

A.B.M. College, Golmuri

English Core

I.Com.

By Manish Prabhakar Singh

Comprehension of an unseen passage

(Write down the solved passages given below in the copy followed by the unsolved passages assigned to you as homework. No need of copying down anything else in the copy.)

Comprehension of an unseen passage means a complete and thorough understanding of the passage. The main object of comprehension is to test one's ability to grasp the meaning of a given passage properly and also one's ability to answer, in one's own words, the questions based on the passage. A variety of questions like short answer type questions, completion of incomplete sentences, filling the blanks with appropriate words and exercises based on vocabulary are set forth for the purpose.

There are three types of Passages which help to testify the reading skill of the students during the examination. They are:-

i) **Factual Passage** - A factual passage provides good clarity on the topic being discussed. The whole passage gives the reader a complete picture of what is being presented. It gives a comprehensive view about the subject discussed by offering a step by step description of the same. There are instructive, descriptive and reporting passages in it.

ii) **Discursive Passage** – A Discursive Passage contains a text which is either argumentative or interpretative or Persuasive in nature. They may also include opinion or feedbacks. The passage will talk about various topics at random that appear to have no connection with one another. It is often a challenging task to follow the changes in subject.

iii) **Literary Passage** - Literary Passages are the extract taken from fiction, drama, Poetry, essay or biography. These types of passages require a thorough reading of comprehension followed by an interpretation (which is personal in nature).

One should also keep the following points in mind before answering the questions set on a given passage:

1. Read the passage quickly to have some general idea of the subject matter.
2. Read the passage again and underline the important points.
3. Read the questions and try to know what has been asked.
4. Read the passage again and underline the portions where the probable answers may be available.
5. Use, as far as possible, your own words to answer the questions in a precise and brief way.
6. Always use complete sentences while answering a question.
7. If you are asked to give the meaning of some words or phrases, try to express your idea, in your own words, as clearly as possible.
8. Don't give your own opinions or comments about anything unless you are asked to do so.

How to answer short questions

- ✓ Read the passage carefully
- ✓ The answer should be concrete to the point
- ✓ Do not try to copy words
- ✓ While writing summary, try to be concise and the summarized answer should be clear.
- ✓ The summary should contain one tense. Do not try to mix it up.

How to give meaning

The meaning should be according to the context

Try to give one answer

Don't make the meaning ambiguous.

The meaning should be in one word or in phrase.

1. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions that follow in your own language.

Birds are warm blooded creatures. Their bodies are covered with feathers that help to keep them warm and dry. Though all birds have wings, some, like the penguin and ostrich cannot fly. The bodies of the birds are designed to be as light as possible, like hollow bones and a streamlined body, which help them in flying.

Birds have various kinds of beaks, feet and claws according to their diet and way of life. Birds have no teeth and their beaks are made of horn. The heron has a long slender beak for spearing fish, while a hawk has a sharp curved beak for tearing meat. A parrot has a very strong beak for cracking nuts. When a bird flaps its wings its feathers push the air back and downwards, so that the bird moves forward and up. Together with the tail, the wings help the bird to steer, brake and land.

Birds differ enormously in colour, size and shape. The largest bird, the ostrich, which can grow up to two and half metres tall cannot fly but can run very fast. The smallest bird is the humming bird which hovers in mid air and even flies backwards, beating its wings at great speed. Birds eat different food. For example, quails eat grass and parrots eat fruits and nuts. Because of only waterproof feathers, some birds can swim too. These birds eat food like fish, snails and water plants.

Some birds like the heron cannot swim, but live on the edge of water. Some birds like the wood peckers and bee-eaters eat insects. Some large birds like the eagle, kill the prey with their strong beak and claws. Their eyesight is very good which enables them to see any small movement on the ground. Thus they can identify their prey from a long distance.

a) What kind of feet and claws do the birds have?

Ans - Birds are warm blooded creatures with various kinds of beak, feet and claws. It is according to their diet and way of life.

b) How does a bird move forward and upwards?

Ans-Birds use their wings to move forward and upwards. When a bird flap its wings, the feathers help in pushing the air back and downwards which help the birds in moving forward and upward. The wings, together with the tails, help the birds to steer, brake and land.

c) What is said about the largest bird?

Ans-Ostrich is the largest bird. It can grow up to two and half metres tall. Though it cannot fly, it is able to run very fast.

d) What is rare about the way a humming bird flies?

Ans- Humming bird is the smallest bird and what makes it rare is its flying style. It hovers in midair and is able to fly backwards beating its wings at a great speed.

e) How is the body of a bird designed?

Ans-Birds are warm blooded creatures. Their bodies are covered with feathers that help to keep them warm and dry. Their bodies are designed to be light as possible, like hollow bones and streamlined bodies which help them in flying.

f) What is special about the eyesight of an eagle?

Ans-Eagle is one of the largest bird who kill their pray with strong breaks and claws. What makes them special is their eyesight which is so good that it enables them to see any small movement on the ground. Thus they can identify their prey from a long distance.

2. Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow:

The world is finite, resources are scarce,

Things are bad and will be worse,

Coal is burned and gas exploded,

Forests cut and soils eroded

Wells are dry and air's polluted

Dust is blowing, trees uprooted,

Oil is going, ores depleted,

Drains receive what is excreted.

Land is sinking, seas are rising,

Man is far too enterprising.

Fire will rage with man to fan it,

Soon we'll have a plundered planet.

a) What is the most important problem being faced by the Earth today?

Ans- The most important problem being faced by the Earth today is the exploitation of Natural Resources. The word is a finite one with scarce natural resources but the way we humans are plundering the planet, there will be no planet left at all.

b) What are some of the ways in which man has 'plundered' the earth?

Ans- Man has plundered the earth for its natural resources making it bad waiting for the worst to come. We have plundered the earth for coal and natural gases, cut down the forest for our greed leading to soil erosion depleted the fresh water and polluted the air to such a large scale that it seems our home is bleeding with pain.

c) What is the effect of man's thoughtlessness and greed?

Ans-Man's thoughtlessness and greed has resulted in deterioration of our environment with the scarcity of natural resources making our earth bleed. We have exploited the natural resources to such a large extent that our earth will soon become a plundered planet.

d) Who do the poet hold responsible for the depletion of the Earth's resources?

Ans-According to the poet, Man is the one responsible for the depletion of the earth's resources. Our greed and thoughtlessness has led to the destruction of our habitat and in the way we are exploiting the earth, it will soon become a plundered planet.

HOMEWORK

1.Read the given passage carefully.

1. Given the standing of some of its institutions of higher learning, the IITs and IIMs, India is a potential knowledge power. Realising the potential, however, is not going to be easy. The impressive strides made by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) notwithstanding, universal access to quality school education- a minimum necessary condition for any progress towards making India a knowledge society', as the 2006 report of the National Knowledge Commission (NKC) puts it-remains a distant goal.
2. There is as yet no legislation at the national level to affirm the right to education, a fundamental right under the Constitution. The number of school buildings for elementary and secondary education falls far short of requirements and so does the number of qualified teachers. The pressure on government budgets, which forces governments to hire teachers on contract paying a pittance of a salary, is playing havoc with quality. While the incursion of the private sector in the field is providing some competition, mechanisms to enforce the required standards are lacking.

3. Not that there are no national standards or standards-enforcing agencies. We have the National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to bring out textbooks in various subjects for school education. The central government runs several model schools. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) conducts examinations for schools affiliated to it across the country. The states too have their school boards to conduct exams and enforce minimum standards. How even the standards vary widely. In their anxiety to show spectacular performance, some states are overly lenient-in marking answer papers.
4. Questions arise even over the standards applied by CBSE. Going by the number of students securing 90% or more in their higher secondary exam, it would appear India is on the brink of a knowledge revolution. The numbers are so large that the cut-off point for admission to top colleges is now above 90%. However, admissions to IITs and medical colleges are not based only on CBSE or state board exam results. Leading undergraduate colleges offering non-professional degree courses hold their own admission tests. Obviously, higher secondary school results are not taken to be a reliable index of the quality of a student's learning capability or potential.
5. It is not difficult to see why. In the CBSE class XII exam., the number of successful candidates securing more than 90% in economics this year turned out to be over 8000 in the Delhi region alone; in English it was above 9000. The numbers seem to be growing every year. If the country produces so many children who attain very high levels of performance even before graduation, we can expect India to produce Amartya Sens by the dozens.
6. While scoring high marks or even 100 out of 100 may not be out of a good student's reach in subjects like mathematics or physics, it is difficult to figure out the quality of the answers that fetch 90% marks in Economics or English. The standards applied by higher secondary boards like CBSE seem to have been diluted to the point that leaves a big gap between what students learn at school and what they have to face on entering institutions of higher learning. Thriving teaching shops around the country promise to bridge that gap.
7. In an attempt to remedy the situation, NCERT had recently commissioned experts to rewrite textbooks on macro and micro economics. Though not entirely free from blemishes, these new texts should go some way in helping beginners get acquainted with the basic concepts in the subject and their applications.
8. Not surprisingly, their introduction is facing roadblocks. Teachers do not like to be compelled to look at textbooks they are not familiar with. Those who revel in seeing students score 90% are chary of ushering in something that may stop the rush of such

scores. Lastly, even teaching shops see red as they fear loss of business if the higher secondary finalists can get their skills upgraded without buying their help.

9. One wonders if our Knowledge Commission is aware of these insidious impediments to India's knowledge ambitions.

Answer the following questions as briefly as possible.

1. What remains a distant goal?
2. What is the main factor that has affected the quality of education?
3. Which are the standard enforcing agencies in India?
4. Why do leading undergraduate colleges hold their own admission tests?
5. What is the problem created by the results of CBSE examinations?
6. Why does the author state, "we can expect India to produce Amartya Sens by the dozens"?

2.Read the given poem carefully.

I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.
To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.
Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes;
The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:-
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.
The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?*

Answer the following questions as briefly as possible.

1. What is the poet's mind filled with?
2. Why was the poet sad?
3. Describe nature according to the poet?
4. In what state the poet found the birds?
5. What were the budding twigs doing?
6. Why does the poet have reason to lament?