BLOGS

Passage-Based Questions on English for CLAT UG [Part 14]

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Passage 1 (P.1)

When I was twelve, my grandfather would wake before sunrise and insist that I sit with him on the veranda while he polished his old brass telescope. The ritual never changed. He would spread a soft cotton cloth across his lap, unscrew the instrument carefully, and polish each piece as though preparing it for use that very night. In reality, he had not used the telescope in years. Still, he treated it with the seriousness of a working instrument, as if memory itself required maintenance. He would then begin telling stories about the nights he spent mapping constellations as a young railway signal operator stationed in a remote desert town. According to him, the sky there was so clear that the Milky Way looked like spilled salt across black stone.

Electricity was unreliable, and artificial light rarely disturbed the darkness. In that environment, the night sky was not an abstract idea but a constant companion. Working at the railway crossing required patience more than action. Hours often passed without a single train, yet he had to remain alert to prevent accidents. During those long intervals, he began identifying stars simply to pass time. Over the years, this habit turned into fascination. He learned to recognize seasonal patterns, predict monsoon changes from cloud movement, and navigate by starlight during power failures that sometimes lasted entire nights. What fascinated me most was not astronomy itself but his description of silence. He often said that silence in the desert was not empty; it was “crowded with small sounds you never notice elsewhere.”

He could distinguish the movement of sand carried by wind, distant animal calls, and even the faint vibration of rails before a train became visible. These details, he believed, trained his mind to observe patiently rather than react quickly. As cities expanded and technology advanced, those experiences became difficult to imagine. Now, decades later, the telescope sits in my apartment, no longer polished every morning.

Tall buildings and constant electric light prevent me from seeing even the brighter constellations he once described so vividly. The night sky in the city feels smaller, almost hidden. Yet sometimes, during power cuts, I step outside and try to remember the patterns he taught me. In those moments, I realize that what he truly passed on was not knowledge of stars but the discipline of attention , the ability to notice quiet details in a noisy world.

1. The grandfather polished the telescope mainly because:

a) he still used it professionally
b) it reminded him of earlier experiences
c) it was valuable metal
d) he planned to sell it

2. The railway job required primarily:

a) physical strength
b) mathematical skill
c) patience and alertness
d) mechanical repair

3. The word “vividly” most nearly means:

a) faintly
b) clearly
c) angrily
d) incorrectly

4. The tone of the passage is:

a) humorous
b) suspenseful
c) critical
d) nostalgic

5. “What he truly passed on was not knowledge of stars but the discipline of attention” suggests:

a) observation is more valuable than facts
b) astronomy is unimportant

c) cities prevent learning

d) telescopes are outdated

Passage 2 (P.2)

The library did not contain books. Instead, it stored memories, carefully preserved fragments of human experience collected across centuries. The building itself resembled a museum more than a traditional library, with quiet circular halls connected by glass corridors. Visitors spoke softly, not because silence was required, but because the place naturally inspired reflection. Inside each chamber were small circular rooms where translucent panels floated in the air like suspended windows. Each panel contained a recorded human experience – a childhood festival in a mountain village, a scientist witnessing a new discovery, a musician performing before an audience for the first time, or even the sensation of walking through snow in complete silence.

By touching a panel, a visitor could temporarily experience the memory as if it were their own. The archivists who maintained the library believed preserving memory was more important than preserving objects. Civilizations often lost monuments, documents, and technologies through war or time, but lived experiences revealed how people actually understood their world. A simple memory of cooking during a famine, for example, might reveal more about history than official records. Over centuries, the library collected millions of such memories, carefully indexed by emotion, geography, language, and historical period. Some rooms were rarely visited because they contained painful experiences, while others were popular for moments of joy or discovery.

The archivists insisted that all memories, pleasant or difficult, were equally important for understanding humanity. However, a quiet debate persisted among them. Some worried that repeated exposure to others' memories could weaken a person's sense of identity. If someone experienced too many borrowed lives, would their own memories begin to feel less real? Others argued the opposite, that shared memory could increase empathy and reduce conflict by helping people understand unfamiliar lives.

One evening, a young visitor entered the library searching for courage before making a difficult decision. Instead of choosing memories of heroes or leaders, she selected the memory of an ordinary farmer rebuilding a broken fence after a storm. When she left, she realized courage was not always dramatic or visible; sometimes it was simply persistence repeated day after day.

6. The library preserves:

a) digital books

b) historical buildings

c) human memories

d) scientific machines

7. Archivists believe memories are valuable because they:

a) replace education

b) show lived experience

c) reduce technology use

d) entertain visitors

8. The central debate concerns:

a) cost of storage

b) ownership of memories

c) identity and empathy

d) visitor safety

9. The farmer's memory represents:

a) physical strength

b) ordinary resilience

c) agricultural knowledge

d) economic success

10. The genre of the passage is primarily:

a) realism

b) satire

c) biography

d) speculative fiction

Passage 3 (P.3)

Human beings often assume that decision-making improves when more choices are available. Modern consumer culture reinforces this belief by presenting abundance as freedom. Supermarkets offer dozens of nearly identical products, streaming platforms display thousands of

films, and career paths appear increasingly diverse. At first glance, this variety seems empowering because it allows individuals to customize their lives according to personal preference. However, psychologists studying human behavior have observed a phenomenon called “choice overload.” When individuals face too many options, decision-making can become slower, more stressful, and less satisfying.

Instead of feeling liberated by variety, people may feel anxious about selecting the wrong option. The responsibility of choosing becomes heavier when the number of alternatives increases. Even after making a decision, dissatisfaction may continue. Individuals often imagine the benefits of options they did not choose, creating a sense of regret. This effect is partly explained by opportunity cost awareness — the understanding that every choice eliminates other possibilities.

When options are numerous, the perceived loss becomes greater, even if the selected option is objectively good. Technology has intensified this experience by making alternatives constantly visible. Online stores, social media, and recommendation systems continuously present new possibilities, making it difficult for individuals to feel confident about their decisions. As a result, satisfaction depends not only on the quality of the decision but also on how many alternatives remain present in memory. Interestingly, reducing options can sometimes increase happiness and confidence.

Studies in behavioral psychology show that people often feel more satisfied when selecting from a smaller set of meaningful alternatives. Limitation can reduce anxiety and make decisions feel more final and meaningful. This suggests that freedom is not simply the presence of unlimited choice but the ability to decide without excessive doubt. True satisfaction may come not from maximizing options but from accepting decisions once they are made.

11. “Choice overload” refers to:

a) lack of options
b) economic scarcity
c) quick decision-making
d) confusion caused by too many options

12. “Opportunity cost” in the passage means:

a) financial investment
b) consumer marketing

c) career growth

d) missed alternatives after choosing

13. The author's main argument is that:

a) more options always improve decisions

b) freedom depends on unlimited choice

c) fewer meaningful choices may improve satisfaction

d) psychology discourages decision-making

14. The tone of the passage is:

a) analytical

b) emotional

c) sarcastic

d) dramatic

15. Which sentence best summarizes the passage?

a) Modern markets are inefficient

b) Decision-making depends on income

c) Abundance of choice can reduce satisfaction

d) Psychology rejects consumer culture

Answers

1. B – He no longer used the telescope, but polishing it kept his memories and past life meaningful.
2. C – The job involved long waiting periods while staying attentive to prevent accidents.
3. B – "Vividly" shows how clearly and strongly he described the constellations.
4. D – The passage looks back warmly at memories of the grandfather and a quieter past.
5. A – The real lesson wasn't astronomy, but learning to notice small details with care.
6. C – The entire library is built around storing and sharing lived human experiences.
7. B – Archivists believe memories reveal how people truly felt and lived, beyond official records.
8. C – The debate is whether shared memories weaken personal identity or deepen empathy.
9. B – The farmer's quiet persistence shows courage in everyday effort, not dramatic action.

10. D – The idea of a memory-preserving library is imaginative and futuristic rather than realistic.
11. D – “Choice overload” describes stress and difficulty when faced with excessive choices.
12. D – Opportunity cost is the awareness of what you give up when selecting one option.
13. C – The passage argues that limited, meaningful options often make people happier and more confident.
14. A – The author explains ideas logically using psychology and observation rather than emotion.
15. C – This captures the main message that too many options can actually lower happiness.