BLOGS

Sample Reading Comprehension Questions for CLAT 2024

Ruchika Mohapatra · 03 Mar 2023

Read the passage and answer the following questions.

Philosophy of Education is a label applied to the study of the purpose, process, nature, and ideals of education. It can be considered a branch of both philosophy and education. Education can be defined as the teaching and learning of specific skills, and the imparting of knowledge, judgment, and wisdom, and is something broader than the societal institution of education we often speak of.

Many educationalists consider it a weak and woolly field, too far removed from the practical applications of the real world to be useful. But philosophers dating back to Plato and the Ancient Greeks have given the area much thought and emphasis, and there is little doubt that their work has helped shape the practice of education over the millennia.

Plato is the earliest important educational thinker, and education is an essential element in “The Republic” (his most important work on philosophy and political theory, written around 360 B.C.). In it, he advocates some rather extreme methods: removing children from their mothers’ care and raising them as wards of the state, and differentiating children suitable to the various castes, the highest receiving the most education, so that they could act as guardians of the city and care for the less able. He believed that education should be holistic, including facts, skills, physical discipline, music and art. Plato believed that talent and intelligence is not distributed genetically and thus is be found in children born to all classes, although his proposed system of selective public education for an educated minority of the population does not really follow a democratic model.

Aristotle considered human nature, habit and reason to be equally important forces to be cultivated in education, the ultimate aim of which should be to produce good and virtuous citizens. He proposed that teachers lead their students systematically, and that repetition be used as a key tool to develop good habits, unlike Socrates’ emphasis on questioning his listeners to bring out their own ideas. He emphasized the balancing of the theoretical and practical aspects of

subjects taught, among which he explicitly mentions reading, writing, mathematics, music, physical education, literature, history, and a wide range of sciences, as well as play, which he also considered important.

During the Medieval period, the idea of Perennialism was first formulated by St. Thomas Aquinas in his work “De Magistro”. Perennialism holds that one should teach those things deemed to be of everlasting importance to all people everywhere, namely principles and reasoning, not just facts (which are apt to change over time), and that one should teach first about people, not machines or techniques. It was originally religious in nature, and it was only much later that a theory of secular perennialism developed.

During the Renaissance, the French skeptic Michel de Montaigne (1533 – 1592) was one of the first to critically look at education. Unusually for his time, Montaigne was willing to question the conventional wisdom of the period, calling into question the whole edifice of the educational system, and the implicit assumption that university-educated philosophers were necessarily wiser than uneducated farm workers, for example.

1.What is the difference between the approaches of Socrates and Aristotle?

a. Aristotle felt the need for repetition to develop good habits in students; Socrates felt that students need to be constantly questioned
b. Aristotle felt the need for rote-learning; Socrates emphasized on dialogic learning
c. There was no difference
d. Aristotle emphasized on the importance of paying attention to human nature; Socrates emphasized upon science

2.Why do educationists consider philosophy a ‘weak and woolly’ field?

a. It is not practically applicable
b. Its theoretical concepts are easily understood
c. It is irrelevant for education
d. None of the above

3. What do you understand by the term ‘Perennialism’, in the context of the given comprehension passage?

a. It refers to something which is quite unnecessary
b. It refers to something which is of ceaseless importance

c. It refers to something which is abstract and theoretical

d. It refers to something which existed in the past and no longer exists now

4.Were Plato's beliefs about education democratic?

a. He believed that only the rich have the right to acquire education

b. Yes

c. He believed that only a select few are meant to attend schools

d. He believed that all pupils are not talented

5.Why did Aquinas propose a model of education which did not lay much emphasis on facts?

a. Facts are not important

b. Facts do not lead to holistic education

c. Facts change with the changing times

d. Facts are frozen in time

Answers

1. a

2. a

3. b

4. b

5. c