

Comprehension

Reading Comprehension is generally designed to test your ability to read a passage and understand its contents and your ability to draw inferences on the basis of what is read. In other words, your ability to grasp the contents of the passage in a relatively short span of time is what is being tested.

Aspects to consider

- Read between the Paragraphs.
- Read for Main Idea and Primary Purpose of the passage.
- Write down the Main Idea and Primary purpose after each paragraph and create a thought flowchart.
- The Main Idea of the passage is the repeated idea in each of the Main ideas (of the paragraphs)
- The primary purpose is mostly the Primary purpose of the concluding paragraph.
- Classify the passages, such as
 - Explanatory (Mostly Science passages, explain one theory/phenomenon in detail)
 - Comparative (two or more point of views on a theory/topic. Doesn't go in much detail)
 - Argumentative (Subjective, opinionated. Mostly social science/business topics.Pros and cons of a topic with author's views on them)
 - Paraphrase the text to simplify.
 - Don't over read. Skip examples, dates, lengthy names, any details which can be referred in case something is asked explicitly.
- Don't go for choices which hold true only for one part of the author's argument.
- Don't go for choices which exaggerate the author's conclusion.
- Don't fill in the blanks yourself. Use only as much is there in the passage.
- At the end of reading, ask yourself questions like: What was the passage about? What was author's motive in writing all this?
- Read quickly through soporific passages.
- Read the first question before the Passage.
- Use your Critical Reasoning techniques for reasoning/ inference/ strengthen/ weaken questions.

I. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below it. Certain words are printed in **bold** to help you to locate them while answering some of the questions.

The yearly festival was close at hand. The store room was **packed** with silk fabrics. Gold ornaments, clay bowls full of sweet curd and platefuls of sweetmeats. The orders had been placed with shops well in advance. The mother was sending out gifts to everyone.

The eldest son, a government servant, lived with his wife and children in far off lands. The second son had left home at an early age. As a merchant he travelled all over the world. The other sons had split up over petty squabbles, and they now lived in homes of their own. The relatives were spread all across the world. They rarely visited. The youngest son, left in the company of a servant, was soon bored and stood at the door all day long, waiting and watching. His mother, thrilled and excited, loaded the presents on trays and plates, covered them with colourful kerchiefs, and sent them off with maids and servants. The neighbours looked on.

The day came to an end. All the presents had been sent off.

The child came back into the house and **dejectedly** said to his mother, "Maa, you gave a present to everyone, but you didn't give me anything !"

His mother laughed, "I have given all the gifts away to everyone, now see what's left for you." She kissed him on the forehead.

The child said in a tearful voice, "Don't I get a gift ?"

"You'll get it when you go far away."

"But when I am close to you, don't I get something from your own hands?"

His mother reached out her arms and drew him to her. "This is all I have in my own hands. It is the most precious of all."

1. Why did the woman's second son travel?

- (A) He was restless by nature
- (B) He did not want to stay at home
- (C) He was rich and could afford to travel
- (D) His job was such that he had to travel
- (E) None of these

2. Why did the woman's eldest son not attend the festival?

- (A) He was not on good terms with his youngest brother who lived at home
- (B) He had quarrelled with his mother
- (C) His wife did not allow him to return home
- (D) His job prevented him from taking leave
- (E) None of these

3. How did the woman prepare for the festival?

- 1. She bought expensive gifts for her children and neighbours.
 - 2. She ordered her servants to prepare sweets and food well in advance.
 - 3. She made sure that her youngest child was looked after so that he wouldn't be bored.
- (A) None
 - (B) Only 1
 - (C) Only 2
 - (D) Both 1 and 2
 - (E) All 1, 2 and 3

4. What did the youngest child do while his mother was busy?

- 1. He waited for a chance to steal some sweetmeats.
 - 2. He pestered his mother to give him a present.
 - 3. He stood at the door with servants.
- (A) Only 1
 - (B) Only 2
 - (C) Both 1 and 3
 - (D) Only 3
 - (E) None of these

5. Which of the following can be said about the woman ?

- (A) She was a widow who had brought up her children single handedly
- (B) She was not a good mother since her children had left home at an early age
- (C) She enjoyed sending her family gifts at festival time

- (D) She gave expensive presents to show that she was wealthy
- (E) She rarely visited her grand-children because they all lived abroad

6. What did the boy receive from his mother ?

- (A) She taught him the value of patience
- (B) She encouraged him to grow up and live independently like his brothers
- (C) She showed him the importance of giving expensive gifts
- (D) She gave him a hug to express her love
- (E) None of these

7. Which of the following is TRUE in the context of the passage ?

- (A) The woman usually ignored her youngest son
- (B) The woman's eldest son lived abroad
- (C) The members of the woman's family did not care about her
- (D) The woman made all the preparations herself since she did not want to burden the servants
- (E) The woman sent gifts to her children to ensure that they visited her

Directions—(Q. 8–9) Choose the word which is most nearly the SAME in meaning as the word printed in bold as used in the passage.

8. Left

- (A) Gone
- (B) Quit
- (C) Remaining
- (D) Disappeared
- (E) Forgot

9. Packed

- (A) Filled
- (B) Squeezed
- (C) Crowd
- (D) Collected
- (E) Untidy

10. Choose the word which is most OPPOSITE in meaning of the word **dejectedly** as used in the passage.

- (A) Calmly
- (B) Happily
- (C) Willingly
- (D) Fortunately
- (E) Softly

II. Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below it. Certain words have been printed in **bold** to help you locate them while answering some of the questions.

Over the past few decades, many Asian nations transformed from poverty into global competitors. From 2003 to 2007, Asian economies expanded at an average annual rate of 8.1%, triple that of advanced economies. Over the same period, inflation in Asia averaged only about 3.5%. But Asia could be facing **turbulent** economic times. In May, the average inflation rate throughout the region reached nearly 7%, led by spikes in oil and food prices. In India, inflation jumped to an 11.6% annual rate in June, according to the latest government figures, the highest in 13 years.

Policymakers and central bankers are forced to raise interest rates and limit credit to get inflation under control. But these same measures suppress the investment and consumption that generates growth. The combination of slowing growth and soaring inflation makes economic policy-making tricky. Inflation **stirs** up the middle classes because it can quickly erase years of hardwon personal **gains**. Inflation is cruel to the poor, because families have to spend a larger share of their meagre incomes on necessities. In the Philippines, farmers, unable to afford fuel for tractors, use water buffaloes to plough their fields.

But to avoid unrest, leaders cannot blindly adopt rigid anti-inflation measures. Voters won't hesitate to remove from office any politician who doesn't deliver the goods. So they cannot overreact to the inflation threat and **scale** down economic growth in the process. Developing nations need to grow quickly to create jobs and increase incomes for their large populations. With prices soaring, doing nothing is not an option. Most central banks in Asia have started raising interest rates. The Reserve Bank of India increased its benchmark rate twice last month to a six year high of 8.5%.

The challenge is especially difficult because currently, inflation is not of domestic **origin**. Prices are being driven higher by a global surge in oil and food prices, which individual governments can do little to control. Of course, inflation is not just a problem in Asia. World Bank President Robert Zoellick called rising food and oil prices a man-made 'catastrophe' that could quickly reverse the gains made in overcoming poverty over the past seven years. For now, though, there is more talk than action on the international front, so Asian governments are on their own. Even though inflation throughout the region is likely to continue to rise in coming months, no one is expecting an economic calamity. According to the Asian Development Bank Asian countries have large hard currency reserves and relatively healthy banks, and so are far better prepared to absorb external shocks than they were during the region's last recession ten years ago. Asian policymakers have learned their lessons and are more alert.

11. Which of the following can be said about Asian economies during the period from 2003- 2007?

1. Though inflation was rising at the time politicians did not pay much attention.
2. Many of the poor countries were able to compete internationally.
3. The growth rate of Asian countries was facilitated by growth in advanced countries.

- (A) All 1, 2, and 3
(B) Only 1
(C) Only 2
(D) Both 1 and 2
(E) None of these

12. Which of the following is not an anti-inflation measure being used by Asian countries?

1. Increase in benchmark interest rate by a central bank.
2. Checks on lending.
3. Subsidising fuel for farmers.

- (A) Only 3
(B) Both 1 and 2
(C) Both 2 and 3
(D) Only 2
(E) None of these

13. What makes it difficult for Asian countries to control inflation ?

- (A) Restrictions by organizations like the Asian Development Bank
- (B) Governments are indecisive and adopt counterproductive measures
- (C) The problem is global in nature, not restricted to their individual countries
- (D) Countries have never faced a financial crisis
- (E) Economic growth rate cannot occur in the absence of inflation

14. Why are experts not very concerned about the impact of inflation on Asian economies?

1. Asian countries have not maintained substantial hard currency reserves.
2. The condition of Asian banks is currently both stable and strong.
3. The Asian Development Bank will bail them out of any trouble.

- (A) Only 1
- (B) Both 1 and 3
- (C) Both 1 and 2
- (D) Only 2
- (E) None of these

15. What is the author's advice to politicians regarding the handling of inflation ?

- (A) They should focus on preventing agitations among their citizens not implementing antiinflation measures
- (B) They ought to implement anti-inflation measures even at the cost of losing office
- (C) They must focus on maintaining high economic growth rate as inflation will taper off on its own
- (D) Countries should handle the problem independently and not collectively
- (E) None of these

Answers:

- 1.(D)
- 2.(E)
- 3.(A)
- 4.(D)
- 5.(C)
- 6.(D)
- 7.(B)
- 8.(C)
- 9.(A)
- 10.(C)
- 11.(E)
- 12.(C)
- 13.(C)
- 14.(D)
- 15.(C)