

CUET 2026 May 14 Shift 2 English

Question Paper (Memory-Based) With Solutions PDF

Conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA)



General Instructions

- (i) The examination will be conducted in Computer-Based Test (CBT) mode.
- (ii) Each question carries +5 marks for correct answer and -1 mark for wrong answer.
- (iii) The total number of questions are 50.
- (iv) Duration of the exam is 1 hour (60 minutes).

1. Choose the SYNONYM of AMELIORATE:

- (A) Worsen
- (B) Diminish
- (C) Maintain
- (D) Improve

Correct Answer: (D) Improve

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

A synonym is a word that has the same or nearly the same meaning as another word. "Ameliorate" is a formal verb used to describe the act of making something better.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Ameliorate:** To make (something bad or unsatisfactory) better.
- **Improve:** To make or become better. This is the direct synonym.
- **Worsen:** To make something worse (Antonym).

- **Diminish:** To make or become less.
- **Maintain:** To keep something at the same level or state.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The synonym of "Ameliorate" is "Improve."

Quick Tip: Think of "Ameliorate" as a fancy way to say "fix" or "upgrade" a situation. If conditions in a city are bad, the government tries to ameliorate them.

2. 'The team _____ playing exceptionally well this season.'

- (A) are
- (B) were
- (C) is
- (D) have been

Correct Answer: (C) is

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question tests Subject-Verb Agreement with collective nouns. A collective noun (like team, family, or jury) takes a singular verb when the group is acting as a single unit.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

In this sentence, "The team" is viewed as a single collective entity performing the action of playing.

- **is:** Singular present tense, appropriate for a single unit.
- **are:** Plural present tense, used if the members were acting individually (e.g., "The team are putting on their uniforms").
- **were / have been:** These do not fit the singular focus of the current season's performance as well as "is" in this specific context.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct sentence is: "The team is playing exceptionally well this season."

Quick Tip: In American English, collective nouns almost always take a singular verb (is). In British English, they can take plural verbs (are) if the focus is on the individuals.

3. 'To burn the midnight oil' means:

- (A) To waste resources
- (B) To be very angry
- (C) To set fire to something
- (D) To work very late into the night

Correct Answer: (D) To work very late into the night

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

An idiom is a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The phrase originates from the time before electricity, when people had to use oil lamps to see. If you were "burning the midnight oil," it meant you were staying up past midnight to study or work by the light of a lamp.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The idiom "To burn the midnight oil" means to work or study very late into the night.

Quick Tip: Use this idiom when talking about exam preparation: "I had to burn the midnight oil to finish my project before the deadline."

4. The politician's speech was so _____ that even his opponents were moved.

- (A) banal
- (B) monotonous
- (C) garbled
- (D) eloquent

Correct Answer: (D) eloquent

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The sentence implies that the speech had a powerful, positive effect because it "moved" (emotionally touched) even those who disagreed with the politician. We need a word that describes high-quality, persuasive speaking.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Eloquent:** Fluent or persuasive in speaking or writing. This perfectly fits the context of moving an audience.
- **Banal:** So lacking in originality as to be obvious and boring.
- **Monotonous:** Dull, tedious, and lacking in variation in tone or pitch.
- **Garbled:** Reproduced in a confused and distorted way; unclear.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct word is "eloquent."

Quick Tip: To "move" an audience usually requires Pathos (emotional appeal). An eloquent speaker knows exactly how to use words to create that emotional connection.

5. Choose the ANTONYM of LOQUACIOUS:

- (A) Talkative
- (B) Garrulous
- (C) Taciturn
- (D) Verbose

Correct Answer: (C) Taciturn

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

An antonym is a word that means the opposite. "Loquacious" describes someone who tends to talk a great deal.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Loquacious:** Tending to talk a great deal; talkative.
- **Taciturn:** Reserved or uncommunicative in speech; saying little. This is the direct opposite.
- **Talkative / Garrulous / Verbose:** These are all synonyms or related terms meaning someone who uses many words.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The antonym of "Loquacious" is "Taciturn."

Quick Tip: The root "loqu-" comes from the Latin loqui, meaning "to speak." You see it in words like eloquent, soliloquy, and colloquial.

6. Identify the error: 'He is knowing the answer but refused to tell us.'

- (A) is knowing
- (B) answer
- (C) refused
- (D) tell

Correct Answer: (A) is knowing

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question deals with Stative Verbs. These are verbs that describe a state, condition, or

mental process rather than a physical action.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Verbs like know, believe, understand, and love are generally not used in the continuous (-ing) form. We do not "be knowing" something; we either "know" it or we don't.

- **Incorrect:** "He is knowing the answer."
- **Correct:** "He knows the answer" (Present) or "He knew the answer" (Past).

Since the second half of the sentence is in the past tense ("refused"), the first part should logically be "He knew."

Step 3: Final Answer:

The error is in the phrase "is knowing."

Quick Tip: Stative verbs are like "filters" of the mind or heart. Because they aren't physical actions you can see someone doing, we rarely use them with -ing.

7. One who can speak two languages fluently is called a:

- (A) Multilingual
- (B) Monolingual
- (C) Polyglot
- (D) Bilingual

Correct Answer: (D) Bilingual

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a one-word substitution question based on numerical prefixes in linguistics. The prefix "bi-" refers to the number two.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Bilingual:** Capable of speaking two languages fluently.
- **Monolingual:** Speaking only one language.
- **Multilingual / Polyglot:** Someone who can speak or use several (usually more than three) languages.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The term for someone speaking two languages fluently is "Bilingual."

Quick Tip: To remember prefixes: Mono = 1, Bi = 2, Tri = 3, Poly/Multi = Many.

8. Her _____ attitude towards criticism helped her grow professionally.

- (A) hostile
- (B) defensive
- (C) receptive
- (D) dismissive

Correct Answer: (C) receptive

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The sentence states that the attitude "helped her grow." Therefore, we need a positive word that describes someone who is open to feedback and learning.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Receptive:** Willing to consider or accept new suggestions and ideas. This leads to growth.
- **Hostile:** Showing or feeling opposition or dislike; unfriendly.
- **Defensive:** Very anxious to challenge or avoid criticism.
- **Dismissive:** Feeling or showing that something is unworthy of consideration.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct word is "receptive."

Quick Tip: Look for the "result" in the sentence. If the result is "growth," the input attitude must be open and positive.

9. Choose the SYNONYM of EPHEMERAL:

- (A) Permanent
- (B) Eternal
- (C) Transient
- (D) Lasting

Correct Answer: (C) Transient

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

"Ephemeral" describes something that lasts for a very short time. We need a word that captures this sense of briefness.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Ephemeral:** Lasting for a very short time.
- **Transient:** Lasting only for a short time; impermanent. This is the synonym.
- **Permanent / Eternal / Lasting:** These are all antonyms, describing things that endure for a long time.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The synonym of "Ephemeral" is "Transient."

Quick Tip: "Ephemeral" is often used in nature, like "ephemeral flowers" that bloom and die in a single day.

10. 'Neither the manager nor the employees _____ informed about the decision.'

- (A) was
- (B) is
- (C) were
- (D) has been

Correct Answer: (C) were

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question tests the "Rule of Proximity" in subject-verb agreement. When subjects are joined by "neither/nor" or "either/or," the verb must agree with the subject closest to it.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The two subjects are "the manager" (singular) and "the employees" (plural).

- The subject closest to the blank is "the employees."
- Since "employees" is plural, the verb must also be plural.
- "were" is the plural form suitable for the past passive context.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct sentence is: "Neither the manager nor the employees were informed about the decision."

Quick Tip: Always look at the noun right before the verb in "neither...nor" sentences. If that noun is plural, the verb is plural!