

CAT 2020 VARC Question Paper PDF (November 29, 2020) (Shift 1)

Passage 1 (Questions 1 - 5)

The word 'anarchy' comes from the Greek 'anarkhia', meaning contrary to authority or without a ruler, and was used in a derogatory sense until 1840, when it was adopted by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon to describe his political and social ideology. Proudhon argued that organization without government was both possible and desirable. In the evolution of political ideas, anarchism can be seen as an ultimate projection of both liberalism and socialism, and the differing strands of anarchist thought can be related to their emphasis on one or the other of these.

Historically, anarchism arose not only as an explanation of the gulf between the rich and the poor in any community, and of the reason why the poor have been obliged to fight for their share of a common inheritance, but as a radical answer to the question 'What went wrong?' that followed the ultimate outcome of the French Revolution. It had ended not only with a reign of terror and the emergence of a newly rich ruling caste, but with a new adored emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte, strutting through his conquered territories.

The anarchists and their precursors were unique on the political Left in affirming that workers and peasants, grasping the chance that arose to bring an end to centuries of exploitation and tyranny, were inevitably betrayed by the new class of politicians, whose first priority was to re-establish a centralized state power. After every revolutionary uprising, usually won at a heavy cost for ordinary populations, the new rulers had no hesitation in applying violence and terror, a secret police, and a professional army to maintain their control.

For anarchists the state itself is the enemy, and they have applied the same interpretation to the outcome of every revolution of the 19th and 20th centuries. This is not merely because every state keeps a watchful and sometimes punitive eye on its dissidents, but because every state protects the privileges of the powerful.

The mainstream of anarchist propaganda for more than a century has been anarchist-communism, which argues that property in land, natural resources, and the means of production should be held in mutual control by local communities, federating for innumerable joint purposes with other communes. It differs from state socialism in opposing the concept of any central authority. Some anarchists prefer to distinguish between anarchist-communism and collectivist anarchism in order to stress the obviously desirable freedom of an individual or family to possess the resources needed for living, while not implying the right to own the resources needed by others. . . .

There are, unsurprisingly, several traditions of individualist anarchism, one of them deriving from the 'conscious egoism' of the German writer Max Stirner (1806-56), and another from a remarkable series of 19th-century American figures who argued that in protecting our own autonomy and associating with others for common advantages, we are promoting the good of all. These thinkers differed from free-market liberals in their absolute mistrust of American capitalism, and in their emphasis on mutualism.

Question 1

The author makes all of the following arguments in the passage, EXCEPT:

- (A) The failure of the French Revolution was because of its betrayal by the new class of politicians who emerged from it.

- (B) For anarchists, the state is the enemy because all states apply violence and terror to maintain their control.
- (C) Individualist anarchism is actually constituted of many streams, all of which focus on the autonomy of the individual.
- (D) The popular perception of anarchism as espousing lawlessness and violence comes from a mainstream mistrust of collectivism.

Question 2

The author believes that the new ruling class of politicians betrayed the principles of the French Revolution, but does not specify in what way. In the context of the passage, which statement below is the likeliest explanation of that betrayal?

- (A) The new ruling class was constituted mainly of anarchists who were against the destructive impact of the Revolution on the market.
- (B) The anarchists did not want a new ruling class, but were not politically strong enough to stop them.
- (C) The new ruling class struck a deal with the old ruling class to share power between them.
- (D) The new ruling class rode to power on the strength of the workers' revolutionary anger, but then turned to oppress that very class.

Question 3

Which one of the following best expresses the similarity between American individualist anarchists and free-market liberals as well as the difference between the former and the latter?

- (A) Both prioritise individual autonomy; but the former also emphasise mutual dependence, while the latter do not do so.
- (B) Both reject the regulatory power of the state; but the former favour a people's state, while the latter favour state intervention in markets.
- (C) Both have sophisticated arguments for capitalism; but the former argue for a morally upright capitalism, while the latter argue that the market is the only morality.
- (D) Both are founded on the moral principles of altruism; but the latter conceive of the market as a force too mystical for the former to comprehend.

Question 4

Of the following sets of concepts, identify the set that is conceptually closest to the concerns of the passage.

- (A) Anarchism, State, Individual, Freedom.
- (B) Revolution, State, Strike, Egoism.
- (C) Revolution, State, Protection, Liberals.
- (D) Anarchism, Betrayal, Power, State.

Question 5

According to the passage, what is the one idea that is common to all forms of anarchism?

- (A) They all derive from the work of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon.
 - (B) They are all opposed to the centralisation of power in the state.
 - (C) They all focus on the primacy of the power of the individual.
 - (D) There is no idea common to all forms of anarchism; that is why it is anarchic.
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Passage 2 (Questions 6 - 9)

Few realise that the government of China, governing an empire of some 60 million people during the Tang dynasty (618-907), implemented a complex financial system that recognised grain, coins and textiles as money. Coins did have certain advantages: they were durable, recognisable and provided a convenient medium of exchange, especially for smaller transactions. However, there were also disadvantages. A continuing shortage of copper meant that government mints could not produce enough coins for the entire empire, to the extent that for most of the dynasty's history, coins constituted only a tenth of the money supply. One of the main objections to calls for taxes to be paid in coin was that peasant producers who could weave cloth or grow grain - the other two major currencies of the Tang - would not be able to produce coins, and therefore would not be able to pay their taxes. . . .

As coins had advantages and disadvantages, so too did textiles. If in circulation for a long period of time, they could show signs of wear and tear. Stained, faded and torn bolts of textiles had less value than a brand new bolt. Furthermore, a full bolt had a particular value. If consumers cut textiles into smaller pieces to buy or sell something worth less than a full bolt, that, too, greatly lessened the value of the textiles. Unlike coins, textiles could not be used for small transactions; as an official noted, textiles could not "be exchanged by the foot and the inch" . . .

But textiles had some advantages over coins. For a start, textile production was widespread and there were fewer problems with the supply of textiles. For large transactions, textiles weighed less than their equivalent in coins since a string of coins could weigh as much as 4 kg. Furthermore, the dimensions of a bolt of silk held remarkably steady from the third to the tenth century: 56 cm wide and 12 m long. The values of different textiles were also more stable than the fluctuating values of coins. . . .

The government also required the use of textiles for large transactions. Coins, on the other hand, were better suited for smaller transactions, and possibly, given the costs of transporting coins, for a more local usage. Grain, because it rotted easily, was not used nearly as much as coins and textiles, but taxpayers were required to pay grain to the government as a share of their annual tax obligations, and official salaries were expressed in weights of grain. . . .

In actuality, our own currency system today has some similarities even as it is changing in front of our eyes. We have cash - coins for small transactions like paying for parking at a meter, and banknotes for other items; cheques and debit/credit cards for other, often larger, types of payments. At the same time, we are shifting to electronic banking and making payments online. Some young people never use cash and do not know how to write a cheque . . .

Question 6

During the Tang period, which one of the following would not be an economically sound decision for a small purchase in the local market that is worth one-eighth of a bolt of cloth?

- (A) Making the payment with the appropriate weight of grain.
- (B) Paying with a faded bolt of cloth that has approximately the same value.
- (C) Using coins issued by the government to make the payment.
- (D) Cutting one-eighth of the fabric from a new bolt to pay the amount.

Question 7

When discussing textiles as currency in the Tang period, the author uses the words “steady” and “stable” to indicate all of the following EXCEPT:

- (A) reliable transportation.
- (B) reliable quality.
- (C) reliable measurements.
- (D) reliable supply.

Question 8

In the context of the passage, which one of the following can be inferred with regard to the use of currency during the Tang era?

- (A) Currency that deteriorated easily was not used for official work.
- (B) Copper coins were more valuable and durable than textiles.
- (C) Grains were the most used currency because of government requirements.
- (D) Currency usage was similar to that of modern times.

Question 9

According to the passage, the modern currency system shares all the following features with that of the Tang, EXCEPT that:

- (A) it uses different materials as currency.
- (B) it uses different currencies for different situations.
- (C) its currencies fluctuate in value over time.
- (D) it is undergoing transformation.

Passage 3 (Questions 10 - 14)

Vocabulary used in speech or writing organizes itself in seven parts of speech (eight, if you count interjections such as Oh! and Gosh! and Fuhgeddaboudit!). Communication composed of these parts of speech must be organized by rules of grammar upon which we agree. When these rules break

down, confusion and misunderstanding result. Bad grammar produces bad sentences. My favorite example from Strunk and White is this one: "As a mother of five, with another one on the way, my ironing board is always up."

Nouns and verbs are the two indispensable parts of writing. Without one of each, no group of words can be a sentence, since a sentence is, by definition, a group of words containing a subject (noun) and a predicate (verb); these strings of words begin with a capital letter, end with a period, and combine to make a complete thought which starts in the writer's head and then leaps to the reader's.

Must you write complete sentences each time, every time? Perish the thought. If your work consists only of fragments and floating clauses, the Grammar Police aren't going to come and take you away. Even William Strunk, that Mussolini of rhetoric, recognized the delicious pliability of language. "It is an old observation," he writes, "that the best writers sometimes disregard the rules of rhetoric." Yet he goes on to add this thought, which I urge you to consider: "Unless he is certain of doing well, [the writer] will probably do best to follow the rules."

The telling clause here is *Unless he is certain of doing well*. If you don't have a rudimentary grasp of how the parts of speech translate into coherent sentences, how can you be certain that you are doing well? How will you know if you're doing ill, for that matter? The answer, of course, is that you can't, you won't. One who does grasp the rudiments of grammar finds a comforting simplicity at its heart, where there need be only nouns, the words that name, and verbs, the words that act.

Take any noun, put it with any verb, and you have a sentence. It never fails. *Rocks explode. Jane transmits. Mountains float.* These are all perfect sentences. Many such thoughts make little rational sense, but even the stranger ones (*Plums deify!*) have a kind of poetic weight that's nice. The simplicity of noun-verb construction is useful—at the very least it can provide a safety net for your writing. Strunk and White caution against too many simple sentences in a row, but simple sentences provide a path you can follow when you fear getting lost in the tangles of rhetoric—all those restrictive and nonrestrictive clauses, those modifying phrases, those appositives and compound-complex sentences. If you start to freak out at the sight of such unmapped territory (unmapped by you, at least), just remind yourself that rocks explode, Jane transmits, mountains float, and plums deify. Grammar is . . . the pole you grab to get your thoughts up on their feet and walking.

Question 10

Which one of the following statements, if false, could be seen as supporting the arguments in the passage?

- (A) An understanding of grammar helps a writer decide if she/he is writing well or not.
- (B) Regarding grammar, women writers tend to be more attentive to method and accuracy.
- (C) It has been observed that writers sometimes disregard the rules of rhetoric.
- (D) Perish the thought that complete sentences necessarily need nouns and verbs!

Question 11

"Take any noun, put it with any verb, and you have a sentence. It never fails. Rocks explode. Jane transmits. Mountains float." None of the following statements can be seen as similar EXCEPT:

- (A) Take any vegetable, put some spices in it, and you have a dish.

- (B) Take an apple tree, plant it in a field, and you have an orchard.
- (C) A group of nouns arranged in a row becomes a sentence.
- (D) A collection of people with the same sports equipment is a sports team.

Question 12

Which one of the following quotes best captures the main concern of the passage?

- (A) "The telling clause here is Unless he is certain of doing well."
- (B) "Bad grammar produces bad sentences."
- (C) "Strunk and White caution against too many simple sentences in a row, but simple sentences provide a path you can follow when you fear getting lost in the tangles of rhetoric . . ."
- (D) "Nouns and verbs are the two indispensable parts of writing. Without one of each, no group of words can be a sentence . . ."

Question 13

All of the following statements can be inferred from the passage EXCEPT that:

- (A) sentences do not always have to be complete.
- (B) the subject-predicate relation is the same as the noun-verb relation.
- (C) the primary purpose of grammar is to ensure that sentences remain simple.
- (D) "Grammar Police" is a metaphor for critics who focus on linguistic rules.

Question 14

Inferring from the passage, the author could be most supportive of which one of the following practices?

- (A) The availability of language software that will standardise the rules of grammar as an aid to writers.
- (B) A campaign demanding that a writer's creative license should allow the breaking of grammatical rules.
- (C) A Creative Writing course that focuses on how to avoid the use of rhetoric.
- (D) The critique of standardised rules of punctuation and capitalisation.

Passage 4 (Questions 15 - 18)

In the late 1960s, while studying the northern-elephant-seal population along the coasts of Mexico and California, Burney Le Boeuf and his colleagues couldn't help but notice that the threat calls of males at some sites sounded different from those of males at other sites. That was the first time dialects were documented in a nonhuman mammal. . . .

All the northern elephant seals that exist today are descendants of the small herd that survived on Isla Guadalupe [after the near extinction of the species in the nineteenth century]. As that tiny population grew, northern elephant seals started to recolonize former breeding locations. It was precisely on the more recently colonized islands where Le Boeuf found that the tempos of the male vocal displays showed stronger differences to the ones from Isla Guadalupe, the founder colony.

In order to test the reliability of these dialects over time, Le Boeuf and other researchers visited Año Nuevo Island in California—the island where males showed the slowest pulse rates in their calls—every winter from 1968 to 1972. “What we found is that the pulse rate increased, but it still remained relatively slow compared to the other colonies we had measured in the past” Le Boeuf told me.

At the individual level, the pulse of the calls stayed the same: A male would maintain his vocal signature throughout his lifetime. But the average pulse rate was changing. Immigration could have been responsible for this increase, as in the early 1970s, 43 percent of the males on Año Nuevo had come from southern rookeries that had a faster pulse rate. This led Le Boeuf and his collaborator, Lewis Petrinovich, to deduce that the dialects were, perhaps, a result of isolation over time, after the breeding sites had been recolonized. For instance, the first settlers of Año Nuevo could have had, by chance, calls with low pulse rates. At other sites, where the scientists found faster pulse rates, the opposite would have happened—seals with faster rates would have happened to arrive first.

As the population continued to expand and the islands kept on receiving immigrants from the original population, the calls in all locations would have eventually regressed to the average pulse rate of the founder colony. In the decades that followed, scientists noticed that the geographical variations reported in 1969 were not obvious anymore. In the early 2010s, while studying northern elephant seals on Año Nuevo Island, [researcher Caroline] Casey noticed, too, that what Le Boeuf had heard decades ago was not what she heard now . . . By performing more sophisticated statistical analyses on both sets of data, [Casey and Le Boeuf] confirmed that dialects existed back then but had vanished. Yet there are other differences between the males from the late 1960s and their great-great-grandsons: Modern males exhibit more individual diversity, and their calls are more complex. While 50 years ago the drumming pattern was quite simple and the dialects denoted just a change in tempo, Casey explained, the calls recorded today have more complex structures, sometimes featuring doublets or triplets. . . .

Question 15

All of the following can be inferred from Le Boeuf’s study as described in the passage EXCEPT that:

- (A) male northern elephant seals might not have exhibited dialects had they not become nearly extinct in the nineteenth century.
- (B) changes in population and migration had no effect on the call pulse rate of individual male northern elephant seals.
- (C) the influx of new northern elephant seals into Año Nuevo Island would have soon made the call pulse rate of its male seals exceed that of those at Isla Guadalupe.
- (D) the average call pulse rate of male northern elephant seals at Año Nuevo Island increased from the early 1970s till the disappearance of dialects.

Question 16

Which one of the following conditions, if true, could have ensured that male northern elephant seal dialects did not disappear?

- (A) Besides Isla Guadalupe, there was one more surviving colony with the same average male call tempo from which no migration took place.
- (B) The call tempo of individual male seals in host colonies changed to match the average call tempo of immigrant male seals.
- (C) Besides Isla Guadalupe, there was one more founder colony with the same average male call tempo from which male seals migrated to various other colonies.
- (D) The call tempo of individual immigrant male seals changed to match the average tempo of resident male seals in the host colony.

Question 17

Which one of the following best sums up the overall history of transformation of male northern elephant seal calls?

- (A) Owing to migrations in the aftermath of near species extinction, the average call pulse rates in the recolonised breeding locations exhibited a gradual increase until they matched the tempo at the founding colony.
- (B) The calls have transformed from exhibiting simple composition, less individual variety, and great regional variety to complex composition, great individual variety, and less regional variety.
- (C) Owing to migrations in the aftermath of near species extinction, the calls have transformed from exhibiting complex composition, less individual variety, and great regional variety to simple composition, less individual variety, and great regional variety.
- (D) The calls have transformed from exhibiting simple composition, great individual variety, and less regional variety to complex composition, less individual variety, and great regional variety.

Question 18

From the passage it can be inferred that the call pulse rate of male northern elephant seals in the southern rookeries was faster because:

- (A) the male northern elephant seals of Isla Guadalupe with faster call pulse rates might have been the original settlers of the southern rookeries.
 - (B) a large number of male northern elephant seals migrated from the southern rookeries to Año Nuevo Island in the early 1970s.
 - (C) a large number of male northern elephant seals from Año Nuevo Island might have migrated to the southern rookeries to recolonise them.
 - (D) the calls of male northern elephant seals in the southern rookeries have more sophisticated structures, containing doublets and triplets.
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Question 19

Five jumbled up sentences, related to a topic, are given below. Four of them can be put together to form a coherent paragraph. Identify the odd one out and key in the number of the sentence as your answer:

1. For feminists, the question of how we read is inextricably linked with the question of what we read.
2. Elaine Showalter's critique of the literary curriculum is exemplary of this work.
3. Androcentric literature structures the reading experience differently depending on the gender of the reader.
4. The documentation of this realization was one of the earliest tasks undertaken by feminist critics.
5. More specifically, the feminist inquiry into the activity of reading begins with the realization that the literary canon is androcentric, and that this has a profoundly damaging effect on women readers.

Question 20

The passage given below is followed by four alternate summaries. Choose the option that best captures the essence of the passage.

For nearly a century most psychologists have embraced one view of intelligence. Individuals are born with more or less intelligence potential (I.Q.); this potential is heavily influenced by heredity and difficult to alter; experts in measurement can determine a person's intelligence early in life, currently from paper-and-pencil measures, perhaps eventually from examining the brain in action or even scrutinizing his/her genome. Recently, criticism of this conventional wisdom has mounted. Biologists ask if speaking of a single entity called "intelligence" is coherent and question the validity of measures used to estimate heritability of a trait in humans, who, unlike plants or animals, are not conceived and bred under controlled conditions.

- (A) Biologists have questioned the long-standing view that 'intelligence' is a single entity and the attempts to estimate its heritability.
- (B) Biologists have criticised that conventional wisdom that individuals are born with more or less intelligence potential.
- (C) Biologists have started questioning psychologists' view of 'intelligence' as a measurable immutable characteristic of an individual.
- (D) Biologists have questioned the view that 'intelligence' is a single entity and the ways in which what is inherited.

Question 21

The four sentences (labelled 1, 2, 3, 4) below, when properly sequenced would yield a coherent paragraph. Decide on the proper sequencing of the order of the sentences and key in the sequence of the four numbers as your answer:

1. Relying on narrative structure alone, indigenous significances of nineteenth-century San folktales are hard to determine.

2. Using their supernatural potency, benign shamans transcend the levels of the San cosmos in order to deal with social conflict and to protect material resources and enjoy a measure of respect that sets them apart from ordinary people.
3. Selected tales reveal that they deal with a form of spiritual conflict that has social implications and concern conflict between people and living or dead malevolent shamans.
4. Meaning can be elicited, and the tales contextualized, by probing beneath the narrative of verbatim, original-language records and exploring the connotations of highly significant words and phrases.

Question 22

The passage given below is followed by four alternate summaries. Choose the option that best captures the essence of the passage.

As Soviet power declined, the world became to some extent multipolar, and Europe strove to define an independent identity. What a journey Europe has undertaken to reach this point. It had in every century changed its internal structure and invented new ways of thinking about the nature of international order. Now at the culmination of an era, Europe, in order to participate in it, felt obliged to set aside the political mechanisms through which it had conducted its affairs for three and a half centuries. Impelled also by the desire to cushion the emergent unification of Germany, the new European Union established a common currency in 2002 and a formal political structure in 2004. It proclaimed a Europe united, whole, and free, adjusting its differences by peaceful mechanisms.

- (A) Europe has consistently changed in keeping with the changing world order and that has culminated in a united Europe.
- (B) The establishment of a formal political structure in Europe was hastened by the unification of Germany and the emergence of a multipolar world.
- (C) Europe has consistently changed its internal structure to successfully adapt to the changing world order.
- (D) Europe has chosen to lower political and economic heterogeneity, in order to adapt itself to an emerging multi-polar world.

Question 23

The passage given below is followed by four alternate summaries. Choose the option that best captures the essence of the passage.

For years, movies and television series like Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) paint an unrealistic picture of the “science of voices.” In the 1994 movie Clear and Present Danger an expert listens to a brief recorded utterance and declares that the speaker is “Cuban, aged 35 to 45, educated in the [...] eastern United States.” The recording is then fed to a supercomputer that matches the voice to that of a suspect, concluding that the probability of correct identification is 90%. This sequence sums up a good number of misimpressions about forensic phonetics, which have led to errors in real-life justice. Indeed, that movie scene exemplifies the so-called “CSI effect”—the phenomenon in which judges hold unrealistic expectations of the capabilities of forensic science.

- (A) Although voice recognition is often presented as evidence in legal cases, its scientific basis can be shaky.

- (B) Voice recognition as used in many movies to identify criminals has been used to identify criminals in real life also.
- (C) Movies and televisions have led to the belief that the use of forensic phonetics in legal investigations is robust and fool proof.
- (D) Voice recognition has started to feature prominently in crime-scene intelligence investigations because of movies and television series.

Question 24

The four sentences (labelled 1, 2, 3, 4) below, when properly sequenced would yield a coherent paragraph. Decide on the proper sequencing of the order of the sentences and key in the sequence of the four numbers as your answer:

1. Tensions and sometimes conflict remain an issue in and between the 11 states in South East Asia (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam).
2. China's rise as a regional military power and its claims in the South China Sea have become an increasingly pressing security concern for many South East Asian states.
3. Since the 1990s, the security environment of South East Asia has seen both continuity and profound changes.
4. These concerns cause states from outside the region to take an active interest in South East Asian security.

Question 25

Five jumbled up sentences, related to a topic, are given below. Four of them can be put together to form a coherent paragraph. Identify the odd one out and key in the number of the sentence as your answer:

1. Talk was the most common way for enslaved men and women to subvert the rules of their bondage, to gain more agency than they were supposed to have.
2. Even in conditions of extreme violence and unfreedom, their words remained ubiquitous, ephemeral, irrepressible, and potentially transgressive.
3. Slaves came from societies in which oaths, orations, and invocations carried great potency, both between people and as a connection to the all-powerful spirit world.
4. Freedom of speech and the power to silence may have been preeminent markers of white liberty in Colonies, but at the same time, slavery depended on dialogue: slaves could never be completely muted.
5. Slave-owners obsessed over slave talk, though they could never control it, yet feared its power to bind and inspire—for, as everyone knew, oaths, whispers, and secret conversations bred conspiracy and revolt.

Question 26

The four sentences (labelled 1, 2, 3, 4) below, when properly sequenced would yield a coherent paragraph. Decide on the proper sequencing of the order of the sentences and key in the sequence of the four numbers as your answer:

1. Man has used poisons for assassination purposes ever since the dawn of civilization, against individual enemies but also occasionally against armies.
2. These dangers were soon recognized, and resulted in two international declarations—in 1874 in Brussels and in 1899 in The Hague—that prohibited the use of poisoned weapons.
3. The foundation of microbiology by Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch offered new prospects for those interested in biological weapons because it allowed agents to be chosen and designed on a rational basis.
4. Though treaties were all made in good faith, they contained no means of control, and so fail.