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Logical Reasoning and Analytical Ability	Topics 9–12	**380 Qs**

Questions per part, from "The paper at a glance" (p. 4).

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1,70,000, ÷ 5 = 34,000). Option (c), ₹20,000, gives the whole monthly rise to the average, forgetting to share it, and option (b), ₹16,000, does not fit. Always bring all figures to the same time period before adding.

Trap: The average is per month but the rise is per year. Convert ₹1,20,000 a year to ₹10,000 a month before you add.

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37. An automobile owner reduced his monthly petrol consumption when the prices went up. The price-consumption relationship is as follows : [2015]

Price (in ₹ per litre)	40	50	60	75
Monthly consumption (in litres)	60	48	40	32

If the price goes up to ₹ 80 per litre, his expected consumption (in litres) will be

(a) 30 (b) 28
(c) 26 (d) 24

Ans. (a) Before reaching for any formula, look for a pattern in the table. Multiply each price by the litres bought: 40 × 60 = 2,400; 50 × 48 = 2,400; 60 × 40 = 2,400; 75 × 32 = 2,400. Every column gives the same answer. So the owner always spends ₹2,400 a month on petrol, whatever the price. At ₹80 a litre, he buys 2,400 ÷ 80 = 30 litres: option (a). Options (b), (c) and (d) would mean he spends less than ₹2,400, which breaks the pattern. The trap is to see that consumption fell by 8 litres between some columns and continue that drop in a straight line; the table is about fixed spending, not a fixed fall.

---

38. Two equal glasses of same type are respectively 1/3 and 1/4 full of milk. They are then filled up with water and the contents are mixed in a pot. What is the ratio of milk and water in the pot? [2015]

(a) 7 : 17 (b) 1 : 3
(c) 9 : 21 (d) 11 : 23

Ans. (a) Choose an easy size for each glass, a number that both 3 and 4 divide into: 12 cups. The first glass is one-third milk, so it has 4 cups of milk and 8 cups of water after it is filled up. The second glass is one-fourth milk, so it has 3 cups of milk and 9 cups of water. Pour both into the pot: milk = 4 + 3 = 7 cups, water = 8 + 9 = 17 cups. The ratio is 7 : 17, option (a). Option (b), 1 : 3, is what you get if you treat both glasses as one-fourth milk. Option (c), 9 : 21, simplifies to 3 : 7, and (d), 11 : 23, does not fit. The trap is adding the fractions 1/3 + 1/4 = 7/12 and calling that the milk share of the pot; there are two glasses, so the milk is 7 out of 24, not 7 out of 12.

---

39. A person ordered 5 pairs of black socks and some pairs of brown socks. The price of a black pair was thrice that of a brown pair. While preparing the bill, the bill clerk interchanged the number of black and brown pairs by mistake which increased the bill by 100%. What was the number of pairs of brown socks in the original order ? [2015]

(a) 10 (b) 15
(c) 20 (d) 25

Ans. (d) Give the prices easy values: a brown pair costs ₹1, so a black pair costs ₹3. Now test the options, starting with any one. Try (d), 25 brown pairs. The correct bill is 5 black × ₹3 + 25 brown × ₹1 = 15 + 25 = ₹40. The clerk swapped the numbers, billing 25 black and 5 brown: 25 × 3 + 5 × 1 = 75 + 5 = ₹80. ₹80 is double ₹40, which is a 100% increase, exactly as stated. So 25 is right. Quickly check one other to be sure: with 10 brown, the true bill is 15 + 10 = 25 and the wrong bill is 30 + 5 = 35, only a 40% rise. Options (a), (b) and (c) all give rises below 100%. The trap is to read "increased by 100%" as "increased by ₹100"; it means the bill doubled.

---

40. The monthly incomes of Peter and Paul are in the ratio of 4 : 3. Their expenses are in the ratio of 3 : 2. If each saves ₹ 6,000 at the end of the month, their monthly incomes respectively are (in ₹) [2015]

(a) 24,000 and 18,000 (b) 28,000 and 21,000
(c) 32,000 and 24,000 (d) 34,000 and 26,000

Ans. (a) All four options already keep the incomes in the ratio 4 : 3, so just check the expenses. Take away the ₹6,000 each person saves and see whether the expenses come out 3 : 2. Option (a): 24,000 − 6,000 = 18,000 and 18,000 − 6,000 = 12,000; 18,000 : 12,000 is 3 : 2. It works. Option (b): expenses 22,000 and 15,000, which is not 3 : 2. Option (c): 26,000 and 18,000, which is 13 : 9. Option (d): 28,000 and 20,000, which is 7 : 5. Only (a) fits. When every option already satisfies one condition, the other condition decides the answer. The trap is to stop after checking the 4 : 3 ratio, which every option passes.

Fastest way: All four options already give incomes in the ratio 4 : 3, so test only the other

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23. Two Statements are given followed by two Conclusions : Statements : All numbers are divisible by 2. All numbers are divisible by 3. Conclusion-I : All numbers are divisible by 6. Conclusion-II : All numbers are divisible by 4. [2020]

Which of the above Conclusions logically follows/follow from the two given Statements?

(a) Only Conclusion-I
(b) Only Conclusion-II
(c) Neither Conclusion-I nor Conclusion-II
(d) Both Conclusion-I and Conclusion-II

Ans. (a) A number divisible by both 2 and 3, which share no factor, is divisible by $2 \times 3 = 6$. So conclusion I follows. Being divisible by 2 does not make a number divisible by 4; 6 itself is the counter-example. So only I, option (a).

24. Two Statements are given followed by two Conclusions : Statements : All cats are dogs. All cats are black. Conclusion-I : All dogs are black. Conclusion-II : Some dogs are not black. [2020]

Which of the above Conclusions logically follows/follow from the two given Statements, disregarding commonly known facts?

(a) Only Conclusion-I
(b) Only Conclusion-II
(c) Neither Conclusion-I nor Conclusion-II
(d) Both Conclusion-I and Conclusion-II

Ans. (c) Draw a small cats circle sitting inside the dogs circle and also inside black. We know the cat part of the dogs is black, but the other dogs could be any colour. So "all dogs are black" is not certain, and "some dogs are not black" is not certain either. Neither follows, option (c). The two conclusions are opposites, which tempts you to say one must hold, but no option offers "either I or II".

25. Consider the following Statements and Conclusions : Statements : [2019]

1. Some rats are cats.
2. Some cats are dogs.
3. No dog is a cow. Conclusions :

I. No cow is a cat.
II. No dog is a rat.
III. Some cats are rats.

Which of the above conclusions is/are drawn from the statements ?

(a) I, II and III (b) Only I and II
(c) Only III (d) Only II and III

Ans. (c) "Some rats are cats" can be turned round to "some cats are rats", so III follows. Conclusion I says no cow is a cat. We only know the cats that are dogs are not cows; other cats might be cows, so I fails. Conclusion II says no dog is a rat, but nothing links dogs and rats either way, so II fails. Only III, option (c). "Some" statements can never give you a "no" conclusion.

26. In a school, 60% students play cricket. A student who does not play cricket, plays football. Every football player has got a two-wheeler. Which of the following conclusions cannot be drawn from the above data ? [2019]

1. 60% of the students do not have two-wheelers.
2. No cricketer has a two-wheeler.
3. Cricket players do not play football.

Select the correct answer using the code given below :

(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2 and 3 only
(c) 1 and 3 only (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans. (d) We know only this: the 40% who do not play cricket play football, and every footballer has a two-wheeler. About cricketers we know nothing more; a cricketer may also play football and may or may not have a two-wheeler. So none of 1, 2 or 3 can be drawn. The question asks which **cannot be drawn**, so the answer is all three, option (d).

> **Trap:** The question asks which conclusions cannot be drawn. After testing each one, make sure you mark the ones that fail, not the ones that pass.

27. Read the following statements S1 and S2 and answer the item that follows : S1 : Twice the weight of Sohan is less than the weight of Mohan or that of Rohan. S2 : Twice the weight of Rohan is greater than the weight of Mohan or that of Sohan. [2019]

Which one of the following statements is correct ?

(a) Weight of Mohan is greatest
(b) Weight of Sohan is greatest

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Topic 1 · Reading comprehension I: inference, assumption, implication and conclusion

Inference questions ask what **must follow** from the passage; assumption questions ask what the author **takes for granted** without saying. Both reward staying inside the text: an option that is true in real life but not supported by the passage is wrong. Watch the words "only", "solely", "all", "never" and "inevitably". UPSC uses them to turn a supported idea into an **extreme** one. I check every such word against the passage before marking.

A · UPSC QUESTIONS, 2026 TO 2014

PASSAGE · QUESTIONS 1–2 [2026]

'Kalagram', the cultural village set up at the Maha Kumbh Mela, unfolded as a mosaic of India's diverse regions, each represented by seven meticulously crafted 'Sanskriti Angans'—stepping through the grand portal was like entering another world. These thematic zones, inspired by iconic temples like the Dakshineshwar Kali Temple and the Brahma Mandir, were treasure troves of regional artistry. Bengal's Pattachitra paintings, Assam's bamboo crafts, Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur paintings, and Madhya Pradesh's tribal sculpture—all were showcased in these living galleries where 230 master artisans breathed life into them using age-old techniques, their hands shaping India's ancient history into creations to behold.

1. Which of the following conclusions are valid? [2026]

1. Seven Sanskriti Angans, representing different regions of India, had been showcased in Kalagram.
2. Regional artistry was recognised via the inspiration drawn from iconic temples.
3. India's ancient history had been crafted by the contemporary craftsmanship of 230 artisans into creations to behold.
4. Art forms from all regions of India had been showcased in these living galleries.
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) 1 and 2 only (b) 2, 3 and 4
(c) 1, 2 and 4 (d) 1 and 3

Ans. (a) We are asked which conclusions the passage actually supports, so hold each one up against the text. Conclusion 1 is almost a copy of the opening: India's regions are "represented by seven meticulously crafted 'Sanskriti Angans'". Conclusion 2 matches the next line: the zones, "inspired by iconic temples", were "treasure troves of regional artistry". Conclusion 3 slips on one word: the artisans used "age-old techniques", and calling them **contemporary** turns that upside down. Conclusion 4 says art from **all** regions, but the passage names only four States; **diverse is not the same as all**. So 1 and 2 only, option (a).

Trap: "Diverse" does not mean "all". When the passage names a few examples, an option that says every region, every State or all forms has gone beyond it.

2. Which one of the following statements is not correct? [2026]

(a) Paintings from four States of India have been mentioned.
(b) Stepping into Kalagram is likened to stepping into another world.
(c) The Angans have been described as living galleries.
(d) Kalagram is divided into thematic zones, inspired by well-known temples of India.

Ans. (a) This one asks for the statement that is **not** correct, so we are hunting for the false one. Count the paintings carefully: the passage names "Bengal's Pattachitra paintings" and "Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur paintings", only two. Assam appears for bamboo crafts and Madhya Pradesh for tribal sculpture, which are not paintings. So (a), "paintings from four States", is the false statement. Four States are mentioned, but **not four for paintings**. The rest are faithful: "like entering another world" gives (b), "living galleries" gives (c), and "thematic zones, inspired by iconic temples" gives (d).

PASSAGE · QUESTIONS 3–4 [2026]

Sport is not just about winning medals or getting jobs through a sports quota. Today's generation is struggling with issues like depression and anxiety. Parents often say that their children are inactive and rarely

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leave the house. Sport can help tackle these problems. From sport you can learn time management, fitness, teamwork, coordination, and so much more. We need to develop a culture in which sport is seen as a way of life—a path to building a healthier, happier society.

3. Which of the following conclusions are valid? [2026]

1. Sport is more than just games; it is a way of life.
2. Sport can help mitigate the problems of seclusion among the young.
3. Earning laurels in sport can help one secure a job on the basis of an assigned quota.
4. Standard corporate sector skills cannot be learnt through sport.
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) 1 and 3 only (b) 2 and 4 only
(c) 1, 2 and 4 (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans. (d) Test each conclusion against the passage. Conclusion 1 is the closing thought: sport should be "seen as a way of life". Conclusion 2 picks up "children are inactive and rarely leave the house", the seclusion that "sport can help tackle". Conclusion 3 rests on the first line, which mentions "getting jobs through a sports quota"; the passage says sport is not *just* about that, which still accepts that it happens. Conclusion 4 says corporate skills **cannot** be learnt through sport, yet the passage lists "time management, fitness, teamwork, coordination", exactly the skills any office wants. So 4 contradicts the text, and the answer is 1, 2 and 3, option (d).

4. Which of the following statements is/are correct? [2026]

1. Parents are not encouraging enough when it comes to children playing sport.
2. Participation in sporting activities can help develop life skills.
3. Sport as a way of life can help evolve the very nature of society itself.
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) 1 and 3 (b) 2 and 3
(c) 2 only (d) 3 only

Ans. (b) Statement 2 is straight from the line "From sport you can learn time management, fitness, teamwork, coordination, and so much more"; those are life skills. Statement 3 matches the ending, sport as a way of life is "a path to building a healthier, happier society", which is a change in society itself. Statement 1 is the trap: parents only *report* that their children are inactive, and **the passage never blames them** for it. Do not turn the person reporting a problem into its cause. So 2 and 3, option (b).

PASSAGE · QUESTIONS 5–7 [2026]

When SARS-CoV-2 was first detected in 2019, it was a truly novel virus for the world. At that time, no one in the world had been exposed to SARS-CoV-2 or had specific immunity against it. In contrast, people across the world have been exposed to HMPV for decades and the virus is well-studied. HMPV and SARS-CoV-2 belong to two very different virus families with fundamentally different characteristics and epidemiology, with strong seasonality seen in HMPV, unlike SARS-CoV-2. Both viruses cause different severity of symptoms, particularly over the long term, and the affected population segments do not fully overlap. In general, HMPV causes milder illness with deaths being very rare and with no long-term post-viral symptoms.

5. Which of the following conclusions is/are valid? [2026]

1. Though SARS-CoV-2 and HMPV are similar viruses with somewhat different epidemiology, the former became a pandemic because it was novel and people had not been exposed to it in the past.
2. The two viruses have fundamentally different impacts on human populations and should not therefore be dealt with in a similar manner.
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (b) The whole passage is built on contrast: the viruses "belong to two very different virus families with fundamentally different characteristics and epidemiology". Conclusion 2 follows naturally: different impacts, so they should not be handled the same way. Conclusion 1 starts by calling them **similar viruses**, which flatly contradicts "very different virus families". One

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Topic 2 · Reading comprehension II: central idea, author's view, message and passage facts

Central-idea and message questions ask what the whole passage is **about**; the right option covers every part of the passage and adds nothing new. Statement questions ask what the passage **says**, so check each statement line by line. Wrong options are usually **too narrow** (one detail of the passage), **too broad** (a general truth beyond it) or **reversed** (the opposite of a detail). I read the first and last sentences of the passage again before choosing.

A · UPSC QUESTIONS, 2026 TO 2014

PASSAGE · QUESTIONS 1–2 [2026]

> How is deflation done? Most countries use a method called 'double deflation', where input and output prices are deflated separately. Consider a manufacturer importing oil for use in production. If oil prices fall, output prices do not and quantities remain the same, real value added should not change. But if the same deflator is used for inputs and outputs, as in India, it would look as if the manufacturer had become more productive.

1. Which of the following statements is/are correct? [2026]

1. Real value should not change in the instance of static output cost and unchanged quantities against falling oil prices.
2. Deflators are to be used separately for inputs and outputs, and this is a practice universally adopted by all economies.
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (d) Read statement 1 against the oil example word by word. The passage says that if oil prices fall while "output prices do not and quantities remain the same, real **value added** should not change". Statement 1 talks of "real value" and "static output cost", and **value added and output cost are not the same things** as real value and output prices; the official key treats the statement as a distortion. Statement 2 says double deflation is used by **all** economies, but the passage says "most countries", and India is the exception. Neither, option (d).

Trap: Statement 2 changes "most countries" into "all economies". One quantifier word is enough to make a statement false.

2. Which of the following assumptions is/are valid? [2026]

1. Deflation strategies can be used to make manufacturers appear to be doing better than they actually are.
2. When input and output prices are both deflated against a single input price, it is referred to as 'double deflation'.
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) 1 only (b) 2 only
(c) Both 1 and 2 (d) Neither 1 nor 2

Ans. (a) If India uses one deflator for inputs and outputs, "it would look as if the manufacturer had become more productive". So the method can make firms look better than they are, assumption 1. Assumption 2 reverses the definition: double deflation means inputs and outputs "are deflated separately", not against a single price. Only 1, option (a).

PASSAGE · QUESTIONS 3–4 [2026]

> Previous waves of customer-service technology, including email and those pesky voice menus, stoked concerns of job losses, only for them to fail to materialise. AI could yet prove different. And if it does, its effects may be salutary. Human agents could be freed up to spend more time on creative and rewarding tasks, like using feedback to make products and services better—and thereby spend less time listening to irate customers!

3. Which one among the following statements most appropriately reflects the point of view of the given passage? [2026]

(a) If AI were to take over customer service, there would be no work left for human subjects to do.

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Topic 3 · Number system, basic algebra, clocks and calendars

This is the biggest topic in CSAT quant. UPSC loves **unit digits, remainders, divisibility, HCF–LCM and digit puzzles**, with one clock or calendar question most years. My advice: don't do long division in the exam. Almost every question here falls to a pattern: a **cycle of unit digits**, a **factorisation**, or a quick test with small numbers. Watch for the words 'can be', 'definitely', 'distinct' and 'integer'. They decide many answers.

A · UPSC QUESTIONS, 2026 TO 2014

1. **The weight of X, in kg, is denoted by X. The weights of A, B, C, D, P, Q, R and S are measured. Given : A + B + C + D = 17 A + C = 6 P + Q + S + D = 15 P + Q + R + B = 17 P = R and Q = S Which one of the following statements is correct?** [2026]

(a) B and D together weigh less than the total weight of P and Q.
(b) P and Q together weigh more than the total weight of A and C.
(c) P weighs more than Q.
(d) Q weighs more than P.

Ans. (b) Many letters, but only a few facts matter, so write them one under the other and look for what cancels. From A + B + C + D = 17 and A + C = 6, take one from the other: B + D = 11. Now use P = R and Q = S in the last two lines. The third line becomes P + Q + Q + D = 15 and the fourth P + Q + P + B = 17. Add them: 3P + 3Q + B + D = 32. We know B + D = 11, so 3(P + Q) = 21 and P + Q = 7. Now test the options. (b) says P + Q is more than A + C: 7 is more than 6, so (b) is true. (a) says B + D is less than P + Q, but 11 is more than 7, so false. (c) and (d) compare P and Q, but we only know their total, so neither can be claimed. The trap is to try to find every weight; you only need the totals that the options ask about.

2. **X, Y and Z jump forward 4', 6' and 5', respectively. At 8 AM, they all land on mark 199'. How many times will they all land on the same mark (need not be at the same moment) between mark 195' and 1000', if all of them cross mark 1000' by 9 AM?** [2026]

(a) 11 (b) 12
(c) 13 (d) 14

Ans. (d) All three start together at 199'. X lands on every 4th foot, Y on every 6th and Z on every 5th from there. They share a mark again only after a distance that 4, 6 and 5 all divide: the LCM, 60 feet. So the common marks are 199, 259, 319, and so on, adding 60 each time. How many fit up to 1000'? 199 + 60 × 13 = 979, and the next, 1039, is past 1000. So the marks are 199 plus 0 to 13 jumps of 60: 14 marks, option (d). The window starts at 195', so 199' itself counts. Option (c), 13, is the trap: it forgets to count the **starting mark 199'**.

How to solve: Common marks repeat every LCM of the step sizes. Count them as (last − first) ÷ LCM + 1, and remember the +1 for the starting mark.

3. **A toy T jumps forward or backward. In each forward jump, it moves 5' forward whereas in each backward jump, it moves 2' backward. If in 31 jumps, T moves exactly 15' forward, then what is the difference of the number of forward and backward jumps?** [2026]

(a) 6 (b) 7
(c) 8 (d) 9

Ans. (d) Two facts, two unknowns. Call the forward jumps f and the backward jumps b. There are 31 jumps, so f + b = 31. The toy ends 15 feet forward, so 5f − 2b = 15. The easy way is to try values: if f = 11, then b = 20, and 5 × 11 − 2 × 20 = 55 − 40 = 15. It fits. So 11 forward and 20 backward, a difference of 9: option (d). (Algebra gives the same: put b = 31 − f, so 7f = 77 and f = 11.) The trap is to give one of the counts instead of the difference; read the last line again.

4. **If $10^m \times 1000 \times n = 75^{25} \times 25^{32} \times 32^{75}$, where n is not divisible by 10, then the value of m is** [2026]

(a) 101 (b) 111
(c) 121 (d) 131

Ans. (b) A 10 is made of one 2 and one 5, so count the 2s and 5s on the right side. $75 = 3 \times 5 \times 5$, so 75^{25} gives 50 fives. $25 = 5 \times 5$, so 25^{32} gives 64 fives. $32 = 2^5$, so 32^{75} gives 375 twos. Fives: 50 + 64 = 114, and there are far more twos, so the right side has exactly 114 tens, and what is left (n) is not divisible

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by 10. On the left, $10^m \times 1000$ is 10 raised to m + 3. So m + 3 = 114 and m = 111: option (b). The trap is to forget the **1000**, which hides three more tens, and answer 114.

CONNECT THE DOTS

Counting one prime factor is the same skill as zeros at the end and powers in a factorial: see Q 37 [2024], Q 40 [2024] and Q 94 [2022].

5. For $1/3 < x < y < 2$, which of the following statements is/are always correct? [2026]

I. $x + 1/x < y + 1/y$ II. $\sqrt{(1 + y^2)}/y < \sqrt{(1 + x^2)}/x$
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) I only (b) II only
(c) Both I and II (d) Neither I nor II

Ans. (b) Test with easy numbers inside the range from 1/3 to 2. Statement I says x + 1/x is always less than y + 1/y when x < y. Try x = 1/2 and y = 1: x + 1/x = 2·5, y + 1/y = 2. Here 2·5 is not less than 2, so I is not always true. (x + 1/x falls until 1 and then rises.) Statement II: $\sqrt{(1 + y^2)}/y$ is the same as $\sqrt{(1/y^2 + 1)}$. As y grows, $1/y^2$ shrinks, so this value keeps falling. So the bigger number, y, gives the smaller value, and II is always true. Answer: II only, option (b). The trap is to test only numbers above 1, where statement I happens to work; the word **always** means checking below 1 too.

6. What is the minimum number of times one needs to measure to get 298 litres of water from a tank, if the measuring cylinders have capacities 1 litre, 6 litres, 25 litres and 100 litres? [2026]

(a) 4 (b) 5
(c) 9 (d) 13

Ans. (b) Adding only, the best way to make 298 is 2 × 100 + 2 × 25 + 8 × 6, which needs 12 measures, and that is not an option. So think like a person at a tank: you may also pour water back. 298 = 300 − 2. Fill 100 litres three times, then take out 1 litre twice. That is 5 measures: option (b). Could it be 4? Using the cylinders four times cannot reach 298 (for example 3 × 100 − 1 = 299, or 3 × 100 − 6 = 294). The trap is to think only of adding, which leads to (c) or (d).

7. Three variables x, y and z take values 2, 3, 4 or 5 such that their values are always distinct. If M and N denote the largest possible value and the smallest possible value, respectively, for the expression {(x × y) + z}; then M − N is [2026]

(a) 11 (b) 12
(c) 13 (d) 14

Ans. (c) To make x × y + z as big as possible, multiply the two biggest numbers and add the next: 5 × 4 + 3 = 23. Check the other ways: 5 × 3 + 4 = 19 and 4 × 3 + 5 = 17, both smaller. So M = 23. To make it as small as possible, multiply the two smallest and add the next smallest: 2 × 3 + 4 = 10. (2 × 4 + 3 = 11 and 3 × 4 + 2 = 14 are bigger.) So N = 10. M − N = 13: option (c). The trap for N is to add 5 instead of 4 out of habit; once 2 and 3 are used, the smallest left is 4.

8. In an objective type question paper, 5 marks are awarded for a correct answer and 2 marks are deducted for a wrong answer. A student attempted all the questions and got a score of 69. Had he been awarded 4 marks for a correct answer and 1 mark deducted for a wrong answer, he would have scored 84. How many questions were there in the question paper? [2026]

(a) 99 (b) 81
(c) 84 (d) 79

Ans. (b) Let c be correct answers and w wrong ones. First scheme: 5c − 2w = 69. Second scheme: 4c − w = 84. From the second, w = 4c − 84. Put it in the first: 5c − 8c + 168 = 69, so 3c = 99 and c = 33. Then w = 132 − 84 = 48. He attempted all questions, so the paper had 33 + 48 = 81 questions: option (b). Check: 5 × 33 − 2 × 48 = 165 − 96 = 69, and 4 × 33 − 48 = 84. Option (c), 84, is just the second score, the trap for a hurried eye.

9. The digit in the unit place of the number $6^{129} \times 7^{307}$ is [2026]

(a) 2 (b) 4
(c) 8 (d) 6

Ans. (c) The unit digit of a product depends only on the unit digits. Every power of 6 ends in 6. Powers of 7 end in a repeating cycle of four: 7, 9, 3, 1. Divide 307 by 4: 76 full cycles and remainder 3, so 7^{307} ends like 7^3, in 3. Now 6 × 3 = 18, so the product ends in 8: option (c). The trap is to forget that the cycle of 7 is of length four and simply multiply 6 × 7 = 42, giving 2, which is option (a).

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(c) 4:20 p.m. (d) 4:30 p.m.

Ans. (b) Each light spends equal time on green and red, so a full green-to-green cycle is **double** the given time: 50 s, 78 s and 120 s. They are all green together again after the LCM of these. $50 = 2 \times 5^2$, $78 = 2 \times 3 \times 13$ and $120 = 2^3 \times 3 \times 5$, so the LCM is $2^3 \times 3 \times 5^2 \times 13 = 7800$ seconds, which is 130 minutes. 2:00 p.m. plus 2 hours 10 minutes is 4:10 p.m., option (b). The trap is to take the LCM of 25, 39 and 60; that tells you when they all **change colour**, which could be turning red, not green.

Trap: "Takes 25 seconds to change from green to red" is half a cycle. Green comes back only after green and red both pass, so double each time before taking the LCM.

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75. **40 children are standing in a circle and one of them (say child-1) has a ring. The ring is passed clockwise. Child-1 passes on to child-2, child-2 passes on to child-4, child-4 passes on to child-7 and so on. After how many such changes (including child-1) will the ring be in the hands of child-1 again ?** [2023]

(a) 14 (b) 15
(c) 16 (d) 17

Ans. (b) Watch the jumps: 1 to 2 is one step, 2 to 4 two steps, 4 to 7 three steps. So after k passes the ring has moved $1 + 2 + \ldots + k = k(k + 1) \div 2$ places. It is back with child-1 when this is a multiple of 40, that is, when $k(k + 1)$ is a multiple of 80. Try values: $14 \times 15 = 210$ no, $15 \times 16 = 240 = 3 \times 80$ yes. So 15 changes, option (b). Options (a), (c) and (d) do not hit a multiple of 80 first.

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76. **What is the remainder if 2^{192} is divided by 6 ?** [2023]

(a) 0 (b) 1
(c) 2 (d) 4

Ans. (d) Large powers almost always settle into a short cycle of remainders, so list a few. $2 \div 6$ leaves 2, 4 leaves 4, 8 leaves 2, 16 leaves 4. The remainders simply alternate: odd powers leave 2 and even powers leave 4. 192 is even, so the remainder is 4, option (d). Option (c) is the odd-power value. Options (a) and (b) cannot happen, because a power of 2 is never a multiple of 3, so never of 6.

---

77. **AB and CD are 2-digit numbers. Multiplying AB with CD results in a 3-digit number DEF. Adding DEF to another 3-digit number GHI results in 975. Further A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I are distinct digits. If E = 0, F = 8, then what is A + B + C equal to?** [2023]

(a) 6 (b) 7
(c) 8 (d) 9

Ans. (a) The product AB × CD is only a three-digit number, D08, so both two-digit numbers must be small. Try the smallest sensible pair: $12 \times 34 = 408$. That fits beautifully: D = 4, E = 0, F = 8. Then GHI = 975 − 408 = 567. Check that all nine digits are different: 1, 2, 3, 4, 0, 8, 5, 6, 7. They are. So A + B + C = 1 + 2 + 3 = 6, option (a). A small product means small factors, so start trying from the bottom, not the top.

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78. **An Identity Card has the number ABCDEFG, not necessarily in that order, where each letter represents a distinct digit (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 only). The number is divisible by 9. After deleting the first digit from the right, the resulting number is divisible by 6. After deleting two digits from the right of original number, the resulting number is divisible by 5. After deleting three digits from the right of original number, the resulting number is divisible by 4. After deleting four digits from the right of original number, the resulting number is divisible by 3. After deleting five digits from the right of original number, the resulting number is divisible by 2. Which of the following is a possible value for the sum of the middle three digits of the number?** [2022]

(a) 8 (b) 9
(c) 11 (d) 12

Ans. (a) Long question, simple idea: read it from the left. Deleting digits from the right leaves the first few digits, so the first 2 digits form an even number, the first 3 a multiple of 3, the first 4 a multiple of 4, the first 5 a multiple of 5 and the first 6 a multiple of 6. The whole number, with digit sum $1 + 2 + 4 + 5 + 7 + 8 + 9 = 36$, is divisible by 9 automatically. The fifth digit must be 5 (there is no 0), and the 2nd, 4th and 6th digits must be even. Working through the options leaves two numbers: 7412589 and 1472589. In 7412589 the middle three digits (3rd, 4th, 5th) are 1, 2 and 5, adding to 8, option (a); the other number gives 14, which is not offered. The trap is the phrase "first digit from the right", which is the **units digit**, not the leading one.

[2022]

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Topic 4 · Percentages, profit and loss, simple and compound interest

Percentage questions in CSAT are short but full of traps. The base changes quietly: '20% less than P' is not '20% more than Q'. Always turn percentages into **multiplying factors** (a 20% rise = ×1·2, a 20% fall = ×0·8) and multiply them. Take 100 as the starting value whenever none is given.

A · UPSC QUESTIONS, 2026 TO 2014

1. A person saves 10% of his salary every month. If his salary increases by 12% and the expenditure increases by 10%, then what will be the change in his saving per month? [2026]

(a) 20% increase (b) 30% increase
(c) 03% decrease (d) 02% decrease

Ans. (b) With percentages, the friendliest start is a salary of 100. He saves 10%, so he saves 10 and spends 90. Now apply each change to the right thing. The salary rises by 12%, so it becomes 112. The **expenditure** rises by 10%, and 10% of 90 is 9, so he now spends 99. His new saving is 112 − 99 = 13. Saving went from 10 to 13, a rise of 3 on a base of 10, which is a **30% increase**: option (b). Option (a), 20%, and the decreases in (c) and (d) come from applying the 10% to the salary instead of to the spending, or from comparing the two percentages directly (12 − 10 = 2). The trap is that small percentage changes in salary and spending make a large percentage change in a small saving. Always work it out with actual numbers; a salary of 100 is unrealistic, sadly, but very convenient.

How to solve: Take salary = 100. Then saving = salary − spending, so apply each percentage to its own part (12% to 100, 10% to 90) and compare the two savings.

CONNECT THE DOTS
Watch the base of a percentage. The same idea decides Q 15 [2021] and Q 5 [2024].

2. A shopkeeper employs a delivery boy and gives him a motorcycle for home delivery. For every delivery, the boy is given ₹ 5. At the end of the day, he also gets ₹ 2 for every kilometre of the distance covered in the day. The boy wants to earn more than ₹ 500 a day, but does not want to travel more than 100 km. Which of the following numbers of deliveries would definitely meet his target? [2026]

(a) 80
(b) 85
(c) 90
(d) The question cannot be answered due to insufficient data

Ans. (d) Write his day's earnings in plain words: ₹5 for each delivery, plus ₹2 for each kilometre. He wants more than ₹500, and he rides at most 100 km. Now read the key word in the question: which number of deliveries would "**definitely**" meet his target? Definitely means it must work no matter how many kilometres he rides, even very few. With 90 deliveries he earns ₹450 from deliveries, and he crosses ₹500 only if he rides more than 25 km. With 85 or 80 deliveries he needs even more kilometres. The question never tells us how far he rides, so none of these numbers is certain to work. That gives option (d). Options (a), (b) and (c) are all possible on a day with enough kilometres, but none is definite. The trap is to assume he rides the full 100 km; nothing says so, and "definitely" asks you to plan for the worst day.

3. The price (p) of a commodity is first increased by k%; then decreased by k%; again increased by k%; and again decreased by k%. If the new price is q, then what is the relation between p and q? [2025]

(a) $p(10^4 - k^2)^2 = q \times 10^8$
(b) $p(10^4 - k^2)^2 = q \times 10^4$
(c) $p(10^4 - k^2) = q \times 10^4$
(d) $p(10^4 - k^2) = q \times 10^8$

Ans. (a) The options look heavy with powers, but there is a very easy first test: imagine k = 0. Then nothing changes and q must equal p. In (a), the left side becomes $p \times 10^8$ and the right side $q \times 10^8$, so p = q, fine. In (c), $p \times 10^4 = q \times 10^4$, also fine. In (b) and (d), the powers of 10 do not match, so p would not equal q; both are out. Now choose between (a) and (c) by thinking about one round of "up k%, then down k%". Up k% multiplies the price by (100 + k)/100; down k% multiplies it by (100 − k)/100. Together that is $(100 + k)(100 - k)/10{,}000 = (10^4 - k^2)/10^4$. A quick check: up 10% and down 10% turns 100 into 99, and (10,000 − 100)/10,000 = 0·99. The question has **two such rounds**, so the factor comes twice: $q = p \times (10^4 - k^2)^2 \div 10^8$. That is option (a).

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Option (c) is the trap: it is the answer for only one round.

4. The petrol price shot up by 10% as a result of the hike in crude oil prices. The price of petrol before the hike was ₹ 90 per litre. A person travels 2200 km every month and his car gives a mileage of 16 km per litre. By how many km should he reduce his travel if he wants to maintain his expenditure at the previous level? [2025]

(a) 180 km (b) 200 km
(c) 220 km (d) 240 km

Ans. (b) Ask what must stay the same: his spending. Spending is price × litres. If the price goes up by 10%, from ₹90 to ₹99, the litres he buys must go down so that the product stays the same. Litres must become 90/99 = 10/11 of before. Since his car's mileage does not change, his distance falls in the same ratio: 2,200 × 10/11 = 2,000 km. So he must cut his travel by 2,200 − 2,000 = 200 km: option (b). Notice that the mileage of 16 km per litre is not needed; it cancels out. Option (c), 220 km, is the trap: it cuts travel by 10%, as if a 10% rise in price needs a 10% cut in use. It needs a smaller cut, 1/11, because the cut is taken from the higher price. Options (a) and (d) do not fit.

5. P's salary is 20% lower than Q's salary which is 20% lower than R's salary. By how much percent is R's salary more than P's salary? [2024]

(a) 48·75% (b) 56·25%
(c) 60·50% (d) 62·25%

Ans. (b) Start from the top of the chain with an easy number. Let R's salary be 100. Q's is 20% lower, so 80. P's is 20% lower than Q's: 20% of 80 is 16, so P earns 64. R earns 100 − 64 = 36 more than P. Now read the question carefully: "by how much percent is R's salary more than **P's**?" So the base is P's salary, 64. 36 ÷ 64 = 0·5625, which is 56·25%: option (b). Option (a), 48·75%, and options (c) and (d) do not come from 36 ÷ 64. The trap is to divide by R's salary and say 36%, or to add 20 + 20 = 40%; neither is among the options, which makes students guess. Whenever you see "more than X", divide by X.

Fastest way: Two 20% cuts in a row multiply: 0·8 × 0·8 = 0·64. So P = 64 when R = 100, and R is 36 more than 64.

6. A number is mistakenly divided by 4 instead of multiplying by 4. What is the percentage change in the result due to this mistake? [2024]

(a) 25% (b) 50%
(c) 72·75% (d) 93·75%

Ans. (d) Use a very small, easy number. Take the number 4. The correct result, multiplying by 4, is 16. The mistaken result, dividing by 4, is 1. The result changed by 16 − 1 = 15. "Percentage change in the result" is measured from the **correct** result, 16. So 15 ÷ 16 = 0·9375, a change of 93·75%: option (d). This works for any number, because multiplying by 4 and dividing by 4 always differ by a factor of 16. Option (a), 25%, and option (b), 50%, come from thinking about the 4 alone, and (c) is a near-random figure. The trap is to measure the change from the wrong result (15 ÷ 1 = 1,500%), which is not an option and sends students guessing.

7. In an examination, 80% of students passed in English, 70% of students passed in Hindi and 15% failed in both the subjects. What is the percentage of students who failed in only one subject? [2024]

(a) 15% (b) 20%
(c) 25% (d) 35%

Ans. (b) Think of 100 students and sort them into groups. 15 failed both subjects, so 85 passed at least one. 80 passed English and 70 passed Hindi; that adds to 150, which is more than 85, because the students who passed **both** were counted twice. So those who passed both = 150 − 85 = 65. Now every student is in one of three groups: passed both (65), failed both (15), or failed only one. Failed only one = 100 − 65 − 15 = 20%: option (b). You can also count it directly: 20 failed English and 30 failed Hindi; take away the 15 who failed both from each, giving 5 + 15 = 20. Option (a), 15%, is the number who failed both, and (d), 35%, is 20 + 15, those who failed English plus those who failed both. The trap is to forget that the both-group sits inside both counts.

8. A person buys three articles P, Q and R for ₹ 3,330. If P costs 25% more than R and R costs 20% more than Q, then what is the cost of P? [2024]

(a) ₹ 1,000 (b) ₹ 1,200
(c) ₹ 1,250 (d) ₹ 1,350

Ans. (d) Chains of percentages are easiest when you start with the item that everything else is built on. Here R is built on Q, and P on R, so start with Q. Let Q = 100. R is 20% more, so R = 120. P is 25%

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Topic 9 · Statements, conclusions, syllogisms and logic

UPSC asks two or three logic questions every year: **syllogisms** ('all', 'some', 'no'), statement and conclusion, 'which must be true', and lately chains of 'if ... then' rules. My advice: draw two quick circles for every 'all' or 'some', and never use outside knowledge. A conclusion follows only if it is true in **every** picture the statements allow. 'May', 'possible' and 'can be' need just one picture.

A · UPSC QUESTIONS, 2026 TO 2014

1. **There are four statements X, Y, Z and W. Their relations are as follows : If X is incorrect, then so is Z; if Y is incorrect, then W is correct; if W is correct, then X is incorrect.** [2026]

Which of the following is/are correct?
I. If X is correct, then so is Y.
II. If Z is correct, then it is not necessary that Y is correct.
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) I only (b) II only
(c) Both I and II (d) Neither I nor II

Ans. (a) Three "if ... then" rules, and the only safe way to use them is to turn each one around: "if A then B" always also means "if not B, then not A". So "X incorrect → Z incorrect" also says **Z correct → X correct**. "Y incorrect → W correct" also says **W incorrect → Y correct**. And "W correct → X incorrect" also says **X correct → W incorrect**. Now chain them. Statement I: X correct gives W incorrect, which gives Y correct. So I is true. Statement II: Z correct gives X correct, then W incorrect, then Y correct, so Y must be correct, and II's "not necessary" is false. Only I, option (a). The trap is to reverse a rule the wrong way, as in reading "if X then Z" as **if Z then X**; only the flipped-and-negated form is safe.

How to solve: Write each rule with its contrapositive beside it (if A then B, so if not B then not A). Then follow the arrows from the starting fact; never run an arrow backwards.

2. **Consider the following statements :** [2026]

Every red is blue. Every blue is green. Every green is yellow.

Which of the following statements denoted by P, Q and R are correct?
P. Every blue is yellow.
Q. Every red is green.
R. Every red is yellow.
Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) P and Q only (b) Q and R only
(c) P and R only (d) P, Q and R

Ans. (d) Picture nested circles: red sits inside blue, blue inside green, green inside yellow. Anything inside an inner circle is inside every circle around it. So every blue is yellow (P), every red is green (Q) and every red is yellow (R). All three follow, option (d). "Every A is B" chains pass straight along, so there is nothing to catch you here except the fear that it is too easy.

3. **Consider the following three statements, namely S1, S2 and S3: S1. Protecting the environment is an existential exigency for humans, given the impact of environmental degradation on climate change. S2. Scientific consensus has not been achieved with regard to the extent of the contribution of human intervention to climate change. S3. Environmental activism includes climate alarmism and other extremist points of view that often become the focus of climate change deniers.** [2026]

Which of the following relationships based on the statements given above is/are correct?
1. S3 is a counterpoint to S1 2. S3 is unconnected to S1 and S2 3. S2 could be the reason for S3 Select the answer using the code given below.

(a) 2 and 3 only (b) 1, 2 and 3
(c) 1 and 2 only (d) 3 only

Ans. (d) Take the three relationships one at a time. 1: S3 says some activism is extreme and gets picked on by deniers. That says nothing against S1's claim that protecting the environment is vital, so it is not a counterpoint. 2: S3 is clearly linked to S2, so "unconnected" is wrong. 3: because scientists have not agreed on how much humans cause climate change (S2), there is room for both alarmism and denial to flourish (S3), so S2 could well be a reason for S3. Only 3, option (d). A counterpoint has to

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Topic 10 · Arrangements, puzzles, ranking and counting

This is the biggest reasoning topic: seating around a table or in a row, ranks in a queue, schedules, matching people with jobs or cities, and counting the ways something can happen. Make a small grid or a line of seats before you read the options, and fill in the **fixed facts first** (a person whose seat or rank is given). For counting, decide whether order matters, then multiply for 'and' and add for 'or'.

A · UPSC QUESTIONS, 2026 TO 2014

1. **How many words can one form by shuffling the letters of the word QUEUE, if Q is always followed by U? The words thus formed need not necessarily have any meaning.** [2026]

(a) 6 (b) 8
(c) 10 (d) 12

Ans. (d) "Q is always followed by U" means Q and U stick together, so tie them into one block, QU. The letters of QUEUE then become four items: QU, U, E, E. Four items can be lined up in $4 \times 3 \times 2 \times 1 = 24$ ways, but the two Es look the same, so every word is counted twice: $24 \div 2 = 12$, option (d). Do not halve again for the Us: one of them is locked inside the block, so the **block and the loose U are different items**.

How to solve: For "X always followed by Y", glue them into one block, count arrangements of the blocks, and divide by the factorial of each repeated letter outside the block.

2. **Eight persons P, Q, R, S, T, U, V and W sit around a round table in eight different seats placed with equal distance between any two consecutive seats. Both P and R are adjacent to Q. Both T and R are adjacent to S. Both U and W are adjacent to V. S and W are on opposite chairs. If while going in the clockwise direction around the table from P, one meets R before T, then how many persons shall Q cross while moving in the clockwise direction around the table before meeting W?** [2026]

(a) 5 (b) 4
(c) 2 (d) 1

Ans. (a) Join the adjacency clues into a run. Q sits between P and R, and S sits between R and T, so we have the run P, Q, R, S, T. Going clockwise from P we meet R before T, so number the seats clockwise: P 1, Q 2, R 3, S 4, T 5. U, V and W fill 6, 7 and 8, with V in the middle at 7. W must face S (seat 4), and the seat opposite 4 is 8, so W is at 8 and U at 6. Clockwise from Q we pass R, S, T, U and V before reaching W: 5 people, option (a).

3. **The top of a table is rectangular and its dimensions are 6′ × 10′. Two rectangular portions of the table top are painted in blue colour; both these portions have dimensions 2.5′ × 8′ and each of them has exactly two sides common with two edges of the table top. If the table is fixed to the ground and the remaining portion of the table top is painted in white, how many different patterns are possible when observed from above?** [2026]

(a) 2 (b) 4
(c) 6 (d) 8

Ans. (b) Let the sizes do the work. Each blue strip is 2.5′ × 8′, and its 8′ side cannot fit along a 6′ edge, so it must run along a 10′ edge, tucked into a corner (it shares two edges with the table). Two strips on the same 10′ edge would need 16′ and would overlap, so there is one strip along each 10′ edge. Each strip can sit at the left or right end of its edge: $2 \times 2 = 4$ patterns, option (b). The table is fixed, so mirror images count as different patterns.

4. **There are four types of weights, namely 1 kg, 2 kg, 5 kg and 10 kg. What is the maximum number of different ways one can measure 20 kg, if at least eight but not more than eleven weights of 1 kg are to be used while measuring?** [2026]

(a) 7 (b) 8
(c) 9 (d) 10

Ans. (b) Fix the number of 1 kg weights and count what is left. With eight, we need 12 kg from 2, 5 and 10: 10 + 2, 5 + 5 + 2, or six 2s, which is 3 ways. With nine, we need 11: only 5 + 2 + 2 + 2, 1 way. With ten, we need 10: 10, 5 + 5, or five 2s, 3 ways. With eleven, we need 9: only 5 + 2 + 2, 1 way. Total 3 + 1 + 3 + 1 = 8, option (b). A handy check: an odd leftover needs exactly one 5, because 2s and 10s are even.

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