

CUET 2026 May 31 Shift 2 English

Question Paper (Memory-Based) with Solutions

Conducted by National Testing Agency (NTA)

1. Choose the grammatically correct sentence.

- (A) Neither of the proposals were accepted by the committee.
- (B) Neither of the proposals have been accepted by the committee.
- (C) Neither of the proposals was accepted by the committee.
- (D) Neither of the proposals are accepted by the committee.

Correct Answer: (C) Neither of the proposals was accepted by the committee.

Solution:

Concept:

Questions involving subject-verb agreement are among the most frequently asked grammar questions in CUET English. The examiner often uses words such as *neither*, *either*, *each*, *everyone*, *someone*, and *everybody* because many students incorrectly identify the subject. The key idea is that *Neither* is grammatically singular and therefore takes a singular verb.

Step 1: Identify the actual subject.

The phrase given is:

Neither of the proposals

Many students incorrectly think that the noun

proposals

is the subject.

However, the true grammatical subject is:

Neither

which is singular.

Step 2: Determine the correct verb form.

Since the subject is singular:

Neither

the correct verb must also be singular:

was

and not

were

or

have

Step 3: Evaluate all options.

Option (A):

Neither ... were

Incorrect because of subject-verb disagreement.

Option (B):

Neither ... have

Again incorrect.

Option (C):

Neither ... was

Perfect agreement.

Option (D):

Neither ... are

Incorrect.

Step 4: Final conclusion.

The only grammatically correct sentence is:

Option (C)

Quick Tip: Neither, Either, Each, Everyone, Anybody, Somebody, Nobody and Every are grammatically singular and take singular verbs.

2. Choose the correctly spelled word.

- (A) Ocassion
- (B) Occasion
- (C) Occassion
- (D) Ocassionn

Correct Answer: (B) Occasion

Solution:

Concept:

Spelling questions in recent CUET papers have included commonly confused words where one or two letters are deliberately altered to create distractors.

The word *Occasion* is frequently misspelled because students become confused about the number of letters *c* and *s*.

Step 1:

Recall the correct spelling:

Occasion

Step 2:

Break the word into parts:

Oc + ca + sion

Notice:

- Double *c*

- Single s

Step 3:

Analyze the options.

Option (A):

Contains only one c.

Incorrect.

Option (B):

Correct spelling.

Option (C):

Contains double s.

Incorrect.

Option (D):

Contains an extra letter.

Incorrect.

Hence,

Option (B)

Quick Tip: Frequently confused spellings: Occasion, Embarrassment, Accommodation, Questionnaire, Millennium, Rendezvous.

3. Choose the option that best expresses the meaning of the idiom “*Too many irons in the fire*”.

- (A) To work near a furnace
- (B) To have too many tasks or commitments at the same time
- (C) To waste resources carelessly
- (D) To be physically exhausted

Correct Answer: (B)

Solution:

Concept:

Idioms are fixed expressions whose meanings cannot be understood by interpreting the individual words literally.

Modern CUET papers often include idioms where all options appear plausible, making elimination difficult.

Step 1:

Read the idiom carefully.

Too many irons in the fire

If interpreted literally, it appears related to metalwork.

However, idioms must be interpreted figuratively.

Step 2:

Understand the actual meaning.

The expression refers to a person handling numerous projects, responsibilities, or commitments simultaneously.

Such a person may become overwhelmed because attention is divided among many activities.

Step 3:

Evaluate options.

Option (A):

Literal interpretation.

Incorrect.

Option (B):

Matches the accepted idiomatic meaning.

Correct.

Option (C):

Unrelated.

Option (D):

Not the standard meaning.

Step 4:

Therefore,

Option (B)

Quick Tip: Never interpret idioms literally. Always focus on the figurative meaning developed through usage.

4. Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

The professor's explanation was so _____ that students from different academic backgrounds could understand the concept without difficulty.

- (A) obscure
- (B) lucid
- (C) ambiguous
- (D) cryptic

Correct Answer: (B) Lucid

Solution:

Concept:

Contextual vocabulary questions test whether a student can infer the correct meaning from surrounding clues.

The key clue is:

could understand the concept without difficulty

Step 1:

Determine the required meaning.

The sentence suggests clarity and ease of understanding.

Therefore the missing word should mean:

or

clear

easy to understand

Step 2:

Analyze each option.

Option (A):

Obscure = difficult to understand.

Incorrect.

Option (B):

Lucid = clear and easily understood.

Correct.

Option (C):

Ambiguous = having multiple interpretations.

Incorrect.

Option (D):

Cryptic = mysterious and difficult to understand.

Incorrect.

Step 3:

Therefore,

Option (B)

Quick Tip: Lucid, explicit, coherent, and intelligible are commonly used as synonyms for clarity.

5. Choose the sentence that is free from error.

- (A) Hardly had I reached the station than the train departed.
- (B) Hardly I had reached the station when the train departed.
- (C) Hardly had I reached the station when the train departed.
- (D) Hardly had reached I the station when the train departed.

Correct Answer: (C)

Solution:

Concept:

This question tests inversion and conjunction usage.

The fixed grammatical pattern is:

Hardly + had + subject + past participle + when

Step 1:

Recall the pair:

Hardly → when

and not

Hardly → than

Step 2:

Check each option.

Option (A):

Uses *than*.

Incorrect.

Option (B):

Incorrect inversion.

Option (C):

Perfectly follows the required structure.

Option (D):

Incorrect word order.

Step 3:

Hence,

Option (C)

Quick Tip: Remember: No sooner–than, Hardly–when, Scarcely–when. These pairs are frequently tested in CUET grammar questions.

6. Read the following passage carefully and answer the question that follows.

“The rapid expansion of social media has transformed the way information is disseminated. While it has enabled individuals to access news instantly and participate in public discourse, it has also facilitated the

rapid spread of misinformation. Experts argue that digital literacy is becoming increasingly important because the ability to evaluate information critically is essential in an environment where anyone can publish content.”

Which of the following can be most reasonably inferred from the passage?

- (A) Social media has had only negative effects on society.
- (B) Digital literacy is unnecessary because information is easily available online.
- (C) Critical evaluation of information has become increasingly important in the digital age.
- (D) Governments should completely ban social media platforms.

Correct Answer: (C)

Solution:

Concept:

Inference-based Reading Comprehension questions are among the most challenging sections in CUET English. Unlike factual questions, inference questions require the student to identify an idea that is logically supported by the passage even if it is not directly stated.

The correct answer should be supported by the overall argument of the author and must avoid exaggeration.

Step 1: Identify the central theme of the passage.

The passage discusses:

Social Media

and its impact on information sharing.

The author highlights both:

- Advantages
- Challenges

associated with social media.

Step 2: Identify the positive aspect mentioned.

The passage states that social media enables:

Instant access to information

and

Participation in public discourse

Thus social media has significant benefits.

Step 3: Identify the challenge mentioned.

The passage also states:

Rapid spread of misinformation

This indicates a major concern associated with online platforms.

Step 4: Understand the author's conclusion.

The author argues that:

Digital literacy is increasingly important

because people must evaluate information critically.

This is the main takeaway from the passage.

Step 5: Evaluate the options.

Option (A):

Claims only negative effects.

The passage mentions positive effects as well.

Incorrect.

Option (B):

Directly contradicts the passage.

Incorrect.

Option (C):

Matches the author's argument exactly.

Correct.

Option (D):

The passage never suggests banning social media.

Incorrect.

Step 6: Final conclusion.

The most reasonable inference is:

Critical evaluation of information has become increasingly important

Hence,

Option (C)

Quick Tip: For inference questions, eliminate extreme options containing words like only, always, never, completely, and entirely unless the passage explicitly supports them.

7. Choose the word that is closest in meaning to “*dissonance*”.

- (A) Harmony
- (B) Agreement
- (C) Discord
- (D) Balance

Correct Answer: (C) Discord

Solution:

Concept:

Vocabulary questions in recent CUET papers have increasingly included advanced words that are not part of everyday conversation. Students are expected to understand both direct meanings and contextual usage.

The word:

Dissonance

is commonly used in music, psychology, and general English.

Step 1: Understand the meaning.

Dissonance refers to:

- Lack of harmony
- Conflict
- Disagreement
- Clash

Thus:

Dissonance = Discord

Step 2: Evaluate each option.

Option (A):

Harmony is actually the opposite.

Incorrect.

Option (B):

Agreement is also opposite in meaning.

Incorrect.

Option (C):

Discord means conflict or lack of harmony.

Correct.

Option (D):

Balance does not convey conflict.

Incorrect.

Step 3: Final conclusion.

The closest synonym is:

Discord

Hence,

Option (C)

Quick Tip: Common advanced vocabulary pairs: Dissonance–Discord, Lucid–Clear, Obdurate–Stubborn, Magnanimous–Generous.

8. Choose the correct arrangement of the following sentences to form a coherent paragraph.

P. Consequently, governments around the world have started investing heavily in renewable energy technologies.

Q. Fossil fuels have powered industrial growth for more than a century.

R. However, growing concerns regarding climate change have highlighted their environmental costs.

S. Renewable energy sources such as solar and wind power are viewed as sustainable alternatives.

(A) QRSP

(B) QRPS

(C) QSPR

(D) RQSP

Correct Answer: (A) QRSP

Solution:

Concept:

Parajumble questions test logical sequencing and coherence. The objective is to identify how ideas naturally develop within a paragraph.

Step 1: Identify the introductory sentence.

Sentence Q introduces:

Fossil Fuels

and their historical role.

This serves as the topic sentence.

Hence:

Q

must come first.

Step 2: Find the contrasting statement.

Sentence R begins with:

However

which contrasts with the positive role mentioned in Q.

Therefore:

$Q \rightarrow R$

Step 3: Identify the proposed solution.

Sentence S introduces renewable energy as an alternative.

Since environmental concerns have been raised in R, S logically follows.

Thus:

$$R \rightarrow S$$

Step 4: Locate the conclusion.

Sentence P begins with:

Consequently

which indicates a result.

Governments invest in renewable energy because renewable energy is considered a sustainable alternative.

Thus:

$$S \rightarrow P$$

Step 5:

Final sequence:

$$Q \rightarrow R \rightarrow S \rightarrow P$$

QRSP

Therefore:

Option (A)

Quick Tip: Look for linking words such as however, therefore, consequently, thus, and moreover. They often reveal the correct sequence in parajumble questions.

9. Choose the option that best replaces the underlined part of the sentence.

Had the manager informed us earlier, we will complete the project before the deadline.

- (A) will have completed
- (B) would complete
- (C) would have completed
- (D) had completed

Correct Answer: (C) would have completed

Solution:

Concept:

This question tests one of the most important grammar topics frequently asked in CUET examinations—**Conditional Sentences**. Students often lose marks because the options appear grammatically similar. To solve such questions accurately, one must first identify the type of condition being expressed.

The sentence begins with:

Had the manager informed us earlier

This structure is an inverted form of a third conditional sentence.

The original structure would be:

If the manager had informed us earlier

Thus, we are dealing with a hypothetical situation in the past.

Step 1: Identify the type of conditional.

There are mainly three common conditional structures:

- First Conditional:

If + Present, will + Verb

- Second Conditional:

If + Past, would + Verb

- Third Conditional:

If + Past Perfect, would have + Past Participle

The given sentence contains:

Had informed

which is Past Perfect.

Hence, the sentence belongs to the Third Conditional category.

Step 2: Recall the required structure.

For Third Conditional:

If + Past Perfect

must be followed by

would have + V₃

Therefore the correct expression should be:

would have completed

Step 3: Evaluate each option carefully.

Option (A):

will have completed

This indicates future perfect tense and does not match the hypothetical past condition.

Incorrect.

Option (B):

would complete

This belongs to the second conditional pattern.

Incorrect.

Option (C):

would have completed

Perfectly matches the Third Conditional structure.

Correct.

Option (D):

had completed

Creates an incorrect tense sequence.

Incorrect.

Step 4: Form the corrected sentence.

The sentence becomes:

Had the manager informed us earlier, we would have completed the project before the deadline.

This sentence now expresses an unreal situation in the past.

Step 5: Final conclusion.

The correct replacement is:

would have completed

Hence,

Option (C)

Quick Tip: Third Conditional Pattern: If + Had + V₃, Would Have + V₃

Example: If she had studied harder, she would have scored better marks.

10. Read the following passage carefully and answer the question that follows.

“Scientific progress is often portrayed as a steady accumulation of knowledge. However, historians of science argue that major advances frequently occur through paradigm shifts, where established assumptions are challenged and replaced by new frameworks. Such transformations may initially face resistance because prevailing theories often become deeply embedded within scientific communities.”

Which of the following assumptions is most strongly supported by the passage?

- (A) Scientific theories never change once they are accepted.
- (B) New scientific ideas are always accepted immediately.
- (C) Established scientific communities may resist ideas that challenge existing beliefs.
- (D) Scientific progress depends entirely on technological inventions.

Correct Answer: (C)

Solution:

Concept:

This is a higher-order Reading Comprehension question involving inference and assumption. Such questions are considered among the most difficult because the answer is rarely stated directly.

Instead, the reader must determine what idea logically follows from the author's argument.

The correct answer should be:

- Supported by the passage.
- Consistent with the author's viewpoint.
- Free from exaggeration.

Step 1: Identify the author's central argument.

The passage discusses:

Scientific Progress

The author challenges the common belief that scientific knowledge grows only through gradual accumulation.

Instead, the passage introduces the concept of:

Paradigm Shifts

where old frameworks are replaced by new ones.

Step 2: Analyze the key statement.

The passage states:

"Such transformations may initially face resistance because prevailing theories often become deeply embedded within scientific communities."

This sentence contains the author's most important claim.

It implies that scientists and institutions sometimes become attached to existing theories.

As a result:

New ideas may encounter resistance

even if they are eventually proven correct.

Step 3: Evaluate Option (A).

This option states:

Scientific theories never change

The passage explicitly discusses paradigm shifts where theories are replaced.

Therefore this option directly contradicts the passage.

Incorrect.

Step 4: Evaluate Option (B).

The passage mentions resistance to new ideas.

Therefore acceptance is not always immediate.

Incorrect.

Step 5: Evaluate Option (C).

The passage states that prevailing theories become deeply embedded and therefore new ideas may face resistance.

This option reflects exactly that idea.

Correct.

Step 6: Evaluate Option (D).

The passage never claims that technological inventions are the sole factor behind scientific progress.

This statement introduces information not present in the passage.

Incorrect.

Step 7: Final conclusion.

The assumption most strongly supported by the passage is:

Established scientific communities may resist ideas that challenge existing beliefs

Therefore,

Option (C)

Quick Tip: For assumption and inference questions, prefer options that are directly supported by the author's reasoning. Avoid extreme words such as always, never, entirely, and only unless the passage explicitly uses them.

