BLOGS

Passage-Based Questions on English for CLAT UG [Part 16]

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Passage 1 (P.1)

In several small-scale societies, exchange does not function primarily through markets or currency but through systems of obligation and reciprocity. Anthropologists studying such communities often describe gift exchange as a structured social practice rather than a spontaneous act of generosity. Objects circulate not merely as goods but as carriers of meaning, linking families, clans, or villages through ongoing relationships. The value of an object in such systems lies as much in the relationship it represents as in its practical use.

Participation in these exchanges is rarely optional. Refusing to give or receive may signal distrust or hostility, threatening social stability. In this sense, exchange becomes a form of communication, expressing respect, cooperation, and continuity. Wealth is measured less by accumulation than by one’s ability to maintain networks of obligation. Generosity, paradoxically, becomes a source of social influence. The arrival of monetary trade can alter these dynamics in subtle ways. When objects previously exchanged symbolically begin to acquire fixed prices, their meanings may shift. Transactions once governed by mutual expectation may be replaced by contractual thinking. However, traditional practices often persist alongside markets, creating hybrid systems in which economic and social values coexist. Anthropologists argue that these systems demonstrate that economic behavior is culturally shaped rather than universally defined by profit. By examining exchange practices across societies, scholars broaden the understanding of value itself, showing that economic decisions are embedded within social life.

1. The passage primarily aims to ?

a. explain how exchange practices reflect social relationships

b. compare modern markets with barter systems

c. argue that monetary trade destroys traditional societies

d. describe anthropological field methods

2. In the passage, gift exchange is presented as ?

a. an inefficient economic system

b. a symbolic and relational practice

c. a replacement for trade

d. an informal charity mechanism

3. The author suggests that refusing exchange may ?

a. reduce economic productivity

b. create legal disputes

c. damage social relationships

d. increase individual independence

4. The term “hybrid systems” refers to ?

a. societies abandoning tradition entirely

b. informal markets without regulation

c. replacement of goods with services

d. simultaneous existence of symbolic and monetary exchange

5. Which assumption about economics does the passage challenge?

a. Trade requires written contracts

b. Markets exist in all societies

c. Wealth depends on social reputation

d. Currency is necessary for exchange

Passage 2 (P.2)

The history of measurement reflects humanity’s attempt to impose consistency on a variable world. Early systems of measurement were often based on the human body , the length of a foot, the span of a hand, or the distance of a stride. While practical, these units varied between individuals and regions, creating difficulties in trade and construction. The development of standardized units represented a major intellectual shift. Measurement began to rely not on the human body but on abstract constants. The metric system, for example, was designed around reproducible definitions rather than local custom. This transformation made scientific collaboration and industrial production far more reliable. Standardization, however, required social agreement as much as technical innovation. Governments, merchants, and scientists had to

adopt common definitions before measurement could become universal. Without collective acceptance, even the most precise system would remain ineffective. Today, measurement is so deeply embedded in scientific and technological life that its historical contingency is often forgotten. Yet measurement systems are not merely technical tools; they are social conventions that enable cooperation across distance and time.

6. The passage mainly discusses what ?

a. the invention of scientific instruments

b.differences between ancient civilizations

c. problems in industrial manufacturing

d. the evolution and importance of standardized measurement

7. Early measurement systems were limited primarily because they were ?

a. based on inconsistent human references

b. expensive to maintain

c. difficult to calculate mathematically

d. restricted to scientific use

8. The metric system is presented as ?

a. a regional European innovation

b. a scientific theory

c. a system based on reproducible standards

d. an industrial regulation

9. The author emphasizes that standardization requires what ?

a. technological invention alone

b. political enforcement only

c. social agreement among groups

d. mathematical proof

10. The final paragraph suggests that measurement systems are ?

a. purely scientific discoveries

b. historically accidental but socially meaningful

c. unnecessary in modern science

d. determined by geography

Passage 3 (P.3)

Environmental ethics examines how humans define responsibility toward non-human life and ecosystems. Earlier philosophical traditions often treated nature as a resource existing primarily for human use. Forests, rivers, and animals were valued mainly for their utility, whether economic, agricultural, or scientific. During the twentieth century, new perspectives emerged that challenged this assumption. Some thinkers argued that ecosystems possess intrinsic value independent of human benefit. According to this view, protecting biodiversity is not only practical but morally necessary. Human activity becomes one element within a larger ecological system rather than its center. This shift influenced environmental policy, encouraging conservation efforts and sustainability principles. Laws regulating pollution, wildlife protection, and land use increasingly reflect the belief that environmental harm affects both present and future generations. Ethical reasoning thus became part of ecological decision-making. Debates continue over how far environmental responsibility should extend. While some advocate strict preservation of natural systems, others argue for balancing ecological protection with human development. Environmental ethics therefore remains a field shaped by ongoing negotiation between competing values.

11. The passage traces what ?

a. the philosophical development of environmental responsibility

b.the decline of natural resources

c. the history of conservation laws

d. conflicts between agriculture and science

12. Earlier philosophical traditions viewed nature primarily as ?

a. economically useful

b. spiritually significant

c. legally protected

d. scientifically unpredictable

13. The idea of “intrinsic value” suggests that nature ?

a. must be commercially preserved

b. has worth beyond human use

c. cannot be studied scientifically

d. should remain untouched by humans

14. Environmental policy influenced by ethics focuses on ?

a. eliminating industrial growth

b. protecting ecosystems and future generations

c. reducing scientific research

d. privatizing natural resources

15. The author characterizes environmental ethics debates as ?

a. resolved and universally accepted

b. purely scientific disagreements

c. ongoing negotiations between values

d. political conflicts only

Answers

1. A – The passage focuses on how exchange systems build social relationships and obligations rather than just facilitating trade.
2. B – Gift exchange is shown as meaningful and structured, not random giving or charity.
3. C – Refusing exchange is described as damaging trust and relationships within the community.
4. D – Hybrid systems combine traditional exchange practices with modern monetary trade.
5. B – The author challenges the idea that markets are universal by showing alternative economic systems.
6. D – The passage explains how measurement evolved and why standardization became necessary.
7. A – Body based units varied from person to person, which created inconsistency.
8. C – The metric system worked because it relied on uniform scientific definitions.
9. C – Measurement systems only function properly when societies collectively agree to use them.
10. B – The passage emphasizes that measurement systems are shaped by social and historical choices.
11. A – The passage traces the development of environmental responsibility over time.
12. A – Earlier societies valued nature mainly for human benefit.
13. B – Intrinsic value means nature has worth independent of human use.
14. B – Environmental ethics influenced laws protecting ecosystems and future generations.

15. C – The passage ends by showing that environmental debates are still ongoing.