

UNIT 6

LECTURE 12

READING COMPREHENSION

Reading Comprehension

- It is the skill of purposeful looking over, reading, and evaluation of the text to understand concepts, ideas, words and phrases expressed in written texts. RC is level of understanding of a text
- From where does this understanding come?
- Interaction between the words that are written and how they trigger knowledge outside the text (In the mind of reader).
- Task is to recognize key words quickly and effortlessly

Let`s try first

Looking ahead from the present position where food production has kept ahead of population growth globally, but has fallen per capita in 55 (mainly African) countries, it would seem that these trends will continue. About 30 countries -most of them African - can expect serious problems unless they reduce population growth and give higher priority to agriculture and conservation. Though a warmer, wetter earth with high CO₂ levels is likely to be capable of producing more food, the amounts will still be inadequate for many poorer countries. In many cases, the population projections are greater than the entire local land resources can support.

Q1. Of all the countries in the world it is those in Africa ____.

- A) which have taken the most drastic measures to prevent population growth
- B) that are most threatened by food shortages
- C) which are environmentally most at a disadvantage
- D) that are most conscious of the need to preserve the environment
- E) in which poverty has been greatly reduced through agricultural development

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How?

There is **no shortcut** to improving your critical reading ability. You can-

- Interpret and evaluate events, dialogue, ideas, and information Connect information to what you already know.
- Adjust current knowledge to include new ideas or look at those ideas in a different way.
- **Determine and remember the most important points in the reading**
- **Read “between the lines” to understand underlying meanings**

Constant Practice can help

Types of comprehension strategies

Make Connections—Readers connect the topic or information to what they already know about themselves, about other texts, and about the world.

Asking questions- Readers ask themselves questions about the text, their reactions to it, and the author's purpose for writing it.

Determine Text Importance—Readers (a) distinguish between what's essential versus what's interesting, (b) distinguish between fact and opinion, (c) determine cause-and-effect relationships, compare and contrast ideas or information, (e) discern themes, opinions, or perspectives, (f) pinpoint problems and solutions, (g) name steps in a process, (h) locate information that answers specific questions, or (i) summarize.

Types of comprehension strategies continued..

- **Visualize**—Readers make the printed word real and concrete by creating a “movie” of the text in their minds.
- **Make Inferences**—Making an **inference** involves using what you know to **make** a guess about what you don't know or **reading** between the lines. **Readers** who **make inferences** use the clues in the text along with their own experiences to help them figure out what is not directly said, but understood.
- **Synthesize**—Readers combine new information with existing knowledge to form original ideas, new lines of thinking, or new creations.

Practice Question

After 1933 the western world realized that it was living in another age of absolutism, or rather, in an age of totalitarian dictatorship far worse than the worst of the old absolute kings; such regimes could be seen to be enforcing a "law" that was the command barely of a "sovereign" but of a cruel and despot. It was ordinary people who protested: "This cannot be. Law, if it is to deserve the name of law, must respect at least some basic rights to which every human being is entitled simply because he is human.

Q1. In accordance with the passage, compared with the absolute kings of the past, modern dictators

- a) have been far more cruel and oppressive
- b) have shown a relatively high respect for the rights of the individual
- c) have received considerable support from ordinary people
- d) have shown leniency in the enforcement of law
- e) have always been anxious to rule by law

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Reading Comprehension Question Types

There are about seven question types.

1. Main Idea
2. Supporting Idea / Identifying detail / fact
3. Drawing conclusions / Inference
4. Tone & Style
5. Application
6. Distinguishing between fact and opinion
7. Understanding cause and effect

Type1: Identifying main idea:

Main idea questions ask you to identify the "primary purpose" or "main point" of the passage. In order to answer these questions correctly, you must be able to identify the thesis of the passage and those ideas that support this thesis.

Common Question Stems

- Which of the following most accurately states the main idea of the passage?
- The primary purpose of the passage is to
- The passage is primarily concerned with which of the following?
- The author of this passage is primarily concerned with
- The main point made by the passage is that

How to Identify Correct Answer

Main point questions ask you to identify the crux of the author's point. You must identify which ideas in the passage play a supporting role and which idea is being supported.

Poll question

There has been a paramount research on the corollaries of traumatic events (Atkinson, 2013; Cook et al., 2003; Cook et al., 2005; Perry, 2006, 2009; Van der Kolk et al., 2009). Many of the assumptions made in the above-mentioned works have not been subjected to critical review despite the influence of these ideas in influencing the service delivery for children in out-of-home care. Similarly, there has not yet been any rigorous evaluation of the interventions that are being developed in line with these assumptions.

Q: The author's purpose of writing the preceding paragraph is:

- a) To criticize the existing research on childcare
- b) To save children from disquieting situations
- c) To subject the research on the ramifications of upsetting events to stringent and critical evaluation to further improve the quality of childcare
- d) To accept the interventions unquestionably

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Skim and Scan

Ecology is, by definition, a transdisciplinary science focused on the relationship between living organisms and their environments. A relatively new science, its modern roots emerged in the early 20th century with the work of Frederic Clements and Henry Gleason, American botanists who studied the interactions between plant communities, and Sir Arthur Tansley, a British botanist and zoologist whose research on the interactions between plant and animal communities and the environment led him to coin the term "ecosystem" in 1935.¹ The interdisciplinary work of these pioneers prompted the development of models of ecological succession that dominated plant biology during the early 20th century and became the basis for the new integrated science of plants, animals and the environment eventually known as ecosystem ecology.

Task 1: How can you state the main idea of the passage?

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Task 1: Which of the following most accurately states the main idea of the passage?

Answer : Interdisciplinary aspect of ecology

Supporting Idea

These questions tend to be more difficult than main idea questions because they require a more detailed recollection of the text.

These questions tend to incorporate an idea specific to the passage in the question stem.

Common Question Stems

1. According to the passage, a questionable assumption about x is that
2. The passage states that x occurs because
3. According to the passage, which of the following is true of x
4. The passage mentions each of the following EXCEPT
5. According to the passage, if x occurs then

How to Identify Correct Answer

In trying to identify the correct answer, it is extremely important that you stick quite close to the text. The words "**according to the passage**" should be taken seriously. Answers that seem logical but are not directly supported by the text should be avoided.

Poll Question

Kwanzaa is a holiday celebrated by many African Americans January 1. It pays tribute to the rich cultural roots of Americans of African ancestry, and celebrates family, community, and culture. Kwanzaa means the first or the first fruits of the harvest and is based on the ancient African first-fruit harvest celebrations. The modern holiday of Kwanzaa was founded in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, a professor at the California State University in Long Beach, California. The seven-day celebration encourages people to think about their African roots as well as their life in present-day America. The seven fundamental principles on which Kwanzaa is based are referred to as the Nguzo Saba. These rules consist of unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Participants celebrate by performing rituals such as lighting the kinara. The kinara is symbolic of the continental Africans. Each of its seven candles represents a distinct principle beginning with unity, the black center candle. Talking with family, drumming, singing, and dancing are all part of the celebration activities.

Q: According to the passage, Kwanzaa is celebrated by all of the following EXCEPT

- a. drumming and rituals.
- b. dancing and singing.
- c. dialogue.
- d. solitude and silence.

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Inference

In some ways, *inference* and *supporting idea* questions are similar. However, inference questions tend to go a tad further and ask you to make a very small logical conclusion that is strongly implied based upon information in the passage. Answer choices that require significant assumptions or inferences will NEVER be correct. In inference questions, the answer lies directly in the text and requires a very small logical step (e.g., if the text says that "all the cups in the room are red", an inference would be that "there are no green cups in the room").

Common Question Stems

1. The passage implies that which of the following was true of x
2. It can be inferred from the passage that
3. The passage suggests which of the following about x
4. The author implies that x occurred because
5. The author implies that all of the following statements about x are true EXCEPT

How to Identify Correct Answer

The correct answer to these questions is usually an obvious logical consequence of a sentence in the text.

Poll Question

An increase in the level of serotonin levels in the human body is known to significantly enhance the mood of the person and in some cases, help people overcome depression. Serotonin taken orally does not pass into the pathways of the central nervous system, because it does not cross the blood–brain barrier. However, tryptophan and its metabolite 5-hydroxytryptophan (5- HTP), from which serotonin is synthesized, does cross the blood–brain barrier. These agents are available as dietary supplements, and may be effective serotonergic agents.

Which of the following can be correctly inferred from the statements above?

- a. Individuals who do not consume enough tryptophan can develop depressive tendencies
- b. Individuals who consume tryptophan can metabolize enough serotonin and do not run the risk of depression
- c. Consumption of serotonin laced foods can help cure depression in some cases
- d. Tryptophan is an effective agent that can help cure depression in some cases

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