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DIRECT & CRUX QUESTIONS

Reading Comprehension

WRITE-UP

CSAT PROGRAMS

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9613-19-20-21



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Direct Questions

What are Direct Questions in Reading Comprehension ?

Meaning:

Such questions are Fact-based/Specific Detail/Target Questions. In most of the cases, there is no need to deduce the answer from the passage. The answer can be directly pointed out in the passage.

- Generally, the passages with direct questions are long and contain 3-4 questions based on the passages. Hence, no need to read new passage for solving each question.

Example:

Suppose a passage says at one point, “the lower regions of the Earth’s mantle have roughly the same composition as meteorites.” A direct type of question would be

According to the passage, the lower regions of the Earth’s mantle are characterized by

- (a) a composition similar to that of meteorites.
- (b) the absence of elements found in rocks on the Earth’s crust.
- (c) a greater stability than that of the upper regions.
- (d) the presence of large amounts of carbon dioxide.

Types of Questions

- **Supporting Idea Questions:** According to the passage, which of this is true,
 - According to the passage, which is not mentioned
 - According to the passage, all the options are true except
 - The author states all the options except
- **Recognition Questions:** “What does the author say about the little boy in the passage?”
 - “The author of the passage asserts which one of the following regarding MBA students?”
- **Recognition ‘EXCEPT’ questions:** “The passage provides information that explains the perspectives of all of the following groups EXCEPT”
 - “Which of the following construction techniques is NOT mentioned in the passage as being detrimental to the environment?”
- **Purpose of Reference Questions:** “The author refers to the ____ in order to...”
 - “The author’s reference to ____ (lines ____) serves which one of the following functions in the passage?*
- **Clarifying Meaning Questions:** Clarifying meaning questions ask, “what did the author mean by this?”
 - In a given passage, **words and phrases do not appear in isolation**. They are, rather, **embedded in the context of a narrative**, an argument or an explanation. Thus, clarifying meaning questions test the **ability of the students to identify contextually appropriate meanings of words and phrases**.

Central Idea / Crux / Main Idea

What does the Central Idea Question ask?

Meaning:

The main idea is the **central, or most important, idea** in a paragraph or passage. It states the purpose and **sets the direction of the paragraph** or passage. The main idea **may be stated or it may be implied** sentence of the paragraph.

- It is an Idea that **all other ideas and information in the passage are there to support.**

Example:

If a passage is about volcanoes and the necessary steps that need to be taken in order to predict and prevent volcano eruptions, then one paragraph is about Mount St. Helen's volcanic mountain.

Correct Main Idea: The "Main Idea" would need to be something like "to discuss ways of predicting and preventing eruptions" since that is the more general focus.

Incorrect Main Idea: The main idea of the passage was to "discuss Mount St. Helen's" as that is the main idea of only one paragraph.

Common Questions asked in Central Idea Question

- Which of the following most accurately states the main idea of the passage?
- Which of the following most accurately states the Crux 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
- The Message of the Author / passage is

How to solve Central Idea Questions ?

- You must identify which **ideas in the passage play a supporting role** and which **idea is being supported.**
- Write down the **Purpose of the passage BEFORE reading** the first question.
- Main Idea/Crux" can also be derived from:**
 - Opening paragraph/statement:** Here, identify if the author includes a thesis? Does the author express a strong point of view about the topic?
 - Concluding paragraph/statement:** Identify if the author re-iterates a main purpose here? What is the author summarizing? Focus especially on the first and final sentences.

Common Distractors while solving Central Idea / Message / Main idea questions

Even if you find a seemingly suitable choice, it's worthwhile to check if there might be an even better one. Several common incorrect options you might encounter include:

- **Too narrow:** A vital aspect to remember is that an option capturing an element true or present in the passage might not be the answer. Choices that are excessively narrow will accurately describe a passage fragment but overlook the overarching point.
- **Too strong or extreme:** Some distracting options will draw upon a point from the passage but then extend it beyond what the passage supports directly. Beware of words like “always,” “any,” “all,” “ever,” and “never.”
- **Beyond the scope:** These wrong options introduce content that is tangentially related but ultimately lies outside the passage's scope. Such choices contain ideas or information that might reasonably be found in a larger portion of the same source document from which the passage is taken, but the statement can't be backed by the current text.
- **Conflicts and contradictions:** Certain options contain language directly conflicting with information presented in the passage. Although these incorrect choices can be easy to dismiss, students sometimes find themselves drawn to strong statements taking opposing sides of arguments. While opposite viewpoints might be alluring, be cautious—avoid these tempting distractors!

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