BLOGS

Passage-Based Questions on English for CLAT UG [Part 5]

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Passage 1 (P.1)

My grandmother kept what she called an archive, though no one else in the house took it seriously. It was a wooden cupboard whose doors refused to close properly, as if burdened by the importance of what lay inside. The shelves held an assortment of objects that appeared, at first glance, to have been rescued from irrelevance: bus tickets rubbed pale by the touch of too many fingers, a cracked wristwatch that had not measured time in years, and letters written in a careful handwriting to people who no longer lived at the addresses they once called home.

As a child, I thought the cupboard was a monument to her inability to discard. But as I grew older, I began to notice a pattern in what she preserved. Each item, however trivial it seemed, marked a moment when the world had briefly acknowledged her presence. The bus ticket was proof of a journey taken alone. The broken watch had been a gift from a colleague who had since drifted into the indistinctness of memory. The letters, though unanswered, testified to an insistence on being heard, even in silence.

What my grandmother collected, I realized, was not clutter but confirmation. In a life that unfolded largely in the private spaces of kitchens and corridors, these objects served as witnesses. They said, in their quiet and stubborn way, that her days had intersected with the larger movement of the world, that she had left faint impressions on people and places that did not entirely vanish when the moments themselves passed.

When the cupboard was finally emptied after her death, it looked smaller, almost embarrassed by its own emptiness. The house felt lighter, but also less certain of itself, as if something that had been silently keeping count had stopped.

Q1. What is the main idea of the passage?

a. To criticise the grandmother’s habit of hoarding

b. To show how ordinary objects can hold personal significance

c. To contrast childhood and adulthood perceptions of memory

d. To show the economic conditions of the household

Q2. The narrator's understanding of the cupboard changes over time mainly because?

a. The objects become more valuable with age

b. The grandmother explains their importance

c. The narrator recognises the emotional meaning behind the objects

d. The cupboard is emptied after the grandmother's death

Q3. According to the passage, what did the preserved objects primarily represent for the grandmother?

a. Nostalgia for the past

b. Evidence of unfinished relationships

c. Proof of social status

d. Moments where her existence was acknowledged

Q4. What does the phrase "not clutter but confirmation" mean as given in the passage?

a. The objects were organised carefully

b. The items confirmed the grandmother's memories

c. The objects validated her sense of having mattered

d. The cupboard confirmed family history

Q5. The grandmother's letters that were never answered most strongly indicate?

a. Failed communication

b. Her desire to remain connected and heard

c. Social neglect by others

d. Futility of written communication

Passage 2 (P.2)

In the government office where my father took me as a child, time seemed to obey a different set of laws. The clock on the wall advanced with visible effort, its hands pausing between minutes as though burdened by the weight of the people seated beneath it. We waited on wooden benches that had been polished smooth by generations of restless bodies, each of us clutching a file whose thickness appeared to determine, with quiet authority, how long our presence would be tolerated. The clerks behind the counters spoke in a language that was less about words than about

gestures. A raised eyebrow could mean return tomorrow.

A stamped page could mean sudden permission to proceed. I learned early that waiting was not merely an inconvenience but a kind of education. It taught you where you stood in an invisible order of importance, how much of your day the institution believed it could claim without apology. My father, usually impatient at home, became a model of endurance in that room.

He sat upright, eyes fixed on the counter, as though attention itself were a form of negotiation. I sensed that he was performing a role, one that required him to appear neither desperate nor indifferent, but appropriately hopeful. The waiting room, in this way, became a small theatre where power was rehearsed and accepted in silence. Years later, I realized that what we had been waiting for was not just a signature or a seal, but a moment of recognition, a brief acknowledgment that our lives, too, deserved a place in the machinery of the state.

Q6. What does the author mean by saying that "waiting was not merely an inconvenience but a kind of education"?

a. It helps individuals to understand their position within institutional power

b. Waiting helped people become more patient in daily life

c. It educated people about legal procedures

d. Waiting allowed time for reflection and self-growth

Q7. The father's behaviour in the waiting room suggests that he?

a. Was naturally more patient than others

b. Felt intimidated by authority

c. Adjusted his conduct to meet institutional expectations

d. Was unaware of the power dynamics

Q8. The phrase "a small theatre where power was rehearsed and accepted in silence" implies that?

a. Power relations were subtly performed and rarely questioned

b. The office functioned inefficiently

c. Clerks deliberately humiliated visitors

d. People openly protested unfair treatment

Q9. According to the passage, what were the people truly waiting for?

a. Faster administrative processes

b. Recognition and acknowledgment by the state

c. A legal entitlement

d. Approval from government officials

Q10. What do gestures such as “raised eyebrows and stamps” signify in the passage?

a. Clerks preferred non-verbal communication

b. Language barriers existed in government offices

c. Written rules were unnecessary

d. Authority operated through subtle and informal signals

Passage 3 (P.3)

In my family, stories were not told so much as arranged around absences. There were names that surfaced only in passing, spoken quickly and without detail, like stepping over a crack in the pavement. Photographs existed in drawers but not on walls, their edges soft from being handled in private rather than displayed in public. As a child, I assumed this was simply how families were—careful, economical with their past. It was only when I left home that I learned how unusual this economy of memory was.

Friends spoke of their grandparents with a kind of narrative abundance, as though each generation had left behind a trail of anecdotes meant to be followed. In comparison, my own history felt less like a story and more like a series of locked rooms, each one hinting at something that might be revealed if I stood long enough at the door. When I asked questions, the answers arrived cautiously, shaped by long pauses and gentle deflections. I began to understand that silence, in my family, was not emptiness but protection. It shielded those who had lived through events that resisted being turned into tidy explanations.

The past was not forgotten; it was carefully contained. Now, when I open those old drawers, I handle the photographs differently. I no longer search for complete narratives. Instead, I pay attention to what remains unsaid, to the spaces between the facts. In those spaces, I have come to recognize a different kind of inheritance—not of stories, but of restraint, of the quiet agreement that some truths are carried forward not by being spoken, but by being held.

Q11. The author describes family stories as being “arranged around absences” primarily to suggest that?

a. Family members lacked interest in their history

b. Important parts of the past were deliberately left unspoken

c. The family had lost access to historical records

d. Memories were unintentionally forgotten over time

Q12. What does the comparison with friends' families mainly highlight?

a. The distinctiveness of the author's family approach to memory

b. The author's envy of others' family traditions

c. The superiority of narrative-rich family histories

d. The unreliability of personal recollections

Q13. The author's description of silence as "protection" implies that it?

a. Prevented conflict within the family

b. Preserved family secrets for future generations

c. Shielded individuals from reliving painful experiences

d. Reflected fear of social judgment

Q14. Which of the following best captures the author's change in perspective over time?

a. From curiosity to frustration

b. From indifference to nostalgia

c. From seeking explanations to accepting restraint

d. From criticism to reflection

Q15. The phrase "locked rooms" is used to convey that the family's past?

a. Was intentionally erased

b. Was inaccessible due to lost evidence

c. Contained unresolved conflicts

d. Remained present but deliberately closed off

Answers

1. B –The passage focuses on how even small items acquire deep meaning by representing moments of recognition and presence in the grandmother's life.
2. C – As the narrator grows older, they begin to see a pattern in what was preserved and understand that the objects symbolised emotional acknowledgment.
3. D – Each object is described as proof that the grandmother's life intersected with others and the wider world, affirming that she mattered beyond private spaces.

4. C – It means that the items reassured the grandmother that her experiences left traces and were not erased by time.
5. B – The unanswered letters are presented as an effort to assert presence and voice, showing an insistence on being acknowledged .
6. A – Because it helped people understand how institutional work , indirectly referring to the government and the system, takes so much time to do a simple work and how difficult it is for a common man to even get done a simple work.
7. C – His behaviour suggested that even if he was irritated , he adjusted his temperament according to the situation as he had no other option
8. A – By calling the space a “theatre,” the author suggests that power is enacted through routine behaviour and silently accepted rather than openly challenged.
9. B – The passage ends by clarifying that what people truly awaited was not paperwork, but validation that their lives mattered within the state’s machinery.
10. D – Gestures like raised eyebrows and stamps show that power was exercised informally, through rather than clear or transparent rules.
11. B – The phrase “arranged around absences” indicates intentional silence rather than accidental forgetting or lack of interest.
12. A – By contrasting her family with friends’ “narrative abundance,” the author highlights how her own family relates to memory differently
13. C – The author explicitly states that silence worked as protection for those who had lived through painful events that could not be easily explained or narrated.
14. C – Initially, the author seeks full stories, but later accepts restraint and learns to value what remains unsaid, reflecting a shift from explanation-seeking to acceptance.
15. D – The metaphor of “locked rooms” suggests that the past exists and is preserved, but access to it is intentionally limited rather than erased or lost.