BLOGS

Practice Questions from English for CLAT UG

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Passage 1:

In the quest to combat climate change, policymakers frequently turn to economic incentives as a panacea, offering subsidies for green technologies and carbon taxes to penalize polluters.

Proponents argue that such measures harness self-interest, transforming environmental stewardship into a profitable venture. However, this approach falters when incentives distort priorities: corporations chase short-term gains, investing in superficial “greenwashing” rather than systemic overhauls, while low-income communities bear the brunt of regressive taxes without equitable offsets.

Consider the European Union’s Emissions Trading System. Initial enthusiasm waned as firms gamed the market, stockpiling allowances to inflate prices, ultimately delaying genuine emission cuts.

The core flaw lies in assuming rational actors will align private profits with public goods. Behavioral economics reveals that incentives often backfire, fostering moral licensing, where compliance in one area excuses negligence elsewhere, and crowding out intrinsic motivations like civic duty.

In fisheries management, quota-based incentives led to overfishing sprees just before assessments, as fishers maximized yields without regard for sustainability. Similarly, in urban planning, tax breaks for energy-efficient buildings spurred conversions but ignored broader ecological footprints, such as increased commuting from sprawl.

Critics advocate for regulatory mandates instead, but even these risk bureaucratic inertia. The true path forward integrates incentives with oversight: tiered rewards that escalate with verified long-term impacts, coupled with community veto powers to prevent elite capture.

Without this hybrid vigilance, economic levers pull us toward illusory progress, where the planet’s ledger balances only on paper. Ultimately, if we treat the environment as a marketplace

commodity, we invite its commodification and depletion.

Questions

1. The argument above most closely parallels which of the following?

a) Schools offering cash prizes for high test scores encourage rote learning over critical thinking, as students game the system for rewards without deeper engagement.
b) Governments mandating recycling programs ensure compliance through fines, leading to uniform participation across all socioeconomic groups.
c) Companies providing wellness stipends to employees boost gym memberships, directly correlating with improved health outcomes in the workforce.
d) Libraries lending books for free promote widespread reading, fostering a culture of knowledge without any unintended behavioral shifts.

2. Which of the following is most analogous to the author's critique of economic incentives in environmental policy?

a) A coach rewarding players for individual goals in team sports, which results in selfish plays that undermine collective strategy during crucial matches.
b) A teacher assigning group projects without grades, ensuring students collaborate purely out of shared academic interest.
c) A city installing speed bumps on roads, which effectively reduces accidents without altering drivers' fundamental attitudes toward safety.
d) A parent giving unlimited screen time to children, leading to balanced usage as they self-regulate based on innate curiosity.

3. The reasoning in the passage is most similar to which of the following arguments?

a) Anti-smoking campaigns using graphic ads deter youth uptake by evoking disgust, though some smokers rationalize continued use as personal freedom.
b) Public health initiatives subsidizing gym memberships increase fitness levels, as participants view the cost savings as motivation for sustained exercise.
c) Workplace safety bonuses for accident-free months encourage risk-taking at month's end, as employees push boundaries to secure the payout.
d) Vaccination drives offering lotteries for prizes ensure high turnout, with winners' stories inspiring unvaccinated individuals without backlash.

4. Which option presents an argument structurally parallel to the passage's main contention?

a) Merit-based scholarships in universities attract top talent but favor privileged applicants who can afford test prep, exacerbating inequality.
b) Fee waivers for low-income students at colleges guarantee diverse enrollment, as administrative checks prevent any form of gaming.
c) Online courses with automated grading promote self-paced learning, inherently aligning with learners' intrinsic goals without distortion.
d) Extracurricular clubs charging nominal dues ensure committed participation, directly boosting member retention across all demographics.

5. The passage's logic is most analogous to which of the following?

a) Traffic fines for speeding reduce violations by making non-compliance costly, though drivers may simply pay penalties without changing habits.
b) Loyalty programs in retail rewarding repeat purchases build customer habits, as points accumulation naturally encourages ethical shopping.
c) Performance bonuses in sales teams drive revenue growth, but reps inflate figures through unethical tactics to hit targets.
d) Community gardens distributing free seeds foster local agriculture, with no risk of participants hoarding resources over sustainable use.

Passage 2:

Corporate boards tout meritocracy as the cornerstone of executive selection, insisting that promotions stem from talent and results alone. Yet, this narrative crumbles under scrutiny: implicit biases infiltrate evaluations, favoring those who mirror the dominant demographic (typically white, male, and networked) while sidelining diverse candidates whose "fit" is questioned on cultural rather than competency grounds.

A Harvard study on Fortune 500 firms revealed that women and minorities receive 20 percent fewer stretch assignments, the very opportunities that propel careers, perpetuating a cycle of underrepresentation.

The mechanism is insidious: performance metrics, ostensibly objective, embed subjective elements like "leadership presence," which often functions as code for charisma aligned with

traditional power dynamics.

In tech giants, algorithms screening resumes amplify this problem by prioritizing alma maters from elite institutions over equivalent skills from state schools. Historical parallels abound. In nineteenth-century guilds, apprenticeships were gatekept by familial ties, masquerading as skill-based entry, much like today's "pipelines" that funnel insiders upward.

Defenders claim diversity quotas erode merit, but evidence counters this belief. Firms with balanced leadership, such as those mandating blind reviews, report 15 percent higher innovation rates because varied perspectives challenge groupthink.

True meritocracy demands dismantling these veils through anonymized assessments and inclusive mentorship mandates, rather than papering over them with token hires. Without such reckoning, the corporate ladder remains a funhouse mirror, reflecting privilege as prowess and consigning true merit to the margins.

Questions

6. Which of the following arguments is most parallel in structure to the passage?

a) Judicial appointments emphasizing case precedents ensure consistent rulings, but selectors often overlook evolving societal norms in favor of established jurists.
b) Medical residencies selected via standardized exams promote fairness, inherently eliminating any influence from personal connections or appearances.
c) Artistic grants awarded by peer panels foster creativity, as judges' diverse tastes guarantee unbiased recognition of talent.
d) Sports drafts based on scouting reports build strong teams, with no risk of coaches favoring players from familiar academies.

7. The author's reasoning is most analogous to which of the following?

a) Philanthropic awards celebrating self-made success ignore how inherited wealth provides unfair launchpads, framing inequality as individual failing.
b) Literary prizes judged anonymously elevate quality writing, directly correlating with broader readership without cultural biases.
c) Academic honors for research output incentivize breakthroughs, as metrics like citations remain impervious to institutional prestige.

d) Culinary competitions scoring dishes on taste alone ensure victors reflect true skill, unaffected by chefs' media-savvy presentations.

8. Which option mirrors the logical form of the passage's critique?

a) Electoral systems claiming voter equality falter when gerrymandering concentrates power in safe districts, disguising partisan engineering as democratic design.
b) Campaign finance reforms capping donations level the field, ensuring candidates compete solely on policy merits.
c) Media endorsements for politicians boost visibility, inherently amplifying voices based on substantive platforms alone.
d) Polling predictions relying on samples predict outcomes accurately, free from demographic skews in response rates.

9. The passage's main argument is structurally most similar to:

a) Housing lotteries for affordable units promise equity but prioritize applicants with stable jobs, inadvertently excluding the most precarious renters.
b) Rental subsidies tied to employment status aid workers, directly addressing market barriers without unintended exclusions.
c) Zoning laws restricting developments preserve neighborhoods, aligning perfectly with residents' expressed preferences.
d) Property tax rebates for seniors ensure fiscal relief, with no disproportionate benefits to wealthier retirees.

10. Which of the following is most analogous to the passage's central contention?

a) Fashion industry scouts praising "timeless style" that echoes high-end trends, marginalizing designers from non-Western aesthetics despite their ingenuity.
b) Beauty pageants judging on poise and eloquence reward universal grace, transcending cultural backgrounds seamlessly.
c) Music labels signing based on streaming metrics highlight raw talent, irrespective of promotional budgets.
d) Film festivals awarding scripts for originality ignore directorial fame, focusing purely on narrative strength.

Answer Key

1. 1. a
   2. a
   3. c
   4. a
   5. c
   6. a
   7. a
   8. a
   9. a
   10. a