BLOGS

#MyCLATStory- Kashika Lath [AIR 125] Shares her Preparation Tips for CLAT

Ruchika Mohapatra · 23 Jul 2023

Preparing for CLAT 2024? Read Kashika Lath's #CLATStory and get an insight into how she obtained AIR 125 in CLAT 2023. Read this post to go through her preparation strategy, important tips, and advice for those taking the CLAT this year.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

Hi, my name is Kashika Lath. I finished school from Delhi Public School International in Gurgaon, Haryana. I appeared for CLAT in 2022 and managed to obtain a seat in NALSAR, Hyderabad. So, I am about to be a lawyer – the first in my family! I am very excited to begin this year.

How did your CLAT journey begin?

Honestly, like many teenage students in 11th grade, I did not have a clear idea on what I wanted to do, but I knew I had to start preparing for something. I always had interest in reading, writing and debating, so I wanted my dream job to require these skills in some capacity.

Hence, naturally, I started taking an interest in law and began my research on CLAT for my career. That is when I met Abhilasha Ma'am, who guided me from when I was in the initial phases of my CLAT journey to the end. The most important thing I learned from her was about developing my reading comprehension (RC) skills. On her advice, I had begun preparing for CLAT two years prior to my intended entrance.

It is important for aspirants to understand that ***not just CLAT, but nearly all entrance exams require you to have a strong hold over RC***, which can be very scoring. In order to ace these sections, aspirants must have a firm grasp on vocabulary, a very quick reading speed and high comprehension. Unfortunately, these skills that develops over a lot of time and no amount of

practice can improve your RC significantly enough in just a month of study. So, by starting 2 years in advance and just solving RC passages with a timer, you can have an edge over other aspirants.

You scored AIR 125 in CLAT 2023. Can you tell us how you prepared for the exam?

I had started 2 years earlier, and I just used to keep solving RC passages and read the newspapers, to inculcate the habit of reading. I even used to solve some math questions relevant to CLAT; these can easily be found online.

One very important thing I did, at the advice of Abhilasha Ma'am, was that I appeared for CLAT a year earlier than I was supposed to. That was the most important learning experience for me and I would recommend it for anyone else appearing for CLAT. Give a 'practice' attempt! That will be the real test of your strategy and preparation method.

Closer to the time of the actual 'final' try, I started studying GK extensively and made notes. I also ***started taking many mocks and timed myself*** using a small analogue watch, the kind that will be allowed in the examination hall. I tried to recreate the examination conditions as closely as I could. I solved only the physical OMR mocks, because I learned from my 'practice' attempt that filling in an OMR sheet is something that I will have to master. There is a lot that can go wrong if you aren't familiar with the OMR sheet. I did online mocks too, but only for practice of questions.

What motivated you to pursue law as a career?

I have always appreciated reading and being well-read. I also enjoyed communicating my ideas articulately. In fact, even my mother used to jokingly say that I argue a lot, and that when I grow up, I must be a lawyer. My parents and teachers, especially my English teacher, encouraged me to take part in debate competitions and MUNs for my school. I was nervous but I performed successfully and discovered that I had a knack for it. That's what made me realize that I was always exposed to, and more importantly, enjoyed the kind of subjects, a lawyer would, perhaps, have a flair for!

When I actually did begin my CLAT journey and the study for CLAT, that is when I genuinely became passionate about law. Earlier I wasn't dead-set on one singular career option per se, practice and trying is what sparked my interest. What I have realized about motivation and

passion is that it won't just happen in one defining, story-esque moment. Passion for one's career or that "dream job" is not a goal, but a journey filled with opportunities that we decide to choose or not to choose. The onus is on us to at least try out all the opportunities that come our way and then determine which we enjoy and which can we pursue as actual careers.

Tell us a bit about your experience while taking CLAT 2023. Is there any strategy you employed while taking the examination that helped you score so well?

My strategy and I believe the only strategy that will help one crack CLAT or any examination for that matter, is time management. The question paper of CLAT is not impossibly tricky, but it is tedious.

When aspirants practice the questions from previous CLAT papers, they can solve it easily but when doing the actual paper, they get stumped. That's because the brain doesn't remain alert and sharp as we need, while solving all of these questions continuously for 2 hours. What anyone taking CLAT has to fight is the tendency to lose focus when not given fair break times.

The way I managed to keep focus was by splitting my paper in between reading and non-reading sections. Often when reading too much for too long, we feel like we stop comprehending what we are reading and end up reading the same line over and over again. That wastage of time was not something I could afford during the paper, hence I split my paper that way. It is up to each of us to find what method works best by taking many mocks but I found this method to be best for me.

Another thing I did during the paper, but may not work for everyone, is that I read the questions before the passage and then fished the answers in the passage. I have seen on all the top CLAT coaching YouTube channels, that they advise against it as a student may comprehend the passage incorrectly and mark the wrong answer. However, this trick helped me save time and mental effort as reading and making sense of every long passage was draining me out.

What were your top 3 sources of information for CLAT? Did you prepare for CLAT all by yourself?

I didn't prepare for CLAT all by myself. As I mentioned earlier, Abhilasha Ma'am mentored me. However, there are many students that are preparing by themselves and it is entirely possible for

them to crack CLAT by themselves as long as they know the right places to look for information.

My main information sources were YouTube channels like World Affairs, Drishti IAS, Study IQ and Byju's CLAT to help me with the GK portion of the CLAT paper. Every day, I spent at least half an hour checking these channels for any CLAT relevant information and I made notes using them.

For GK practice, I also relied on newspapers like The Hindu and The Indian Express. I had an online subscription to these newspapers but in the age of the internet, it is possible to find the same information for free.

For instance, Drishti IAS editorials are literally the best source of all things GK. The point of studying from newspapers and editorials even though I got a lot of the information from the YouTube videos, was to stay in practice of reading and skimming important information.

Also, many a times CLAT literally uses an article from newspapers as a passage. Those sources covered the GK portion, but for the rest of sections, only practice can help. I mentioned the RC textbooks earlier but an even more important source of practice are mocks.

In my opinion, it doesn't matter how much you score at the start as long as you consistently take at least 2 mocks every week. That really is the biggest source of information on your own progress and your winning strategy.

I did all the different types of mocks – LegalEdge, Career Launcher, LawPrep, CLAT Prep, Oliveboard, Topranker – you name it, I have done it. Anyone can purchase some mocks online and my reason for doing many different types of mocks is to avoid relying on one coaching's pattern and to avoid repetitive questions. I think the variety helped me by giving me an edge over other aspirants.

What would you say sets apart your #CLATStory from others?

As such, there isn't anything that differentiates my CLAT story from all the other tens of thousands of students who have attempted this paper before. However, what I do hope is that my experiences and my story will help at least one of those tens of thousands of students who will appear for CLAT in the future.

Any advice you'd like to pass on to law school aspirants?

What I am about to say is going to sound very cliché, but hard work and effort pays off. Clichés are only clichés because they tend to be true. I know many aspirants who just apply for CLAT as a last resort, so that they can do as many exams as possible, in case they get a good result in any one. The basic idea of doing many exams is good, and I even believe that more students should sign up for MHCET, SLAT, AILET, LSAT, and all those other exams.

However, don't treat the CLAT paper as the last thing on your mind and do devote as much time as you can to the study and practice for the CLAT paper. Don't just take the exam to check off a box. Work hard and devote a fair and appropriate amount of time to its study, too. I would also like to wish all the aspirants the best of luck for CLAT 2024. YOU CAN DO THIS!

This interview is a part of our series #MyCLATStory where we interview law students and legal professionals.

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