

CAT 2025 Question Paper With Solution VARC Slot 1

Time Allowed :40 Minutes	Maximum Marks :72	Total Questions :24
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General Instructions

Read the following instructions very carefully and strictly follow them:

1. Each correct answer carries **+3 marks**.
2. For multiple-choice questions (MCQs), **-1 mark** will be deducted for each wrong answer.
3. There is **no negative marking** for Type-in-the-Answer (TITA) questions.
4. Once the allotted time for a section ends, you will automatically move to the next section. You cannot go back to a previous section.
5. All answers must be entered on the computer screen using the mouse and keyboard. Rough sheets will be provided.
6. The use of calculators, mobile phones, or any other electronic device is strictly prohibited. An on-screen basic calculator will be provided.

1.

Read the passage and answer the question that follows:

Modern behavioral economists argue that human decisions are not merely deviations from rationality but reflections of multiple competing goals: emotional satisfaction, social approval, cognitive ease, and fear avoidance. Traditional economic models assumed that people maximize utility through consistent preferences. However, empirical evidence shows that preferences fluctuate depending on framing, context, memory limits, and social cues. What we label as “irrationality” may simply be the mind optimizing for criteria that formal models fail to capture.

Question:

Which of the following, if true, most strengthens the author’s argument?

Correct Answer: (B) Studies show that behaviors termed “irrational” often help individuals secure essential social allies and resources.

Solution:

The author’s core argument is that human behaviors, often labeled as “irrational,” are actually the mind optimizing for alternative goals (like social approval) that traditional models miss.

To strengthen this, we need evidence showing that these so-called irrational behaviors serve a functional, optimizing purpose.

1. **Analyze Option (A):** This discusses updates to economic models. While relevant to the field, it does not provide evidence about the nature of the decisions themselves or validate the

“optimizing” claim.

2. **Analyze Option (B):** This option states that “irrational” behaviors help secure allies and resources. This directly proves that the behavior serves a functional goal (optimization of social standing), supporting the author’s hypothesis.

3. **Analyze Option (C):** If behavior is “largely random,” it is not optimized for any specific criteria. This would weaken the idea of a hidden logic behind the decisions.

4. **Analyze Option (D):** This contradicts the passage, which lists “cognitive ease” as a specific goal the mind optimizes for.

Therefore, Option (B) provides the strongest support by demonstrating the utility of the behavior.

Quick Tip

In “Strengthen” questions, identify the conclusion (behavior is optimized for hidden goals) and look for a premise that validates the mechanism (e.g., evidence that the behavior actually achieves those goals).

2.

Read the passage and answer:

Several historians argue that the decline of ancient civilizations was not solely due to environmental factors but also due to institutional rigidity. When rules and governance systems become resistant to change, societies lose flexibility and innovation capacity. Even mild environmental shocks can then trigger collapse because institutions cannot adapt quickly enough.

Question:

Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

Correct Answer: (B) Institutional flexibility can mitigate the impact of environmental shocks on a society.

Solution:

An inference must be a logical consequence of the information provided in the passage, without assuming outside knowledge.

1. **Analyze the Passage logic:** The text states that rigidity leads to a loss of flexibility, making societies unable to adapt to shocks, which triggers collapse.

2. **Evaluate Option (A):** The passage explicitly says the decline was “not solely” due to environmental factors. It does not claim they are the “primary” cause for “all” civilizations.

3. **Evaluate Option (B):** Since rigidity (lack of flexibility) makes institutions unable to adapt to shocks, it logically follows that possessing flexibility would allow institutions to adapt better, thereby mitigating the impact of such shocks. This is a valid inverse inference.
4. **Evaluate Option (C):** The passage states the opposite: rigid systems are vulnerable (collapse is triggered), not immune.
5. **Evaluate Option (D):** The passage explicitly links the two: “When rules... become resistant to change, societies lose... innovation capacity.”

Therefore, Option (B) is the correct inference.

Quick Tip

For Inference questions, if the text states “X causes bad outcome Y,” a valid inference is often “Not-X helps avoid bad outcome Y.”

3.

Para-Jumble

Arrange the sentences in a logical order:

- A. This pursuit of conformity creates a dilemma: the more individuals try to blend in, the more homogeneous and predictable the group becomes.
- B. Humans often conform to group norms to avoid social rejection.
- C. Yet, creativity tends to flourish in environments that allow diversity of thought.
- D. As a result, groups must balance the need for cohesion with the need for individual expression.

Question:

Arrange A, B, C, D in the most coherent order.

Correct Answer: (A) B, A, C, D

Solution:

We must determine the logical flow of ideas, paying attention to pronouns and transition words.

1. **Identify the Opening Sentence:** Sentence B introduces the general topic (human conformity) and the motivation behind it. Sentence A begins with “This pursuit,” which refers back to an action mentioned previously. Thus, B must come before A.
2. **Establish the Link B → A:** Sentence B describes the act of conforming. Sentence A elaborates on the consequence of “This pursuit of conformity” (homogeneity). This creates a strong link.

3. **Identify the Contrast (C):** Sentence C starts with “Yet,” signaling a contradiction. It contrasts the homogeneity mentioned in A with the “diversity of thought” required for creativity. Thus, C follows A.

4. **Identify the Conclusion (D):** Sentence D begins with “As a result,” indicating a summary or recommendation. It synthesizes the conflict between cohesion (A/B) and expression (C) into a final conclusion.

5. **Final Sequence:** B (Topic) → A (Elaboration) → C (Contrast) → D (Conclusion).

Therefore, the correct order is B, A, C, D.

Quick Tip

Look for demonstrative pronouns like “This” or “These” at the start of sentences. They almost always refer to a noun or concept introduced in the immediately preceding sentence.

4.

Odd One Out

Identify the sentence that does not fit in the paragraph:

- (A) Urban planners increasingly recognize that walkable cities improve both physical and mental well-being.
- (B) Several studies indicate that green spaces in cities contribute to lower stress levels.
- (C) Public transportation systems are often designed to optimize fuel efficiency.
- (D) Compact city design reduces car dependency and encourages healthier lifestyles.

Question:

Which sentence is the odd one out?

Correct Answer: (C) Sentence C

Solution:

To find the odd one out, we must identify the common theme connecting the majority of the sentences.

- 1. **Analyze Sentence A:** Focuses on “walkable cities” improving “physical and mental well-being.” (Theme: Urban design → Human Health).
- 2. **Analyze Sentence B:** Focuses on “green spaces” contributing to “lower stress levels.” (Theme: Urban design → Human Health).

3. **Analyze Sentence D:** Focuses on “compact city design” encouraging “healthier lifestyles.” (Theme: Urban design → Human Health).

4. **Analyze Sentence C:** Focuses on “public transportation” optimizing “fuel efficiency.” While related to urban planning, the outcome here is mechanical/environmental efficiency, not directly human physical or mental health.

5. **Conclusion:** Sentences A, B, and D form a coherent paragraph about the health benefits of urban design. Sentence C diverges by focusing on fuel efficiency.

Therefore, Sentence C is the odd one out.

Quick Tip

In “Odd One Out” questions, determine the specific scope of the majority. Even if all sentences relate to a broad topic (like “Cities”), the odd one will often differ in the specific aspect (e.g., Health vs. Engineering).

5.

Para-Summary

Choose the option that best captures the central idea of the following paragraph:
Human memory is not a recording of the past but a reconstruction influenced by expectations, emotions, and present needs. People often recall events differently at different times, not because they are careless, but because memory adapts to serve current goals. Understanding this adaptive nature explains why eyewitness testimonies are unreliable and why personal narratives evolve over time.

Question:

Which option best summarizes the paragraph?

Correct Answer: (C) Memory is an adaptive reconstruction influenced by present needs, which explains its variability and the unreliability of eyewitness accounts.

Solution:

The summary must cover the main points: memory is a reconstruction (not a recording), it is influenced by present needs (adaptive), and this leads to unreliability/evolution of narratives.

1. **Analyze the Paragraph:** The text explicitly defines memory as a “reconstruction influenced by... present needs.” It argues this is “adaptive” and uses this to explain why “eyewitness testimonies are unreliable.”

2. **Evaluate Option (A):** This attributes inaccuracy to “carelessness,” which the passage explicitly denies (“not because they are careless”).

3. **Evaluate Option (B):** This contradicts the first sentence which states memory is “not a recording.”

4. **Evaluate Option (C):** This option captures the definition (adaptive reconstruction), the cause (present needs), and the consequence (variability/unreliability). It covers all key aspects.

5. **Evaluate Option (D):** This focuses narrowly on “emotional satisfaction” and claims it is the “primary function,” which is a distortion of the text’s list of influencing factors.

Therefore, Option (C) is the best summary.

Quick Tip

A good summary must be comprehensive yet concise. It should include the Subject (Memory), the Mechanism (Reconstruction/Adaptive), and the Implication (Unreliability), without adding external judgments.

6.

Critical Reasoning (Weaken the Argument)

Argument:

A company claims its new productivity software significantly improves employee efficiency because workers using it complete tasks 30% faster.

Question:

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the company’s claim?

Correct Answer: (C) The increase in speed leads to a high error rate that requires time-consuming corrections.

Solution:

The argument claims that **Efficiency** improves because **Speed** improves (tasks done 30% faster). We need to find an option that breaks the link between Speed and Efficiency.

1. **Identify the Assumption:** The argument assumes that doing something faster is equivalent to being more efficient/productive.

2. **Analyze Option (A):** Cost is a financial metric, not a measure of employee efficiency or productivity. This does not weaken the claim about performance.

3. **Analyze Option (B):** A one-time training requirement is a setup cost but does not mean the software itself is inefficient once learned.

4. **Analyze Option (C):** If the speed comes at the cost of high error rates requiring corrections, the **net** time to finish a project successfully might actually increase. This directly attacks the definition of efficiency (Speed + Quality). It shows that faster speed does not mean better results.

5. **Analyze Option (D):** Market adoption rates do not reflect on the efficacy of the software itself.

Therefore, Option (C) most seriously weakens the claim by showing that speed does not equal efficiency.

Quick Tip

To weaken an argument based on "Cause and Effect" (Speed causes Efficiency), look for a "Side Effect" that negates the benefit (e.g., Speed causes Errors, which reduces Efficiency).

7.

Critical Reasoning (Assumption)

Argument:

"Cities that invest in cycling infrastructure will see a long-term reduction in traffic congestion because people will shift from cars to bicycles."

Question:

Which of the following is an essential assumption in the argument?

Correct Answer: (B) Commuters are willing to switch from cars to bicycles if safe infrastructure is available.

Solution:

An assumption is a missing link in the logical chain that must be true for the conclusion to hold.

1. **Analyze the Logic:** Premise (Invest in Infrastructure) → Conclusion (Reduction in Traffic).

The mechanism proposed is: People will shift from cars to bicycles.

2. **Identify the Gap:** The argument assumes that the mere existence of infrastructure is sufficient to cause people to change their behavior. It assumes people **want** to cycle but are currently held back by a lack of infrastructure.

3. **Evaluate Option (A):** Whether cycling is environmentally friendly is irrelevant to the specific claim about reducing **traffic congestion**.

4. **Evaluate Option (B):** If commuters are **not** willing to switch (perhaps due to distance, weather, or culture), then building the infrastructure will not lead to a shift, and traffic will not decrease. Thus, this willingness is an essential condition (assumption) for the argument to work.
5. **Evaluate Option (C):** Maintenance costs are a financial consideration, not a logical requisite for the reduction of traffic volume.
6. **Evaluate Option (D):** This actually weakens the argument. If congestion is caused by trucks (which likely can't switch to bikes), then people switching to bikes won't solve the congestion. It is not a supporting assumption.

Quick Tip

The "Negation Test" is useful for Assumption questions. If you negate the correct option (e.g., "Commuters are NOT willing to switch"), the argument should collapse.
