

CUET 2026 May 23 English Shift 2

Question Paper (Memory-Based) with Solutions

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 a correct answer and -1 mark for a wrong answer.
- (iii) The total number of questions is 50.
- (iv) Duration of the examination is 1 hour (60 minutes).

1. Choose the option that best defines the vocabulary word: Meticulous

- (A) Highly critical of others and easily dissatisfied.
- (B) Operating at a very fast and efficient pace.
- (C) Showing great attention to detail; very careful and precise.
- (D) Hesitant to make decisions due to fear of failure.

Correct Answer: (C) Showing great attention to detail; very careful and precise.

Solution:

Concept: Vocabulary acquisition requires understanding subtle contextual nuances. The word *meticulous* originates from the Latin word for fearful, but over time its meaning shifted to describe someone who is overly careful, scrupulous, and exceptionally precise about small details.

Step 1: Analyzing the options based on standard definitions.

While a meticulous person might notice minor flaws, option (A) incorrectly emphasizes a critical attitude toward others. Option (B) contradicts the typical nature of meticulousness, which often requires taking one's time rather than rushing. Option (D) confuses precision with indecisiveness. Therefore, option (C) is the most accurate definition.

Quick Tip: To remember *meticulous*, connect it with the word *metric*. A meticulous person measures everything down to the exact metric millimeter.

2. Complete the sentence with the correct homonym pair: The project manager visited the construction _____ to check if the new structure was within the line of _____.

- (A) sight, site
- (B) site, sight
- (C) cite, sight
- (D) site, cite

Correct Answer: (B) site, sight

Solution:

Concept: Homonyms and confusable words sound similar but have distinct spellings and meanings:

- **Site:** A physical location, place, or ground area used for a specific purpose.
- **Sight:** The faculty or act of seeing; a view within a field of vision.
- **Cite:** To quote, mention, or refer to a source as an authority.

Step 1: Evaluating the context of each blank.

The first blank requires a physical place where construction happens, which corresponds to *site*. The second blank refers to the field of vision or view, which corresponds to *sight*. This makes *site, sight* the only correct sequence.

Quick Tip: Remember that **S-i-t-e** is linked to **S**ituation/**S**pace (location), while **S-i-g-h-t** contains **g-h** just like the word **Li-g-h-t** (which is required to see).

3. What is the meaning of the idiom: "Spill the beans"?

- (A) To make a chaotic mess or cause an accident.
- (B) To reveal secret information unintentionally or indiscreetly.
- (C) To waste valuable resources on a useless project.
- (D) To speak aggregate lies to protect someone.

Correct Answer: (B) To reveal secret information unintentionally or indiscreetly.

Solution:

Concept: Idioms are phrases where the figurative meaning cannot be understood literally from the individual words. "Spill the beans" historically relates to ancient voting systems where colored beans were dropped into jars to cast secret ballots; prematurely dropping or spilling them exposed the hidden results.

Step 1: Differentiating figurative meaning from literal expressions.

Options (A) and (C) mistake the physical action of spilling for a literal or financial mess. Option (D) suggests lying, which is the opposite of exposing a hidden truth. Thus, option (B) is the accurate idiomatic meaning.

Quick Tip: When a secret slips out unexpectedly, imagine a container breaking open—the secret information "spills out" into the open for everyone to see.

4. Choose the option that is an antonym for the word: Loquacious

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

Correct Answer: (D) Taciturn

Solution:

Concept: Antonym questions require identifying words with directly opposite semantic meanings. *Loquacious* means extremely talkative or wordy.

Step 1: Analyzing the definitions of the options.

- *Garrulous* and *Verbose* are synonyms for loquacious, as they describe being overly talkative or using too many words.
- *Articulate* means fluent and clear in speech, which describes quality rather than quantity.
- *Taciturn* refers to a person who is naturally reserved, quiet, and says very little.

Because *taciturn* is the direct opposite of talkative, it is the correct antonym.

Quick Tip: Associate **Loqua-** with **Eloquence** and speech (talking a lot), and associate **Taciturn** with being **Silent** or tacit.

5. Complete the sentence using the correct phrasal verb of 'Put': We had to _____ our travel plans because of the sudden heavy rainfall.

- (A) put up with
- (B) put off
- (C) put out
- (D) put across

Correct Answer: (B) put off

Solution:

Concept: Phrasal verbs combine a base verb with a preposition or particle to form a completely new idiomatic meaning.

- **Put off:** To postpone or delay an event to a future time.
- **Put up with:** To tolerate or endure something unpleasant.
- **Put out:** To extinguish a fire, or to cause someone inconvenience.
- **Put across:** To communicate or express an idea clearly.

Step 1: Matching the context to the correct particle.

The context indicates that travel plans had to be delayed due to bad weather. Therefore, the phrasal verb meaning "to postpone" (*put off*) is required.

Quick Tip: Think of "off" as pushing something away into the future distance—hence, *put off* means to postpone.

6. Which of the following sentences uses the vocabulary word **Abstruse** correctly?

- (A) She was so abstruse in her spending that she ran out of savings within a month.
- (B) The instructions were clear and abstruse, allowing us to build the desk in ten minutes.
- (C) The professor's lecture on quantum physics was so abstruse that only a few advanced students

could follow it.

(D) He has an abstruse personality and makes friends everywhere he goes.

Correct Answer: (C) The professor's lecture on quantum physics was so abstruse that only a few advanced students could follow it.

Solution:

Concept: The adjective *abstruse* is used to describe abstract concepts, theories, texts, or subjects that are profound, complex, obscure, and incredibly difficult for an average mind to grasp or comprehend.

Step 1: Checking contextual alignment for each option.

In option (A), reckless spending should be described as *extravagant*. In option (B), "clear and abstruse" is a contradiction because clear instructions cannot be obscure. In option (D), an open, friendly personality should be called *gregarious* or *affable*. Option (C) uses the word perfectly to describe a dense, complex scientific lecture.

Quick Tip: Think of **Abs-truse** as something that feels **Abs-tract** and hard to understand.

7. Identify the correct preposition to complete the sentence: He has been working on this data analysis project _____ last Monday.

- (A) for
- (B) from
- (C) since
- (D) by

Correct Answer: (C) since

Solution:

Concept: In the Present Perfect Continuous tense structure (*has/have been + verb-ing*), specific prepositions connect time markers:

- **Since:** Used to specify a precise, definite starting point in time.
- **For:** Used to indicate a duration or overall length of time.

Step 1: Determining if the time marker is a point or a duration.

"Last Monday" is a specific day and a definite point on the calendar where the action commenced,

rather than a total count of days or hours. Therefore, *since* is the grammatically correct preposition.

Quick Tip: Use **Since** for specific calendar dates, days, years, or times (e.g., since 2021, since 9 AM).
Use **For** when you can count the units of time (e.g., for 5 days, for 3 hours).

8. Find the correctly spelled word from the options below:

- (A) Extravegant
- (B) Extravagent
- (C) Exstravagant
- (D) Extravagant

Correct Answer: (D) Extravagant

Solution:

Concept: Spelling accuracy requires identifying core root letters and silent phonetic transitions. The term stems from the Latin *extravagari*, combining *extra* (outside) and *vagari* (to wander).

Step 1: Breaking down common orthographic errors.

Option (A) mistakenly uses an 'e' after the 'v'. Option (B) replaces the regular noun/adjective suffix ending *-ant* with *-ent*. Option (C) adds an unnecessary phonetic 's' following the 'E'. The authentic, standard spelling is *Extravagant*.

Quick Tip: Break the word down phonetically into three simple chunks that all contain the vowel 'a':
Extra + vag + ant.

9. Identify the correct tense structure to fill the blank: By the time the teacher entered the classroom, the students _____ writing their notes.

- (A) have finished
- (B) will finish
- (C) had finished
- (D) finish

Correct Answer: (C) had finished

Solution:

Concept: When two separate actions occurred sequentially in the past, the past perfect tense (*had + past participle*) must be used to express the action that completed first, while the simple past tense handles the action that occurred later.

Step 1: Establishing the sequence of events in the past.

The sentence establishes two actions: the teacher entering the room (*entered* - Simple Past) and the students completing their writing. Because the students completed their work *before* the teacher entered, the earlier action must use the past perfect form: *had finished*.

Quick Tip: Whenever a sentence contains "By the time" followed by a past tense verb, look for the **had + V3** structure in the corresponding clause.

10. Rearrange the fragments to form a logical sentence:

P: the complex constitution regulations

Q: with meticulous care

R: the legal research team

S: analyzed every clause of

(A) PRSQ

(B) RSPQ

(C) QSPR

(D) RQSP

Correct Answer: (B) RSPQ

Solution:

Concept: Sentence rearrangement requires structuring clauses according to foundational syntax: Subject + Verb + Object + Modifiers (Adverbs/Prepositions indicating how or where).

Step 1: Identifying structural roles.

- **Subject:** "the legal research team" (R)
- **Verb Phrase:** "analyzed every clause of" (S)
- **Object:** "the complex constitution regulations" (P)

- **Adverbial Modifier:** "with meticulous care" (Q)

Linking these together logically yields: "*The legal research team (R) analyzed every clause of (S) the complex constitution regulations (P) with meticulous care (Q).*" This matches the sequence **RSPQ**.

Quick Tip: Always seek out the core noun performing the action to anchor your sentence, and look for prepositions like "of" that need to connect directly to an object.