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CMAT placement papers of aptitude reasoning, DI Questions with answers for practice

Verbal Ability

Directions for question (1 to 8): Each of the two passages given below is followed by a set off our questions. Choose the best answer to each question.

Passage - I

While complex in the extreme, Derrida's work has proven to be a particularly influential approach to the analysis of the ways in which language structures our understanding of ourselves and the world we inhabit, an approach he termed deconstruction. In its simplest formulation, deconstruction can be taken to refer to a methodological strategy which seeks to uncover layers of hidden meaning in a text that have been denied or suppressed. The term 'text', in this respect, does not refer simply to a written form of communication, however. Rather, texts are something we all produce and reproduce constantly in our everyday social relations, be they spoken, written or embedded in the construction of material artifacts. At the heart of Derrida's deconstructive approach is his critique of what he receives to be the totalitarian impulse of the Enlightenment pursuit to bring all that exists in the world under the domain of a representative language, a pursuit he refers to as logocentrism. Logocentrism is the search for a rational language that is able to know and represent the world and all its aspects perfectly and accurately. Its totalitarian dimension, for Derrida at least, lies primarily in its tendency to marginalize or dismiss all that does not neatly comply with its particular linguistic representations, a tendency that, throughout history, has all too frequently been manifested in the form of authoritarian institutions. Thus, logocentrism has, in its search for the truth of absolute representation, subsumed difference and oppressed that which it designates as its alien 'other'. For Derrida, western civilization has been built upon such a systematic assault on alien cultures and ways of life, typically in the name of reason and progress.

In response to logocentrism, deconstruction posits the idea that the mechanism by which this process of marginalization and the ordering of truth occurs is through establishing systems of binary opposition. Oppositional linguistic dualisms, such as rational/irrational, culture/nature and good/bad are not, however, construed as equal partners as they are in, say, the symbiological structuralism of Saussure. Rather, they exist, for Derrida, in a series of hierarchical relationships with the first term normally occupying a superior position. Derrida defines the relationship between such oppositional terms using the neologism difference. This refers to the realization that in any statement, oppositional terms differ from each other (for instance, the difference between rationality and irrationality is constructed through oppositional usage), and at the same time, a hierarchical relationship is maintained by the deference of one term to the other (in the positing of rationality over irrationality, for instance). It is this latter point which is perhaps the key to understanding Derrida's approach to deconstruction.

For the fact that at any given time one term must defer to its oppositional 'other', means that the two terms are constantly in a state of interdependence. The presence of one is dependent upon the absence or 'absent-presence' of the 'other', such as in the case of good and evil, whereby to understand the nature of one, we must constantly relate it to the absent term in order to grasp its meaning. That is, to do good, we must understand that our act is not evil for without that comparison the term becomes meaningless. Put simply, deconstruction represents an attempt to demonstrate the absent-presence of this oppositional 'other', to show that what we say or write is in itself not expressive simply of what is present, but also of what is absent. Thus, deconstruction seeks to reveal the interdependence of apparently dichotomous terms and their meanings relative to their textual context; that is, within the linguistic power relations which structure dichotomous

terms hierarchically. In Derrida's own words, a deconstructive reading "must always aim at a certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between what he commands and what he does not command of the patterns of a language that he uses [It] attempts to make the not-seen accessible to sight."

Meaning, then, is never fixed or stable, whatever the intention of the author of a text. For Derrida, language is a system of relations that are dynamic, in that all meanings we ascribe to the world are dependent not only on what we believe to be present but also on what is absent. Thus, any act of interpretation must refer not only to what the author of a text intends, but also to what is absent from his or her intention. This insight leads, once again, to Derrida's further rejection of the idea of the definitive authority of the intentional agent or subject. The subject is decentred; it is conceived as the outcome of relations of difference. As author of its own biography, the subject thus becomes the ideological fiction of modernity and its logocentric philosophy, one that depends upon the formation of hierarchical dualisms, which repress and deny the presence of the absent 'other'. No meaning can, therefore, ever be definitive, but is merely an outcome of a particular interpretation.

1. According to the passage, Derrida believes that the system of binary opposition

(a) represents a prioritization or hierarchy. -Answer

(b) reconciles contradictions and dualities.

(c) weakens the process of marginalization and ordering of truth.

(d) deconstructs reality.

2. According to the passage, Derrida believes that:

(a) Reality can be construed only through the use of rational analysis.

(b) Language limits our construction of reality.

(c) A universal language will facilitate a common understanding of reality.

(d) We need to uncover the hidden meaning in a system of relations expressed by language. -Answer

3. Derrida rejects the idea of 'definitive authority of the subject' because

(a) interpretation of the text may not make the unseen visible. -Answer

(b) the meaning of the text is based on binary opposites.

(c) the implicit power relationship is often ignored.

(d) any act of interpretation must refer to what the author intends.

4. To Derrida, 'Logocentrism' does not imply:

(a) A totalitarian impulse.

(b) A domain of representative language.

(c) Interdependence of the meanings of dichotomous terms. -Answer

(d) A strategy that seeks to suppress hidden meanings in a text.

Passage - II

Crinoline and croquet are out. As yet, no political activists have thrown themselves in front of the royal horse on Derby Day. Even so, some historians can spot the parallels. It is a time of rapid technological change. It is a period when the dominance of the world's superpower is coming under threat. It is an epoch when prosperity masks underlying economic strain. And, crucially, it is a time when policy-makers are confident that all is/or the best in the best of all possible worlds. Welcome to the Edwardian Summer of the second age of globalisation.

Spare a moment to take stock of what's been happening in the past few months. Let's start with the oil price, which has rocketed to more than \$65 a barrel, more than double its level 18 months ago. The accepted wisdom is that we shouldn't worry our little heads about that, because the incentives are there for business to build new production and refining capacity, which will effortlessly bring demand and supply back into balance and bring crude prices back to \$25 a barrel. As Tommy Cooper used to say, 'just like that'.

Then there is the result of the French referendum on the European Constitution, seen as thick-headed luddites railing vainly against the modern world. What the French needed to realise, the argument went, was that there was no alternative to the reforms that would make the country more flexible, more competitive, more dynamic. Just the sort of reforms that allowed Gate Gourmet to sack hundreds of its staff at Heathrow after the sort of ultimatum that used to be handed out by Victorian mill owners. An alternative way of looking at the French "non" is that our neighbours translate "flexibility" as "you're fired".

Finally, take a squint at the United States. Just like Britain a century ago, a period of unquestioned superiority is drawing to a close. China is still a long way from matching America's wealth, but it is growing at a stupendous rate and economic strength brings geo-political clout. Already, there is evidence of a new scramble for Africa as Washington and Beijing compete for oil stocks. Moreover, beneath the surface of the US economy, all is not well. Growth looks healthy enough, but the competition from China and elsewhere has meant the world's biggest economy now imports far more than it exports. The US is living beyond its means, but in this time of studied complacency a current account deficit worth 6 percent of gross domestic product is seen as a sign of strength, not weakness.

In this new Edwardian summer, comfort is taken from the fact that dearer oil has not had the savage inflationary consequences of 1973-74, when a fourfold increase in the cost of crude brought an abrupt end to a postwar boom that had gone on uninterrupted for a quarter of a century. True, the cost of living has been affected by higher transport costs, but we are talking of inflation at 2.3 per cent and not 27 percent. Yet the idea that higher oil prices are of little consequence is fanciful. If people are paying more to fill up their cars it leaves them with less to spend on everything else, but there is a reluctance to consume less. In the 1970s unions were strong and able to negotiate large, compensatory pay deals that served to intensify inflationary pressure. In 2005, that avenue is pretty much closed off, but the abolition of all the controls on credit that

existed in the 1970s means that households are invited to borrow more rather than consume less. The knock-on effects of higher oil prices are thus felt in different ways - through high levels of indebtedness, in inflated asset prices, and in balance of payments deficits.

There are those who point out, rightly, that modern industrial capitalism has proved mightily resilient these past 250 years, and that a sign of the enduring strength of the system has been the way it apparently shrugged off everything - a stock market crash, 9/11, rising oil prices - that have been thrown at it in the half decade since the millennium. Even so, there are at least three reasons for concern. First, we have been here before. In terms of political economy, the first era of globalisation mirrored our own. There was a belief in unfettered capital flows, in free trade, and in the power of the market. It was a time of massive income inequality and unprecedented migration. Eventually, though, there was a backlash, manifested in a struggle between free traders and protectionists, and in rising labour militancy.

Second, the world is traditionally at its most fragile at times when the global balance of power is in flux. By the end of the nineteenth century, Britain's role as the hegemonic power was being challenged by the rise of the United States, Germany, and Japan while the Ottoman and Hapsburg empires were clearly in rapid decline. Looking ahead from 2005, it is clear that over the next two or three decades, both China and India - which together account for half the world's population - will flex their muscles.

Finally, there is the question of what rising oil prices tell us. The emergence of China and India means global demand for crude is likely to remain high at a time when experts say production is about to top out. If supply constraints start to bite, any declines in the price are likely to be short-term cyclical affairs punctuating a long upward trend.

5. Which of the following best represents the key argument made by the author?

- (a) The rise in oil prices, the flux in the global balance of power and historical precedents should make us question our belief that the global economic prosperity would continue.
- (b) The belief that modern industrial capitalism is highly resilient and capable of overcoming shocks will be belied soon.
- (c) Widespread prosperity leads to neglect of early signs of underlying economic weakness, manifested in higher oil prices and a flux in the global balance of power. -Answer**
- (d) A crisis is imminent in the West given the growth of countries like China and India and the increase in oil prices.

6. What can be inferred about the author's view when he states, 'As Tommy Cooper used to say "just like that"'?

- (a) Industry has incentive to build new production and refining capacity and therefore oil prices would reduce.
- (b) There would be a correction in the price levels of oil once new production capacity is added. -Answer**

- (c) The decline in oil prices is likely to be short-term in nature.
- (d) It is not necessary that oil prices would go down to earlier levels.

7. What, according to the author, has resulted in a widespread belief in the resilience of modern capitalism?

(a) Growth in the economies of Western countries despite shocks in the form of increase in levels of indebtedness and inflated asset prices.

(b) Increase in the prosperity of Western countries and China despite rising oil prices.

(c) Continued growth of Western economies despite a rise in terrorism, an increase in oil prices and other similar shocks. -Answer

(d) The success of continued reforms aimed at making Western economies more dynamic, competitive and efficient.

8. By the expression 'Edwardian Summer', the author refers to a period in which there is

(a) unparalleled luxury and opulence.

(b) a sense of complacency among people because of all-round prosperity. -Answer

(c) a culmination of all-round economic prosperity.

(d) an imminent danger lurking behind economic prosperity.

Directions for questions (9 to 12) : Each question consists of four sentences on a topic. Some sentences are grammatically incorrect or inappropriate. Select the option that indicates the grammatically correct and appropriate sentence(s).

9. A. The balance of power will shift to the East as China and India evolve.

B. Rarely the economic ascent of two still relatively poor nations has been watched with such a mixture of awe, opportunism, and trepidation.

C. Postwar era witnessed economic miracles in Japan and South Korea, but neither was populous enough to power worldwide growth or change the game in a complete spectrum of industries.

D. China and India, by contrast, possess the weight and dynamism to transform the 21st-century global economy.

(a) A, B & C

(b) A&D -Answer

(c) C

(d) C&D

10. A. People have good reason to care about the welfare of animals.

B. Ever since Enlightenment, their treatment has been seen as a measure of mankind's humanity.

C. It is no coincidence that William Wilberforce and Sir Thomas Foxwell Buxton, two leaders of the movement to abolish the slave trade, helped found the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in 1820s.

D. An increasing number of people go further: mankind has a duty not to cause pain to animals that have the capacity to suffer.

(a) A & D

(b) A&C

(c) C&D -Answer

11. A. When virtuoso teams begin their work, individuals are in and group consensus is out.

B. As project progresses, however, the individual stars harness themselves to the product of the group.

C. Sooner or later, the members break through their own egocentrism and become a plurality with single-minded focus on the goal.

D. In short, they morph into a powerful team with a shared identity.

(a) A&C

(b) A&D -Answer

(c) B&D

(d) A, C&D

12. A. Large reductions in the ozone layer, which sits about 15-30 km above the Earth, take place each winter over the polar regions, especially the Antarctic, as low temperatures allow the formation of stratospheric clouds that assist chemical reactions breaking down ozone.

B. Industrial chemicals containing chlorine and bromine have-been blamed for thinning the layer because they

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attack the ozone molecules, making them to break apart.

C. Many an offending chemical have now been banned.

D. It will still take several decades before these substances have disappeared from the atmosphere.

(a) D

(b) B&D

(c) A&D -Answer

(d) A&C

Directions for questions (13 to 16) : Each of the following questions has a paragraph from which the last sentence has been deleted. From the given options, choose the one that completes the paragraph in the most appropriate way.

13. Federer's fifth grand slam win prompted a reporter to ask whether he was the best ever. Federer is certainly not lacking in confidence, but he wasn't about to proclaim himself the best ever. "The best player of this generation, yes", he said, "But nowhere close to ever. Just look at the records that some guys have. I'm a minnow." _____ .

(a) His win against Agassi, a genius from the previous generation, contradicts that.

(b) Sampras, the king of an earlier generation, was as humble. -Answer

(c) He is more than a minnow to his contemporaries.

(d) The difference between 'the best of this generation' and 'the best ever' is a matter of perception.

14. Thus the end of knowledge and the closing of the frontier that it symbolizes is not a looming crisis at all, but merely one of many embarrassing fits of hubris in civilization's long history. In the end, it will pass away and be forgotten. Ours is not the first generation to struggle to understand the organizational laws of the frontier, deceive itself that it has succeeded, and go to its grave having failed. _____ .

(a) One would be wise to be humble.

(b) But we might be the first generation to actually reach the frontier. -Answer

(c) But we might be the first generation to deal with the crisis.

(d) However, this time the success is not illusory.

15. Most firms consider expert individuals to be too elitist, temperamental, egocentric, and difficult to work with. Force such people to collaborate on a high-stakes project and they just might come to fisticuffs. Even the very notion of managing such a group seems unimaginable. So most organizations fall into default mode, setting up project teams of people who get along nicely.

(a) The result, however, is disastrous.

(b) The result is mediocrity. -Answer

(c) The result is creation of experts who then become elitists.

(d) Naturally, they drive innovations.

16. The audiences for crosswords and sudoku, understandably, overlap greatly, but there are differences, too. A crossword attracts a more literary person, while sudoku appeals to a keenly logical mind. Some crossword enthusiasts turn up their noses at sudoku because they feel it lacks depth. A good crossword requires vocabulary, knowledge, mental flexibility and sometimes even a sense of humor to complete. It touches numerous areas of life and provides an "Aha!" or two along the way _____ .

(a) Sudoku, on the other hand, is just a logical exercise, each one similar to the last. -Answer

(b) Sudoku, incidentally, is growing faster in popularity than crosswords, even among the literati.

(c) Sudoku, on the other hand, can be attempted and enjoyed even by children.

(d) Sudoku, however, is not exciting in any sense of the term.

Directions for questions (17 to 20) : Each of the following questions has a paragraph with one italicized word that does not make sense. Choose the most appropriate replacement for that word from the options given below the paragraph.

17. Intelligent design derives from an early 19th-century explanation of the natural world given by an English clergyman, William Paley. Paley was the populariser of the famous watchmaker analogy. Proponents of intelligent design are *crupping* Paley's argument with a new gloss from molecular biology.

(a) destroying

(b) testing

(c) resurrecting -Answer

(d) questioning

18. Women squat, heads covered, beside huge piles of limp fodder and blank oil lamps, and just about all the cows in the three towns converge upon this spot. Sinners, supplicants and yes, even scallywags' hand over a few coins for a crack at redemption and a handful of grass.

(a) shining

(b) bright

(c) sputtering -Answer

(d) effulgent

19. It is Klang to a sensitive traveller who walks through this great town, when he sees the streets, the roads, and cabin doors crowded with beggars, mostly women, followed by three, four, or six children, all in rags and importuning every passenger for alms.

(a) amusing

(b) irritating

(c) disgusting

(d) distressing -Answer

20. Or there is the most fin gummy diplomatic note on record: when Philip of Macedon wrote to the Spartans that, if he came within their borders, he would leave not one stone of their city, they wrote back the one word - "If".

(a) witty

(b) rude

(c) simple

(d) terse -Answer

Directions for questions (21 to 24): The passage given below is followed by a set of four questions. Choose the best answer to each question.

A game of strategy, as currently conceived in game theory, is a situation in which two or more "players" make choices among available alternatives (moves). The totality of choices determines the outcomes of the game, and it is assumed that the rank order of preferences for the outcomes is different for different players. Thus the "interests" of the players are generally in conflict. Whether these interests are diametrically opposed or only partially opposed depends on the type of game.

Psychologically, most interesting situations arise when the interests of the players are partly coincident and partly opposed, because then one can postulate not only a conflict among the players but also inner conflicts within the players. Each is torn between a tendency to cooperate, so as to promote the common interests, and a tendency to compete, so as to enhance his own individual interests.

Internal conflicts are always psychologically interesting. What we vaguely call "interesting" psychology is in very great measure the psychology of inner conflict. Inner conflict is also held to be an important component of serious literature as distinguished from less serious genres. The classical tragedy, as well as the serious novel, reveals the inner conflict of central figures. The superficial adventure story, on the other hand, depicts only external conflict; that is, the threats to the person with whom the reader (or viewer) identifies stem in these stories exclusively from external obstacles and from the adversaries who create them. On the most primitive level this sort of external conflict is psychologically empty. In the fistfights between the protagonists of good and evil, no psychological problems are involved or, at any rate, none are depicted in juvenile representations of conflict.

The detective story, the "adult" analogue of a juvenile adventure tale, has at times been described as a glorification of intellectualized conflict. However, a great deal of the interest in the plots of these stories is sustained by withholding the unravelling of a solution to a problem. The effort of solving the problem is in itself not a conflict if the adversary (the unknown criminal) remains passive, like Nature, whose secrets the scientist supposedly unravels by deduction. If the adversary actively puts obstacles in the detective's path toward the solution, there is genuine conflict. But the conflict is psychologically interesting only to the extent that it contains irrational components such as a tactical error on the criminal's part or the detective's insight into some psychological quirk of the criminal or something of this sort. Conflict conducted in a perfectly rational manner is psychologically no more interesting than a standard Western. For example, Tic-tac-toe, played perfectly by both players, is completely devoid of psychological interest. Chess may be psychologically interesting but only to the extent that it is played not quite rationally. Played completely rationally, chess would not be different from Tic-tac-toe.

In short, a pure conflict of interest (what is called a zero-sum game) although it offers a wealth of interesting conceptual problems, is not interesting psychologically, except to the extent that its conduct departs from rational norms.

21. According to the passage, which of the following options about the application of game theory to a conflict-of-interest situation is true?

- (a) Assuming that the rank order of preferences for options is different for different players.
- (b) Accepting that the interests of different players are often in conflict.
- (c) Not assuming that the interests are in complete disagreement.
- (d) All of the above. -Answer**

22. The problem-solving process of a scientist is different from that of a detective because

- (a) scientists' study inanimate objects, while detectives deal with living criminals or law offenders.
- (b) scientists study known objects, while detectives have to deal with unknown criminals or law offenders.

(c) scientists study phenomena that are not actively altered, while detectives deal with phenomena that have been deliberately influenced to mislead.

-Answer

- (d) scientists study psychologically interesting phenomena, while detectives deal with "adult" analogues of juvenile adventure tales.

23. According to the passage, internal conflicts are psychologically more interesting than external conflicts because

(a) internal conflicts, rather than external conflicts, form an important component of serious literature as distinguished from less serious genres.

(b) only juveniles or very few "adults" actually experience external conflict, while internal conflict is more widely prevalent in society.

(c) in situations of internal conflict, individuals experience a dilemma in resolving their own preferences for different outcomes. -Answer

(d) there are no threats to the reader (or viewer) in case of external conflicts.

24. Which, according to the author, would qualify as interesting psychology?

(a) A statistician's dilemma over choosing the best method to solve an optimisation problem.

(b) A chess player's predicament over adopting a defensive strategy against an aggressive opponent. -Answer

(c) A mountaineer's choice of the best path to Mt. Everest from the base camp.

(d) A finance manager's quandary over the best way of raising money from the market.

Directions for questions (25 to 25): The sentences given in each question, when properly sequenced, form a coherent paragraph. Each sentence is labelled with a letter. Choose the most logical order of sentences from among the given choices to construct a coherent paragraph.