

GRE Verbal Reasoning

Sample Paper 03

A) Subject: Verbal Reasoning

B) Total Questions: 27 Questions (Section I: 12 — Section II: 15)

C) Marking Scheme & Rules:

- **Correct Answer:** +1 Point
- **Incorrect/Unattempted:** 0 Points (No Negative Marking)
- **Partial Credit:** None. For multi-blank questions, all parts must be correct.
- **Equivalence Questions:** Both synonymous words must be selected.

SECTION I: VERBAL REASONING

Q1. The senator's recent speech was unexpectedly _____; although he is typically celebrated for his grandiloquence, this address lasted fewer than five minutes and lacked any ornate flourishes.

- A. Loquacious
- B. Terse
- C. Ephemeral
- D. Limpid

Q2. Despite the mounting evidence suggesting the theory was flawed, the lead researcher remained _____, refusing to acknowledge any data that contradicted his initial hypothesis.

- A. Irresolute
- B. Belligerent
- C. Apathetic
- D. Intransigent

Q3. The mediator was praised for his (i) _____ demeanor during the labor dispute; he possessed a singular talent for (ii) _____ the grievances of the workers while maintaining the trust of the management.

- A. (i) Placatory; (ii) Allay
- B. (i) Arbitrary; (ii) Aggravate
- C. (i) Opinionated; (ii) Allay
- D. (i) Placatory; (ii) Confound

Q4. While the documentary was undoubtedly (i) _____, offering deep insights into marine biology, its pacing was so (ii) _____ that even dedicated viewers found themselves nodding off.

- A. (i) Illuminating; (ii) Somniferous
- B. (i) Shallow; (ii) Riveting
- C. (i) Illuminating; (ii) Cryptic
- D. (i) Scanty; (ii) Somniferous

For decades, it was a long-held belief that all life on Earth was ultimately dependent on solar energy. However, the discovery of hydrothermal vents on the ocean floor revealed ecosystems powered by chemical energy. In these dark, high-pressure environments, bacteria perform chemosynthesis, converting chemical compounds from the Earth's interior into organic matter. This discovery suggested that life might exist in similar conditions elsewhere, such as on Jupiter's moon Europa, where volcanic activity under an icy crust could provide the necessary chemical substrates.

Q5. The passage implies that the "long-held belief" regarding solar energy was:

- A. Entirely invalidated by the new deep-sea data.
- B. Erroneously centered on the mechanics of photosynthesis.
- C. Overly narrow in its definition of life-sustaining energy sources.
- D. Only applicable to organisms that exist in the upper layers of the ocean.

Q6. According to the passage, the biological activity at hydrothermal vents is fueled by:

- A. Diffused sunlight reaching the seabed.
- B. Thermal energy radiating from tubeworms.
- C. Chemical substrates originating from the Earth's crust.
- D. Nutrient-rich debris sinking from the surface.

Q7. The author mentions "Jupiter's moon Europa" to:

- A. Highlight the contrast between volcanic heat and icy temperatures.
- B. Illustrate a potential extraterrestrial application of chemosynthetic theory.

- C. Detail how chemical energy might reach the surface of distant moons.
- D. Claim that all planetary bodies require volcanic activity to sustain life.

Q8. The board's decision to terminate the popular CEO was met with _____ from the employees, who had long viewed him as their strongest advocate.

- A. Umbrage and Pique
- B. Deference
- C. Indifference
- D. Jubilation

Q9. At the time of their publication, the artist's paintings were dismissed as _____, as they flagrantly disregarded the established techniques of the Royal Academy.

- A. Traditional
- B. Conventional
- C. Radical and Unorthodox
- D. Quotidian

Q10. A study found that employees using standing desks were 10% more productive. Consequently, the firm replaced all desks with standing versions. Which, if true, most weakens this decision?

- A. Standing desks are more expensive than traditional desks.
- B. The study did not account for the physical fatigue that reduces long-term focus.
- C. Some employees reported they enjoyed the new desks.
- D. The company's insurance premiums remained unchanged.

Q11. Choose the correct sentence regarding the subjunctive mood:

- A. The manager insisted that he was present at the meeting.
- B. The manager insisted that he be present at the meeting.
- C. The manager insisted that he is present at the meeting.
- D. The manager insisted like he was present at the meeting.

Q12. In the phrase "the mutability of human fortune," the word "mutability" most nearly means:

- A. Stability
- B. Opulence

- C. Changeability
- D. Depravity

SECTION II: VERBAL REASONING

Q1. The novelist's chapters were frequently (i) _____, drifting from the main plot to lengthy philosophical asides without any (ii) _____ connection, leaving many readers (iii) _____ as to the story's actual direction.

- A. (i) Digressive; (ii) Apparent; (iii) Perplexed
- B. (i) Sequential; (ii) Discordant; (iii) Clarified
- C. (i) Pithy; (ii) Sudden; (iii) Reassured
- D. (i) Digressive; (ii) Discordant; (iii) Reassured

Q2. The contract was meant to be (i) _____, providing a final resolution; however, the (ii) _____ phrasing in the indemnity clause led to a decade of litigation.

- A. (i) Conclusive; (ii) Nebulous
- B. (i) Interim; (ii) Unambiguous
- C. (i) Provocative; (ii) Transparent
- D. (i) Conclusive; (ii) Unambiguous

Q3. To the casual observer, the athlete's retirement seemed (i) _____, but those who monitored his recurring injuries viewed it as a (ii) _____ decision to prioritize his long-term health.

- A. (i) Capricious; (ii) Prudent
- B. (i) Commendable; (ii) Impetuous
- C. (i) Inevitable; (ii) Magnanimous
- D. (i) Capricious; (ii) Impetuous

Q4. The intern found the data entry task (i) _____, but the (ii) _____ stipend provided at the end of the summer made the repetitive work endurable.

- A. (i) Monotonous; (ii) Substantial
- B. (i) Facile; (ii) Paltry
- C. (i) Varied; (ii) Substantial
- D. (i) Monotonous; (ii) Paltry

Q5. The witness's reputation for _____ was well-established; her testimony was always characterized by a scrupulous adherence to the facts.

- A. Chicanery
- B. Veracity
- C. Guile
- D. Profligacy

Q6. The legal jargon was so _____ that it was virtually impossible for a layperson to decipher the terms of the agreement.

- A. Intricate
- B. Lucid
- C. Concise
- D. Evident

The Great Oxidation Event, occurring roughly 2.4 billion years ago, was a biological turning point. It was triggered by cyanobacteria, which produced oxygen as a metabolic byproduct of photosynthesis. While this eventually allowed for the rise of aerobic life, it was initially a catastrophe for the dominant anaerobic organisms of the time, for whom oxygen was toxic. This event demonstrates how biological processes can fundamentally alter the Earth's atmospheric chemistry.

Q7. According to the passage, the Great Oxidation Event was triggered by:

- A. The rise of complex multicellular organisms.
- B. Increased seismic activity.
- C. Biological waste from photosynthetic bacteria.
- D. The total eradication of anaerobic life.

Q8. The term "catastrophe" is used to describe the event because:

- A. It permanently halted biological evolution.
- B. It was lethal to organisms that found oxygen poisonous.
- C. Cyanobacteria were destroyed by their own oxygen production.
- D. It made the Earth's climate permanently unstable.

Q9. The "biological turning point" suggests that:

- A. Organisms must adapt to their environment to survive.
- B. Evolution is a reactive process driven by geological shifts.

- C. Living organisms can be the primary cause of atmospheric transformation.
- D. Aerobic respiration is less efficient than anaerobic respiration.

Q10. Research shows that students who drink green tea have higher test scores. However, these students also study more hours on average. Which weakens the claim that green tea causes higher scores?

- A. Wealthy students can afford more tea and private tutors.
- B. Green tea contains caffeine, which aids alertness.
- C. Many low-scoring students also drink herbal teas.
- D. The study was conducted during the winter months.

Q11. The judge was known for being _____, always ensuring that he remained neutral and did not favor either side.

- A. Objective and Unbiased
- B. Impetuous
- C. Prejudiced
- D. Rash

Q12. The textbook was criticized for being _____, as it contained hundreds of pages of redundant explanations that obscured the core concepts.

- A. Succinct
- B. Wordy and Pleonastic
- C. Engaging
- D. Enigmatic

Q13. The architect's plans were so _____ that even the novice builders were able to execute the design without error.

- A. Lucid and Perspicuous
- B. Murky
- C. Arcane
- D. Abstruse

Q14. Despite the _____ weather conditions at the start of the voyage, the ship arrived at its destination ahead of schedule.

- A. Halcyon
- B. Inclement and Tempestuous

C. Auspicious

D. Serene

Q15. The chef's menu was _____, featuring ingredients and techniques sourced from nearly every continent.

A. Diverse and Multifaceted

B. Uniform

C. Dogmatic

D. Insular

Solutions - Section I

1. **(B)** The sentence uses the word "although" to establish a contrast. While the senator is known for "grandiloquence" (extravagant, colorful, and long-winded speech), this address was very short and plain. "Terse" means using few words or being sparing in language, which fits the context of a five-minute speech without flourishes.
2. **(D)** The context describes a researcher who refuses to change his mind or acknowledge contradicting data despite "mounting evidence." "Intransigent" means refusing to agree or change one's mind, which perfectly describes this stubborn refusal to acknowledge flaws in the theory.
3. **(B)** For blank (i), "Placatory" is correct as it describes a demeanor intended to make someone less angry or hostile. For blank (ii), "Allay" means to diminish or soothe fears/grievances. The mediator's talent was in soothing the workers' anger while keeping management's trust.
4. **(A)** For blank (i), "Illuminating" matches the "deep insights" mentioned. For blank (ii), "Somniferous" means tending to induce sleep, which explains why viewers were "nodding off" despite the high quality of the information.
5. **(C)** The passage states that the discovery of chemosynthesis challenged the belief that all life depends on solar energy. This implies the previous belief was "overly narrow" because it failed to account for energy originating from chemical compounds in the Earth's interior.
6. **(C)** The text explicitly says bacteria perform chemosynthesis by "converting chemical compounds from the Earth's interior into organic matter." This identifies chemical substrates from the crust as the fuel source.
7. **(B)** The author mentions Europa to provide a potential extraterrestrial application of the chemosynthetic theory discovered on Earth, suggesting that similar volcanic activity under an icy moon could sustain life.

8. **(B)** In Sentence Equivalence, we need synonyms. "Umbrage" and "Pique" both refer to a feeling of resentment or offense. Since the employees viewed the CEO as their "strongest advocate," his termination would naturally cause them to feel offended or resentful.
 9. **(C)** "Radical" and "Unorthodox" are synonyms describing ideas that break away from tradition. Because the paintings "flagrantly disregarded" the "established techniques" of the Academy, they are best described by these two words.
 10. **(B)** The firm's decision is based on a productivity increase. To weaken this, option (B) suggests that the study was incomplete because it ignored "physical fatigue," which could lead to a decline in productivity or health issues over the long term.
 11. **(B)** Verbs of demanding or insisting (the mandative subjunctive) require the base form of the verb. Therefore, "insisted that he be present" is the grammatically correct choice for formal writing.
 12. **(C)** "Mutability" refers to the quality of being liable to change. In the context of "human fortune," it describes how one's luck can shift. "Changeability" is the direct synonym.
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Solutions - Section II

1. **(A)** A story that "drifts" from the main plot to asides is "digressive" (i). The lack of an "apparent" (ii) connection between the asides and the plot would leave readers feeling "perplexed" (iii) or confused about the direction of the story.
2. **(A)** The word "however" indicates a contrast. While the contract was intended to be "conclusive" (i) (final/resolving), the "nebulous" (ii) (vague/unclear) language in the clause led to litigation.
3. **(A)** To a "casual observer" who doesn't know the background, the retirement seemed "capricious" (i) (sudden/impulsive). However, those who knew about the injuries saw it as a "prudent" (ii) (wise/sensible) decision for his health.
4. **(A)** The word "but" indicates that the pay made up for the boring nature of the task. A repetitive task is "monotonous" (i), while a "substantial" (ii) (large/significant) stipend makes it worth doing.
5. **(B)** "Veracity" means conformity to facts or truthfulness. This is the only word that matches a "scrupulous adherence to the facts."
6. **(A)** If it is "virtually impossible for a layperson to decipher" the text, the jargon is "intricate" (very complicated or detailed).
7. **(C)** The passage states the event was triggered by cyanobacteria producing oxygen as a "metabolic byproduct" (waste) of photosynthesis.

8. **(B)** The event is called a catastrophe because, while good for aerobic life, it was "toxic" and lethal to the "dominant anaerobic organisms" that found oxygen poisonous.
 9. **(C)** The "turning point" refers to the core idea of the passage: that biological processes (life) can be the primary cause that fundamentally alters the Earth's physical environment.
 10. **(A)** The argument claims tea causes high scores. Option (A) introduces a "confounding variable": wealth. If wealthy students drink more tea AND have tutors, the tutors (not the tea) might be the reason for the high scores.
 11. **(A)** A judge who does not "favor either side" and remains "neutral" is "objective" and "unbiased." These are the two synonyms required.
 12. **(B)** "Wordy" and "Pleonastic" both describe the use of more words than are necessary. Redundant explanations that fill hundreds of pages fit this description perfectly.
 13. **(A)** If "novice builders" could execute the design "without error," the plans must have been very clear. "Lucid" and "Perspicuous" are synonyms meaning clearly expressed and easy to understand.
 14. **(B)** The word "Despite" indicates a contrast between the weather and the ship's successful early arrival. "Inclement" and "Tempestuous" both describe stormy, harsh, or violent weather conditions.
 15. **(A)** A menu featuring techniques from "nearly every continent" is "diverse" and "multifaceted." These two words correctly describe a variety of different cultural and geographical elements.
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