BLOGS

Passage-Based Questions on English for CLAT UG [Part 27]

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Passage 1 (P.1)

Modern political discourse often oscillates between idealism and pragmatism, yet it rarely acknowledges how deeply intertwined the two are. While idealists envision governance as a moral enterprise guided by ethical imperatives, pragmatists tend to view power as something to be negotiated, consolidated, and, when necessary, exercised with calculated restraint. The tension between these perspectives becomes especially visible in times of crisis, when leaders must act decisively but also justify their actions within a moral framework. What complicates matters further is the tendency of political actors to cloak expediency in the language of virtue.

Policies that are fundamentally self-serving are often presented as being in the collective interest, thereby blurring the distinction between genuine public welfare and strategic manipulation. This rhetorical ambiguity allows those in power to maintain legitimacy while pursuing objectives that may not withstand ethical scrutiny. At the same time, it would be overly simplistic to dismiss all pragmatic decisions as morally deficient.

In reality, governance often requires compromise, and rigid adherence to idealistic principles may lead to paralysis. The challenge, therefore, lies not in choosing between idealism and pragmatism, but in navigating the delicate balance between the two without descending into cynicism or hypocrisy.

1. The word “oscillates” in the passage most nearly means?

a. stabilises
b. intensifies
c. declines
d. fluctuates

2. The word “expediency” is closest in meaning to?

a. moral righteousness

b. practical convenience

c. legal obligation

d. ideological rigidity

3. The word “cloak” as used in the passage is closest to?

a. conceal

b. reveal

c. distort

d. analyse

4. The antonym of “paralysis” in the context of the passage would be?

a. stagnation

b. indecision

c. action

d. hesitation

5. The word “cynicism” is closest in meaning to?

a. blind optimism

b. distrustful scepticism

c. moral clarity

d. intellectual curiosity

Passage 2 (P.2)

In an age dominated by digital interfaces, human attention has become both a commodity and a battleground. Technology companies design platforms that are intentionally immersive, encouraging users to remain engaged for extended periods. This is not accidental but the result of meticulous engineering aimed at maximising user retention. As a consequence, attention, once considered an innate cognitive faculty, is now subject to external manipulation. The subtlety of this transformation lies in its invisibility. Unlike overt forms of coercion, digital engagement operates through persuasion and habit formation. Notifications, recommendations, and algorithmic feeds create a feedback loop that reinforces user behaviour, often without conscious awareness.

Over time, this can lead to a diminished capacity for sustained focus, as individuals become accustomed to constant stimulation. However, it would be reductive to portray technology as inherently detrimental. When used judiciously, digital tools can enhance productivity, facilitate learning, and foster global connectivity. The issue, therefore, is not technology itself, but the manner in which it is designed and consumed. A more mindful approach to digital engagement may allow individuals to reclaim control over their attention without entirely disengaging from technological advancements.

6. The word “immersive” most nearly means?

a. distracting
b. absorbing
c. superficial
d. temporary

7. The word “meticulous” is closest in meaning to?

a. careless
b. detailed
c. spontaneous
d. random

8. The antonym of “diminished” in the context of the passage would be?

a. reduced
b. weakened
c. enhanced
d. ignored

9. The word “reductive” most nearly means?

a. overly simplistic
b. highly complex
c. entirely accurate
d. morally wrong

10. The word “judiciously” is closest in meaning to?

a. impulsively

b. wisely

c. rigidly

d. reluctantly

Passage 3 (P.3)

The discourse surrounding environmental responsibility often oscillates between individual accountability and systemic reform. On one hand, individuals are encouraged to adopt sustainable practices, such as reducing waste and conserving resources. On the other hand, critics argue that placing too much emphasis on personal responsibility diverts attention from the role of corporations and governments in perpetuating environmental degradation. This tension is further complicated by the rhetoric of inevitability, which suggests that environmental decline is an unavoidable consequence of modern development.

Such narratives can foster a sense of resignation, discouraging meaningful action. Yet history demonstrates that collective efforts, when sustained over time, can lead to significant change. Importantly, ethical engagement with environmental issues requires more than superficial commitment. Token gestures, while symbolically appealing, often fail to address the root causes of ecological imbalance. A more substantive approach would involve not only behavioural change but also advocacy for structural reforms that hold powerful actors accountable. Ultimately, the challenge lies in reconciling individual agency with collective responsibility, ensuring that neither is used to absolve the other of accountability.

11. The word “perpetuating” most nearly means?

a. ending

b. avoiding

c. questioning

d. continuing

12. The word “inevitability” is closest in meaning to?

a. uncertainty

b. avoidability

c. certainty

d. possibility

13. The antonym of “resignation” in the context of the passage would be?

a. acceptance

b. surrender

c. resistance

d. indifference

14. The word “token” most nearly means?

a. symbolic but ineffective

b. meaningful

c. legally binding

d. compulsory

15. The word “substantive” is closest in meaning to?

a. superficial

b. significant

c. temporary

d. abstract

Answers

1. D
2. B
3. A
4. C
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. C
9. A
10. B
11. D
12. C

13. C
14. A
15. B