

Verbal Ability Practice-3

Passage – 1

In the mountainous coast of southern British Columbia, autumn salmon are running up the Glendale Creek to spawn. Wading among them is a grizzly bear as golden as poplar leaves. Silver fur rings its shoulders and chest. The coat is so unlike the uniform dark brown of most coastal grizzlies that the scientists studying bears here named this yearling male Panda. ‘If you ask me, he’s spoiled rotten,’ says Chris Bright, one of the researchers. ‘Watch’.

Although Panda is already a 150-pound predator, he seldom bothers chasing a fish himself. He waits for his mother to grab one and sidles over to take it from her mouth. He even rubs his plump, itchy, wet behind against her while he eats her catch, then tries to nurse. But mother is busy lifting a thrashing salmon by its belly. As eggs squirt out in a pink arc, Panda filches that fish too. Finished, he ambles into deeper water, where he suddenly lights into dear old mom with play swipes of his paws.

The pair wrestle across a chest-high pool. They growl and bat at each other and slap the surface. Panda gets so worked up that he breaks into a dance. He flattens his ears and swings his head, shimmy-shakes and shadowboxes. He bites his paws. He dashes and leaps and does pudgy pirouettes.

Panda isn’t really spoiled or goofy; he’s just a young grizzly in salmon time. But then grizzlies come in all kinds of moods. Once, my teenage son, Russell, was sitting with his back to the pen of a 750-pound male captive bear named Tank, talking to the grizzly while idly chucking gravel at a can. Hearing scraping sounds behind him, he turned to find that Tank had swept together the odd bits of gravel on the pen’s floor and was pushing a small pile out to him under the bottom bar with a paw.

When a tour leader on the Glendale Creek reports hearing a bear bawling upstream, I go investigate with four others, including Barrie Gilbert of Utah State University, an authority on bear behaviour. In his 60s, he is ruggedly handsome, with an emphasis on rugged after he ran into a grizzly that rearranged one side of his face. We’re afoot on the floodplain when we hear a bear crashing through water. It must be racing after salmon.

Wrong. The next crashing is of brush, then comes snorting, and I see a broad mound of fur hurtling darkly at us and hear myself yell, ‘HEY-BEAR-NO!’ In a heart squeeze this hulk is 15 yards away, maybe, I don’t know, only that it has paused, huffing and popping its jaws, and I’m unholstering spray canisters of red pepper deterrent, and Gilbert is looking at me out of his remaining eye, saying we should keep in a tight group. Well, that would be just fine by me. The bear then disappears, which is all we learn about that one.

Grizzlies set off such a range of emotions, from ooh-snoogie-woogums to God-save-us, that it is almost impossible to see these creatures clearly. Yet their future depends largely upon whether we can.

Brown bears, *Ursus arctos*, are distributed around the northern hemisphere. In North America some scientists distinguish between the big brown bears of Alaska’s Kodiak archipelago, those along the mainland coast, and the more grizzled types found inland. More often than not, people use the name grizzly for all North American brown bears.

There are only about 58,000 left, more than half in Alaska. As many as twice that number lived in America’s lower 48 states two centuries ago. By 1975 those were reduced to fewer than a thousand and listed as threatened. Numbers in some areas appear to have stabilized and may even be rebounding slightly, bringing the total back up to about 1,100. Meanwhile, Canada’s bears are feeling the effects of liberal hunting quotas, tough policies towards nuisance animals, and backcountry development that has fragmented habitats and isolated populations – the same combination that put grizzlies from the lower 48 states on the imperilled list.

1. Which of the following best describes the author’s tone?
 - A. Informal and lively through most of the passage, but sober towards the end
 - B. Frank and cheerful at the beginning, but serious at the conclusion
 - C. Casual and relaxed at first, but apprehensive later on
 - D. Overly excited at the beginning, but somewhat calmer at the end
2. Which of the following is not a behaviour exhibited by grizzlies in this passage?
 - A. Exhaling noisily
 - B. Trying to help a human
 - C. Fighting over food
 - D. Spinning around rapidly
3. When the author says ‘a grizzly ... rearranged one side of his face’, he is:
 - A. trying to show that though Barrie Gilbert’s face was injured by a bear, he still retains some of his original good looks.
 - B. stressing the fact that until Barrie Gilbert’s unfortunate encounter with a bear, he was quite handsome.
 - C. trying to indicate that though Barrie Gilbert was attacked by a bear, the injury did not change his appearance much.
 - D. conveying in a euphemistic manner that one side of Barrie Gilbert’s face was disfigured when he was mauled by a bear.
4. If the passage were to be continued, the next paragraph would most likely deal with:
 - A. the situation regarding grizzlies in the United States.
 - B. the other species of bears that used to live in Canada and how they went extinct.
 - C. how the current hunting quotas in Canada have affected brown bears.
 - D. suggestions on how to increase the number of brown bears in Canada.

Passage-2

The art historian Walter Friedländer, early in the 20th century, defined Mannerism as an extension of the High Renaissance style – and an evolution away from its grace and balance. Emotionalism, distortion, the disappearance of symmetry, unnatural or extreme exaggeration, and an unsettling anxiety – these are the signs of the anti-classicism that emerged in the 16th century.

The dissolution of a classical ideal into something ‘mannered’ ought to sound familiar to today’s art audience. The formal balance of 1950s modernism and the anti-emotionalism of early Pop have evolved into an over-the-top art that one could call postmodern mannerism. Matthew Barney puts on satyr’s ears and parodies frat parties and chorus lines in his films and performances; Damien Hirst brings the abattoir into the art gallery; and Patricia Piccinini takes a cue from E.T., Star Wars, Lord of the Rings, and the Pixar aesthetic to give us creatures that share kinship with orcs, trolls, goblins and hobbits.

Just as the emotional turmoil associated with Mannerism persisted into Baroque, contemporary mannerism shades into the contemporary baroque. For curator Paul Schimmel of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, Barney’s art has qualities in common with Mike Kelley’s and Paul McCarthy’s, in the complexity and richness of their performances, videos, photography and installations. McCarthy’s current show, for example, includes a life-size frigate, a houseboat and a fractured film, all based on the Pirates of the Caribbean ride at Disneyland.

‘All three of these artists deal with elements of caricature or exaggeration,’ says Schimmel. Their multi-component performance-installations have the exaggerated grandeur he associates with opera: ‘It exists in time; it uses a symphony, a chorus, and individual singers; it has an evolving narrative; and it has always been one of the most challenging and complex of the arts.’ But historical Mannerism and Baroque were not identical, and their contemporary analogues also differ. In the historical Baroque, an earthy obsession with entrails, martyrdom, and emotional shadows conveyed dramatic exuberance and, paradoxically, optimism. Body parts and their emotional baggage are a favourite topic for artists now – Louise Bourgeois has been mining this terrain for years. In Sue Williams’s latest paintings, elegantly flowing lines in cursive forms slyly resolve themselves into quivering organic elements arousing fascinating emotional tremors in the viewer.

The qualities of historical Mannerism, in contrast, are artificiality, bizarre colour, illogical compression of space, and an anxiety that breaks through a superficial naturalism. Mannerism puts emphasis on the artifice of emotional expression.

Curator Norman Kleeblatt of the Jewish Museum in New York regards this emotionalism as a positive quality. ‘When I look at classic Mannerist art, there is such playfulness,’ he says. ‘I think that is the connection with contemporary art.’ He defines mannerist art as ‘a formal or conceptual ploy. Matthew Barney, for instance, has a distinct mannerism’, which plays with an earlier classical form ‘attenuated to the point of near-absurdity’.

In the late 1980s, Mike Kelley wrote about another aspect of mannerism: its tremulous, satirical, bombastic, or anxiety-ridden relationship with popular culture. Jeff Koons and other appropriationists took the Pop aesthetic to extremes, not only compressing styles but also assimilating aspects of commercialism that proved impossible to consume at first, even for Warhol and his peers.

Post-Pop mannerism is evident in the artifice and anxiety of Piccinini’s bizarre bestiary, which drew international attention at the 2003 Venice Biennale. Piccinini has absorbed not only the strategy of cultural appropriation but also the look and feel of the warrior epics of current cinema. The superficial naturalism of her silicone-and-fur sculptures – their sagging skin, age spots, translucent ears, and overgrown toenails – induces viewers to identify with them, as with Yoda or Frodo. Scaly, creepy and warty, they are deliberately sentimental: repulsive and cute, sweet and sad. Darwin’s gargoyles, they mock evolution and play to our fears of peril to the natural order. Scientific materialism has given us our own monsters, literally in bed with us, they seem to say.

Take a step back, however, and the artifice itself seems to be deliberately concocted to dovetail with a general nameless unease. In postmodern mannerism, popular culture and its ethos of unrestrained consumption and insatiable entertainment accumulate a momentum that proves hard to resist. The consumerist attitude towards art has already obliterated much that was once considered serious and ‘high’.

For Kiki Smith, the self-consciousness of mannerism gives it a ‘perversity that is interesting. It has nostalgic or sentimental aspects. It makes hybrids – you take known elements and play with them. I’m always looking at things from the past and embellishing them or reconfiguring them.’ Mannerism, she continues, ‘has awkwardness to it also. It’s the second coming of something. But it always implies that it needs to be revisited, that things are not used up, so it has energy from that also.’

YinkaShonibare, in examining colonialism via African cloth, or Canadian sculptor David Altmejd, in creating a ‘werewolf aesthetic’, are making such a loop through older cultural forms. Another is Kim Simonsson, a Finnish sculptor whose doll-like ceramic figures portray the gnawing anxiety under the surface cuteness of Japanese manga comics and anime. Figures that might have graced Grandmother’s china cabinet now echo the fear that mannerism’s illogicality spawns – its sense of a world out of control.

5. In what ways do the Baroque and Mannerist styles differ?
 - A. While there is an analogue of Mannerism in contemporary art, there is none of Baroque.
 - B. While Mannerism emphasizes emotional experience, Baroque is steadfastly anti-emotional.
 - C. Mannerism evolved from the classicism of High Renaissance art, while Baroque had a separate genesis.

- D. Mannerism is not obsessed with organic elements, whereas Baroque is.
6. Which of the following artworks would most likely be considered in the Mannerist style?
- A sculpture that resembles human intestines
 - A painting that derides popular culture
 - A painting of a symmetrical geometrical form
 - A realistic sculpture of an ordinary animal
7. Which of the following best describes the thought-flow of this passage?
- Introduction to new trends in art, especially Mannerism; comparison to art trends from the 16th century; examples of both types of Mannerist art.
 - Comparison and contrast between Mannerism in modern art and in 16th century art; some examples of modern Mannerist art.
 - Introduction to Mannerism and Baroque; difference between the two; discussion and examples of contemporary Mannerist art.
 - Definition of Mannerism; examples of Mannerist art; definition of Baroque and how it differs from Mannerism; examples of Baroque art.
8. What is the author's attitude towards Mannerism?
- She eagerly welcomes it as a fresh, new style.
 - Though she has some qualms about the style, she tries to remain positive.
 - She is uninterested in the style, but tries to understand it better.
 - She maintains an objective attitude throughout.

Passage – 3

Malnutrition and infection are widespread in almost all developing countries. Among the most common conditions are protein-energy malnutrition (PEM), micronutrient deficiency disorders, helminthic (worm) infection, and upper respiratory illness. These conditions often combine to create negative synergies; thus, for example, PEM and infection frequently co-exist and multiply the ill effects that each would cause the organism if present alone.

The endemic nature of malnutrition and infection is probably also at the root of additional health problems that impede learning among school-aged children. Poor vision and auditory impairment, for example, are conditions that directly relate to infection and micronutrient deficiencies.

Prevalent data, therefore, suggest that programmes designed to improve the quality of primary schooling in developing countries must also include efforts to improve the health and nutrition status of students exposed to that schooling. Targeted health and nutrition interventions can confer important educational benefits.

Among developing countries, Protein-Energy Malnutrition (PEM) is one of the two most widespread nutritional deficiencies. The condition is often worsened by a child's parasite load. Caused by poor diet, PEM is almost always linked to conditions of extreme poverty and the additional accompanying threats to the child's normal growth and development that such an environment poses. A complex disorder, PEM is also often associated with different levels and types of nutritional deficiencies, such as iron and vitamin A as well as infectious disease.

Because of the interaction between malnutrition and the adverse social and environmental circumstances in which it occurs, evidence of a direct causal relation between mild-to-moderate PEM alone and impaired intellectual competence has not yet been established. Thus, there is a need for research to examine the question of how mild-to-moderate malnutrition and socio-cultural, economic and other environmental influences combine in affecting mental development and cognitive capacity. One important aspect of this question is whether the consequences of mild-to-moderate PEM and of improved nutritional status due to supplementation vary as a function of an individual's social and physical environment.

While our knowledge about PEM prevalence among school-aged children is incomplete, the data available from relatively small samples in a few countries point to some important differences both among and within countries. In Guatemala, India, Kenya and the Philippines, for example, the degree of stunting and wasting found among school populations is high. Illustratively, over 30 percent of Kenya's school population was stunted and underweight. In summary, large numbers of school-aged children in developing countries appear to be both nutritionally and educationally at risk.

Sigman and others have found that Kenyan children who were better nourished had higher composite scores on a test of verbal comprehension and the Raven Progressive Matrices. Furthermore, better-nourished girls were more attentive during classroom observations than their malnourished female counterparts. For the children as a group, the best predictors of cognitive scores were duration of schooling, food intake (current nutrition), physical stature (nutritional history), and socioeconomic status. Regardless of the social and economic resources of the family, children who had more adequate diets scored higher on the cognitive battery than those with less adequate intake.

Similarly, Florencio concluded from her study in the Philippines that the academic performance and mental ability of pupils with good nutritional status were significantly higher than those of pupils with poor nutritional status, as a whole, even when family

income, school quality, teacher ability, or mental ability were controlled. Although the relationship between health and nutritional status on the one hand and academic achievement on the other varied by grade level and subject matter, a significant positive relationship was found linking nutritional status to mental ability and academic achievement.

Many of the clinical studies on the relationship between PEM and cognitive development have focused on the long-term consequences of malnutrition experienced by infants and preschool children. Collectively, the studies present a comprehensive view of cognitive function which might be defined as the ability to learn categories, to process and structure information, and to learn and react to social and environmental cues. Cognitive function also includes the ability to ask appropriate questions and provide appropriate answers within a given environment and to identify and solve relevant problems. Furthermore, it embraces general conceptual ability, appropriate actions within a given culture, and the mental agility needed to entertain new categories and see new possibilities.

Based on the findings presented in those studies that examined the relationship between PEM and cognitive development on the basis of episodes of malnutrition experienced in infancy or early childhood, it appears that mild-to-moderate malnutrition, while not causing primary learning deficits, does alter processes associated with cognitive function. Passivity, apathy, shortened attention span, reduced short-term memory, failure to acclimate to repetitive stimuli, and a lag in the development of sensory-integrative capacity are all associated with mild-to-moderate malnutrition. Furthermore, among infants and preschoolers, PEM has been shown to reduce playful and exploratory activity as well as motivation and arousal while increasing irritability and apathy.

9. Based on the information given in paragraph 7, which of the following are predictors of cognitive scores of children?

- a) They had adequate food intake.
 - b) They attended school for only five years.
 - c) They had inadequate food intake.
 - d) They belonged to the class of landless labourers.
- A. a, b B. a, b, c, d C. a, b, d D. b, c, d

10. According to the passage, cognitive function of an individual is all of the following, except:

- A. general ability to recognize a completely new object.
- B. the mental dexterity required to explore fresh grounds.
- C. a general conceptual ability within a given environment.
- D. an ability to analyse and organize information.

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11. According to the passage, malnutrition and infection:

- A. directly affect intellectual competence.
- B. result in associated health problems
- C. in mutually exclusive situations, do not have any ill-effects on the child.
- D. affect only school-aged children.

12. Which of the following statements would be least relevant to the arguments put forth by Sigman and Florencio?

- A. The nutritional status of a child affects his physical as well as mental health.
- B. The socioeconomic conditions of a child do not have much influence on his eating habits.
- C. Recent research has proved that the pesticide used by farmers and poultry owners nowadays can result in lowering the attention span and memory of children and adults.
- D. The cognitive scores of children are not the best predictors of the relationship between malnutrition and student performance in school because of too many variables.

For question (13-15) : Select the alternative that best completes the given paragraph:

13. There is, indeed, a "New World Order" taking shape, marked by the diffusion of power in U.S. domains and the collapse of the Russian empire and the tyranny at its heart. These developments leave the U.S. as the overwhelmingly dominant military force and offer three economic power centres the attractive prospect of incorporating the former Soviet system into their Third World domains. These must still be controlled, sometimes by force. This has been the responsibility of the United States.

- A. However, with its lagging economic strength, the temptation to resort to force is only heightened.
- B. However, there is a sharp split over the tactical choice between preparation for war and reliance on sanctions.
- C. However, with its relative economic decline, the task becomes a harder one to shoulder.
- D. However, the U.S. must persist in its historic task, while turning to others to pay the bills.

14. Why do we tend to confuse improbability with impossibility? Partly it's because evolution did not favour complex probabilistic thinking. Honed by centuries of hunter-gathering, we are disposed to make snap decisions on the basis of minimal evidence and facile theories - presumably because those who glimpsed a lion and started running, on the crude assumption that all wild animals always eat humans, were more likely to survive than those who preferred to test this hypothesis experimentally.

- A. But some find this view flawed, as it is said that evolution does not think or plan ahead.
- B. After all, evolution doesn't care if you are right or wrong - only if you survive.
- C. After all, in evolutionary terms, friendly lions are not impossible, but they are certainly improbable.
- D. As they must have thought: there may be such things as friendly lions, but better be safe than sorry.

15. Most modern people have a sense that not much washing was done until the twentieth century and the question I was asked most often while writing this book always came with a look of barely contained disgust: ‘But didn’t they smell?’ As St. Bernard said, where all stink, no one smells. The scent of one another’s bodies was the ocean our ancestors swam in and they were used to the everyday odour of dried sweat. It was part of their world, along with the smells of cooking, roses, garbage, forests and manure. Twenty years ago, airplanes, restaurants, hotel rooms and most other public indoor spaces were thick with cigarette smoke. Most of us never noticed it. Now that these places are usually smoke-free, we shrink back affronted when we enter a room where someone has been smoking.
- the nose is adaptable and teachable.
 - the concept of body odour is a twentieth century invention, our ancestors didn’t think in those terms.
 - the modern world is filled with a largely variety of smells than our ancestors ever had to deal with.
 - that’s because nowadays, smoking in public is frowned upon and even illegal in some places.

For questions (16-18): Arrange the sentences in correct order:

16. A. constable recreated the area around Flatford Mill which was his father’s first home.
 B. the most famous painting John Constable ever painted is The Haywain, a portrait of a hay cart crossing a ford which owes something to Rubens’s View of Het Steen in the Early Morning.
 C. Clearly a metaphor for the tradition to which Constable was extremely sensitive, this work like all his best works is rooted in the emotional associations of his “careless boyhood”.
 D. this was a painting Constable greatly admired for the “joyous and animated character” Rubens imparted to the sky falling it with departing showers.
 E. the house which figures so prominently in this work had earlier belonged to Anna who lived his entire seventy years in Flatford.
17. A. However, the high prevalence of dementia in the elderly can overshadow the importance of its occurrence in younger patients.
 B. but it can also provide important biological insights that might be applicable to the more common presentation in older patients.
 C. for example, the high prevalence of inherited dementia in younger age groups has led to the study of molecular pathology of direct relevance to the more common sporadic disease seen in older patients.
 D. young onset dementia can present a substantial diagnostic challenge.
 E. Dementia is a major public health concern that is growing burden owing to an ageing society.
18. A. History would become an unending, madcap Monty Python episode, as tourists from the future trampled over historic events while trying to get the best camera angle.
 B. if we could journey back into the past, history would be impossible to write.
 C. if, for example we were to go back to the era of the dinosaurs and accidentally step on a mammal that happens to be our ancestor, perhaps we would accidentally wipe out the entire human race.
 D. as soon as a historian recorded the history of the past, someone could go back into the past and rewrite it.
 E. not only would time machine put historians out of business, but they would enable us to alter the course of time at will.

For questions (19-20): Select the sentence that is logically incorrect.

19. A. Occult science is the systematic research into or formulation of occult concepts in a manner that follows in its method or presentation the way natural science researches or describes phenomena of the physical world.
 B. some authors have sought to show that various aspects of what has traditionally been considered occultism are in fact scientific in precisely the same manner that chemistry or physics is scientific.
 C. kabbalah and tarot reading have been described as occult sciences by researchers.
 D. when a branch of knowledge as this overall form, it can be considered ‘scientific’ and that is the claim made for certain aspects of occultism.
20. A. officials beginning to investigate the case said that some of the US diplomats’ symptoms were so severe that they were forced to cancel their tours early
 B. Cuba has never permitted, nor will permit, that Cuban territory be used for any action against accredited diplomatic officials or their families, with no exception.
 C. in the autumn of 2016, a series of US diplomats visiting Cuba began suffering unexplained losses of hearing
 D. after months of investigation, US officials concluded that the diplomats had been attacked with an advanced sonic weapon that operated outside the range of audible sound.
 E. several of the diplomats were recent arrivals at the US embassy in Cuba, which reopened in 2015 as a part of President Barack Obama’s re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Answer Key:

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|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| 1.A | 2.C | 3.D | 4.D |
| 5.D | 6.B | 7.C | 8.D |
| 9.B | 10.A | 11.B | 12.C |
| 13.C | 14.D | 15.A | |
| 16.BDAEC | 17.EADBC | 18.BDECA | 19.D 20.B |