

CUET 2026 May 15 Shift 1 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 word closest in meaning to “innocuous”.

- (A) Harmful
- (B) Harmless
- (C) Aggressive
- (D) Suspicious

Correct Answer: (B) Harmless

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The word "innocuous" is an adjective used to describe something that does not cause any physical or emotional injury. It is derived from the Latin root *innocuus*, where "in-" means "not" and "nocere" means "to harm."

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Innocuous:** Not harmful or offensive.
- **Harmless:** This is the direct synonym, meaning unlikely to cause injury.

- **Harmful:** The direct antonym (opposite).
- **Aggressive:** Ready or likely to attack or confront.
- **Suspicious:** Having or showing a cautious distrust of someone or something.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The word closest in meaning to "innocuous" is "Harmless."

Quick Tip: Think of "innocuous" as a "no-harm" word. It is often used to describe a comment that wasn't meant to be mean, like "an innocuous remark."

2. Choose the word opposite in meaning to “vindictive”.

- (A) Revengeful
- (B) Forgiving
- (C) Cruel
- (D) Arrogant

Correct Answer: (B) Forgiving

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The word "vindictive" (often spelled "vindictive" in older or specific legal contexts, though "vindictive" is the standard modern usage for the personality trait) refers to a strong desire for revenge.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Vindictive:** Having or showing a strong or unreasoning desire for revenge.
- **Forgiving:** Ready and willing to stop feeling angry or resentful toward someone for an offense. This is the direct opposite.
- **Revengeful:** A direct synonym for vindictive.

- **Cruel / Arrogant:** These are negative traits but do not specifically address the "revenge vs. mercy" aspect.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The opposite of "vindictive" is "Forgiving."

Quick Tip: To remember "vindictive," think of the word Vendetta (a blood feud). A vindictive person is someone who wants to start or continue a vendetta.

3. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.

- (A) Neither of the boys were ready for the competition.
- (B) Neither of the boys was ready for the competition.
- (C) Neither of the boys are ready for the competition.
- (D) Neither of the boys have been ready for the competition.

Correct Answer: (B) Neither of the boys was ready for the competition.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question tests the rule of distributive pronouns. Words like "Each," "Either," and "Neither" are distributive pronouns and are always considered singular in formal grammar.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

In the phrase "Neither of the boys," the word "Neither" is the actual subject of the sentence, not "boys."

- "Neither" means "not one and not the other" (referring to them individually).
- Because the subject is singular, the verb must also be singular.
- "was" is singular, while "were," "are," and "have been" are plural.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct sentence is: "Neither of the boys was ready for the competition."

Quick Tip: Whenever you see "of the [plural noun]" after "Each/Either/Neither," ignore the plural noun. Focus only on the first word to decide the verb!

4. Choose the correct option to complete the sentence.

By the time we reached the station, the train _____.

- (A) left
- (B) has left
- (C) had left
- (D) leaves

Correct Answer: (C) had left

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence involves two actions that happened in the past at different times. In English grammar, when two past actions are related, we use the Past Perfect tense for the action that happened first and the Simple Past for the action that happened second.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Action 1 (First):** The train departed.
- **Action 2 (Second):** We reached the station.

Since the train leaving happened before reaching the station, we must use the Past Perfect (**had + past participle**).

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct completion is "had left."

Quick Tip: Think of the Past Perfect as the "Past of the Past." If you are already talking about the past ("reached"), anything that happened before that needs "had."

5. Choose the correct passive form of the sentence: "They are organizing a cultural fest."

- (A) A cultural fest is organized by them.
- (B) A cultural fest was being organized by them.
- (C) A cultural fest is being organized by them.
- (D) A cultural fest has been organized by them.

Correct Answer: (C) A cultural fest is being organized by them.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The original sentence is in the Present Continuous tense (Subject + is/am/are + v-ing + Object). To convert this to passive voice, we use the formula: **Object + is/am/are + being + V3 (past participle) + by + Subject.**

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Subject:** They → becomes "them" (object).
- **Object:** A cultural fest → becomes the new subject.
- **Verb Change:** "are organizing" (continuous) must include "being" to maintain the continuous aspect in passive form.

Applying the formula: "A cultural fest" (singular) + "is" + "being" + "organized" + "by them."

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct passive form is: "A cultural fest is being organized by them."

Quick Tip: If the active sentence has an "-ing" verb, the passive sentence MUST have the word "being."
This is an easy way to eliminate wrong options!

6. Choose the correct indirect narration.

Riya said, "I will complete the project tomorrow."

- (A) Riya said that she will complete the project tomorrow.
(B) Riya said that she would complete the project the next day.
(C) Riya said that she completed the project tomorrow.
(D) Riya said she would have completed the project the next day.

Correct Answer: (B) Riya said that she would complete the project the next day.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

When converting from Direct to Indirect Speech, we must apply three main changes: Tense change, Pronoun change, and Time/Place word changes.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Pronoun Change:** "I" (referring to Riya) changes to "she."
- **Tense Change:** "will" changes to its past form, "would."
- **Time Word Change:** "tomorrow" changes to "the next day" or "the following day."
- **Connector:** Use "that" after the reporting verb "said."

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct indirect narration is: "Riya said that she would complete the project the next day."

Quick Tip: Always remember the "Backshift." If the reporting verb is in the past ("said"), the verbs inside the quotes must move one step back into the past (will → would, can → could).

7. Arrange the following parts in the correct order.

P. the scientist presented

Q. at the international conference

R. his groundbreaking research

S. confidently

(A) P Q R S

(B) P R S Q

(C) P S R Q

(D) Q P R S

Correct Answer: (C) P S R Q

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Sentence rearrangement requires identifying the Subject, Verb, and Object (SVO), followed by adverbs of manner and prepositional phrases for location or time.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Subject + Verb (P):** "The scientist presented"
- **Adverb of Manner (S):** "confidently" (This describes how he presented).
- **Object (R):** "his groundbreaking research" (This describes what he presented).
- **Location (Q):** "at the international conference" (This describes where).

While (B) "P R S Q" is also common in casual English, (C) "P S R Q" provides a more formal and fluid flow by placing the adverb closer to the verb. In many standard examinations, P-S-R-Q is the preferred structural order.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct order is P S R Q.

Quick Tip: A good rule of thumb is: Who (P) + How (S) + What (R) + Where (Q).

8. Read the passage carefully:

Many students believe that success depends entirely on intelligence. However, researchers have found that consistency and disciplined effort often play a greater role in long-term achievement than natural talent alone.

What is the main idea of the passage?

(A) Intelligence is unnecessary for success.

- (B) Talent guarantees achievement.
- (C) Consistent effort is important for success.
- // Option (D) Researchers dislike talented students.

Correct Answer: (C) Consistent effort is important for success.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Finding the "main idea" involves identifying the author's primary argument. Pay close attention to transition words like "However," as they often shift the focus from a common belief to the author's actual point.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- The passage acknowledges a common belief (intelligence = success).
- It uses "However" to introduce a different perspective.
- It highlights "consistency and disciplined effort" as key factors that often outweigh "natural talent."
- Option (C) directly reflects this emphasis on effort.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The main idea is that consistent effort is important for success.

Quick Tip: The word "However" is a giant signpost. The most important information in a short passage usually comes immediately after it.

9. Choose the correctly spelt word.

- (A) Accomodation
- (B) Accommodation
- (C) Accommodation
- (D) Accommmmodation

Correct Answer: (C) Accommodation

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Spelling tests often focus on words with "double letters." "Accommodation" is a classic example that is frequently misspelled in professional and academic writing.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The word is derived from the verb "accommodate."

- Correct spelling: A-C-C-O-M-M-O-D-A-T-I-O-N.
- It requires two 'c's and two 'm's.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correctly spelt word is "Accommodation."

Quick Tip: Remember: A good ccommodating host has enough room for cc and mm. (Two Cs, Two Ms).

10. Choose the best replacement for the underlined part:

Each of the players have performed exceptionally well.

- (A) has performed
- (B) were performing
- (C) perform
- (D) have been performing

Correct Answer: (A) has performed

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

Similar to the "Neither of the boys" rule, the word "Each" is a distributive pronoun that always takes a singular verb, even when followed by a plural prepositional phrase (of the players).

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

- **Subject:** "Each" (Singular).
- **Verb needed:** Singular form.
- "Have" is plural; "has" is singular.

Therefore, "have performed" must be replaced with "has performed" to agree with "Each."

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct replacement is "has performed."

Quick Tip: Think of "Each" as "Every single one." Since "one" is singular, the verb must be singular too!