach a conclusion about the whole state
◯ **D.** rests on decades-old findings without asking whether modern screening still leaves that risk

CRITICAL REASONING — EDUCATION · THE YEAR NO ONE FAILED (Q16–Q20)

For ten years the state followed a no-detention rule: no child up to Class 8 could be made to repeat a year, whatever his or her marks. The rule was meant to keep children, especially first-generation learners, from dropping out after being failed. The government has now withdrawn it, and it was right to do so.

The evidence is plain. The first cohort to pass through all eight years under the rule sat the Class 10 board examination in 2022, and only 61 per cent passed, against 78 per cent of the cohort of 2012, which had studied under annual examinations and the possibility of detention. Teachers tell the same story in every staffroom: children arrive in Class 9 unable to read a paragraph aloud or divide one number by another, because nothing in the earlier years required them to learn. Remove the prospect of failure and you remove the reason to study.

Supporters of the rule reply that it was never meant to work alone. It came with a promise of continuous assessment and remedial teaching for children who fell behind. But promises do not teach children. In practice few schools had the teachers to run remedial classes, and continuous assessment became a register of ticks filled in at the end of each term.

Nor did the rule achieve its own aim. Dropout in the upper primary years did fall during the decade, but it had been falling for ten years before the rule was adopted, as new roads, midday meals and scholarships brought more children into school and kept them there. The decline cannot honestly be credited to the rule.

The lesson is that standards need consequences. A child who knows that the year must be earned will work to earn it; a system that promises promotion regardless tells children that learning is optional. Restoring examinations, with the possibility of detention in Classes 5 and 8, will not by itself repair our schools. But it restores the one signal that every student understands, and a state that wants its children to learn cannot afford to keep that signal switched off.

16. Which of the following best expresses the main conclusion of the argument?
◯ **A.** The no-detention rule caused the fall in the Class 10 pass rate between the 2012 and 2022 cohorts
◯ **B.** The state was right to withdraw the no-detention rule and restore the possibility of detention
◯ **C.** Remedial teaching and continuous assessment failed because schools lacked enough trained teachers
◯ **D.** Examinations with detention in Classes 5 and 8 will by themselves be enough to repair the schools

17. The comparison of the 2012 and 2022 pass rates supports the author's case only if
◯ **A.** the two board examinations were set and marked to broadly comparable standards
◯ **B.** every child in the 2022 cohort attended one school throughout Classes 1 to 8
◯ **C.** the teachers quoted were themselves educated under the old detention system
◯ **D.** pass rates in other states rose during the decade in which this state's fell

18. Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the author's interpretation of the pass-rate figures?
◯ **A.** Teachers in the state received additional training in continuous assessment during 2019
◯ **B.** Pass rates for the 2012 cohort were higher in urban schools than they were in rural schools
◯ **C.** Some parents welcomed the rule because it spared their children the shame of being held back
◯ **D.** Because dropout fell, many children who once would have left school sat the 2022 examination

19. Which of the following, if true, would most strengthen the author's argument?
◯ **A.** Dropout rates in the state began to fall only after the no-detention rule was first adopted
◯ **B.** Many teachers opposed the rule's withdrawal on the ground that it would increase dropout
◯ **C.** In nearby states that never adopted the rule, Class 10 pass rates held steady over the decade
◯ **D.** The 2022 board examination introduced a new paper that many students found unfamiliar

20. Which of the following best describes a flaw in the author's reasoning?
◯ **A.** It relies on teachers' reports that cannot be checked, so its conclusion has no support at all
◯ **B.** It applies a prior-trend test to the dropout figures but never to the pass-rate figures
◯ **C.** It assumes that a rule which failed in this state is bound to fail in every neighbouring state
◯ **D.** It treats continuous assessment as useless because some schools turned it into a register of ticks

RAPID FIRE — ONE-LINE RECALL

94 quick questions · not negatively marked

1. In which century did the 'authentic' performance movement arise?
2. What did the movement's performers trade steel strings for?
3. What replaced modern flutes in period performances?
4. Were period tunings higher or lower than today's concert pitch?
5. Which two composers' orchestra sizes does the passage mer
6. What happened to tempos as scholars read old treatises?

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7. What did old treatises discuss, per the passage?
8. What did the label 'authentic' imply about other performances?
9. 'We can rebuild a harpsichord, but we cannot rebuild…' what?
10. Which year's listeners does the passage use as its example?
11. Name one sound 1720 listeners had never heard, per the passage.
12. What must a scholar use to fill gaps in thin documents?
13. What does inference tend to reflect, per the author?
14. Which aesthetic did critics say the new recordings resembled?
15. Name one quality of the modernist aesthetic listed in the passage.
16. Critics said the movement dressed contemporary taste in what?
17. What, per the author, did the critique remove?
18. What humbler label replaced 'authentic'?
19. What did gut strings and smaller ensembles expose?
20. Into what had dance rhythms hardened?
21. In context, 'regained their spring' means regained their…
22. Where, per the author, does the value of historical research lie?
23. Asking how the past sounded can make the familiar what?
24. Where does interpretation often begin, per the final line?
25. Did the critique demolish the practice?
26. In which year did Daniel Pauly name the shifting baseline syndrome?
27. What was Daniel Pauly's field?
28. What did each generation accept as a fishery's natural state?
29. What did the next generation take as its starting point?
30. Losses came to look like what over decades?
31. The idea describes something about memory rather than what?
32. Which animal does the village elder remember?
33. Why does the grandson not feel the otters' loss?
34. How do young fishers regard older fishers' catches?
35. The young fishers' 'good day' is calibrated to what?
36. In context, 'calibrated' means…
37. Why does the syndrome matter for restoration?
38. Choosing the condition of twenty years ago may do what?
39. Name one old source of evidence listed in the passage.
40. What do old restaurant menus list, per the passage?
41. How does the author describe such historical sources?
42. Old sources are often the only witnesses to what?
43. A pristine baseline can become what kind of standard?
44. A pristine baseline condemns every present landscape as a…
45. Were ecosystems ever static, per the passage?
46. Many valued ecosystems were shaped by what?
47. Is the oldest baseline the true one, per the author?
48. Every baseline is a what, per the final paragraph?
49. What two things should a baseline openly declare?
50. What opposite error does paragraph 4 warn against?
51. How much did the department propose to pay per donation?
52. In which months are district blood banks shortest of supply?
53. Shortfalls leave banks with less than how much supply?
54. What is the author's verdict on the department's proposal?
55. Which social scientist compared British and US blood systems?
56. In which country was blood freely given, in Titmuss's study?
57. In which country was much blood bought, in Titmuss's study?
58. Titmuss found the commercial system more wasteful and less what?
59. Why might a paid donor conceal an illness?
60. Per Titmuss, payment turns a gift to a stranger into what?
61. Who began paying donors in three districts?
62. In which year did the hospital chain begin paying donors?
63. By how much did voluntary camp donations fall within a year?
64. Was total collection in 2024 higher or lower than in 2022?
65. On what point does the author agree with the defenders?
66. The policy will deepen the problem it means to solve and add what?
67. What is the author's 'better course'?
68. Many donors are lost through inconvenience rather than what?
69. Name one inconvenience the author lists.
70. Name one remedy the author proposes.
71. Where would the author place mobile units?
72. Whom would the text-message reminder target?
73. What key assumption links the three districts to the state?
74. Which alternative cause would most weaken the district evidence?
75. What weakness does the 'fresh risk' claim have?
76. For how many years did the state follow the no-detention rule?
77. Up to which class did the no-detention rule apply?
78. Which learners was the rule especially meant to protect?
79. What was the no-detention rule meant to prevent?
80. What is the author's verdict on withdrawing the rule?
81. In which year did the first full no-detention cohort sit Class 10?
82. What was the 2022 cohort's Class 10 pass rate?
83. What was the 2012 cohort's Class 10 pass rate?
84. By how many percentage points did the pass rate fall?
85. Under what system did the 2012 cohort study?
86. In which class, per teachers, do children arrive unable to read?
87. 'Remove the prospect of failure and you remove…' what?
88. Which two measures were promised alongside the rule?
89. Why did remedial classes fail, per the author?
90. What did continuous assessment become in practice?
91. 'But promises do not…' do what?
92. The author's lesson: standards need what?
93. How long had dropout been falling before the rule?
94. In which classes would detention be restored?

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