



GMAT® RC Practice Set - 1

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Note: These 2 sample passages are in addition to the 15 on the RC Practice Set so you will get 15 new passages when you buy the Practice Set. These passages will not be repeated in the same.

Introduction

Reading Comprehension (RC) is perhaps one of the most difficult to improve areas on the GMAT. Unlike Sentence Correction or Critical Reasoning – sections in which there are several strategies that can appreciably improve your performance – there is no special strategy you can use for Reading Comprehension. For those who like to read and who have been exposed to different types of books, this section can be a breeze whereas for those who are not too 'literally' inclined, this section can be a major problem area. Unfortunately, most students fall in the latter category.

So what should one do then?

The single best way to improve your performance in the RC section is by practicing as many passages as you can, especially from diverse subject areas. While there is a lot of practice content available for SC and CR, we felt there was no similar practice material available for RC. Even the passages in the OG are not enough, plus a lot of them have too many questions which makes them non-representative of the actual GMAT.

This is the first in a series of RC practice sets that we will be coming up with over the next few months. Each of these sets is designed to closely mimic the GMAT passages in terms of subject matter, length, and question types.

Here are some of the key features of this book:

- Passages are a mix of difficulty level
- Topic & Passage Map provided for each passage
- Average of 3 questions for a short passage and 4 questions for a long passage – the same as on the actual GMAT
- Questions are a mix of Inference, Global, Detail and some other miscellaneous ones as tested on the GMAT
- Detailed explanations for each question

How to use this book?

This book consists of 15 passages – 10 long passages and 5 short passages. The passages are not arranged in any particular difficulty order so you can attempt them in any order that you like.

Ideally we would recommend that you do a mix of long and short passages. We also suggest that you do not attempt too many passages at a stretch since the mind tends to get tired quickly while practicing Reading Comprehension; four

passages at a stretch should be ideal and this is the number that you will most likely see on the actual GMAT as well.

Try to complete each passage in roughly 9 minutes (both to read and to answer the questions). If you think this time is too little, in our experience it takes most students around 7 minutes to complete each passage, so 9 should be more than enough.

Once you complete one practice set move on to the next. By the time you complete all the practice sets you would have attempted close to 90-100 passages and we can guarantee that anything that the GMAT throws at you after that will not catch you off guard. Remember that RC is all about perseverance and practice.

As always we would love to have your feedback on whether you found this book useful; do mail us the same on feedback@aristotleprep.com

Good luck!

PRACTICE SET 1

Sample Copy

Passage 1

Is there any knowledge in the world which is so certain that no reasonable man could doubt it? This question, which at first sight might not seem difficult, is really one of the most difficult that can be asked. When we have realized the obstacles in the way of a straightforward and confident answer, we shall be well launched on the study of philosophy—for philosophy is merely the attempt to answer such ultimate questions, not carelessly and dogmatically, as we do in ordinary life and even in the sciences, but critically, after exploring all that makes such questions puzzling, and after realizing all the vagueness and confusion that underlie our ordinary ideas.

In daily life, we assume as certain many things which, on a closer scrutiny, are found to be so full of apparent contradictions that only a great amount of thought enables us to know what it is that we really may believe. In the search for certainty, it is natural to begin with our present experiences, and in some sense, no doubt, knowledge is to be derived from them. But any statement as to what it is that our immediate experiences make us know is very likely to be wrong. It seems to me that I am now sitting in a chair, at a table of a certain shape, on which I see sheets of paper with writing or print. By turning my head I see out of the window buildings and clouds and the sun. I believe that the sun is about ninety-three million miles from the earth; that it is a hot globe many times bigger than the earth; that, owing to the earth's rotation, it rises every morning, and will continue to do so for an indefinite time in the future. I believe that, if any other normal person comes into my room, he will see the same chairs and tables and books and papers as I see, and that the table which I see is the same as the table which I feel pressing against my arm. All this seems to be so evident as to be hardly worth stating, except in answer to a man who doubts whether I know anything. Yet all this may be reasonably doubted, and all of it requires much careful discussion before we can be sure that we have stated it in a form that is wholly true.

- 1) According to the information in the passage, which of the following can be inferred about the manner in which we attempt to answer questions in our day to day life?
 - A. Some of these questions may not have an answer at all
 - B. What we think is the answer to a question may, in fact, not be the answer
 - C. Sometimes we allow dogma to affect our thinking while arriving at an answer
 - D. We tend to be satisfied with the answers, even if they appear vague and unclear
 - E. We always make a lot of assumptions while arriving at an answer

- 2) Suppose you state that 'you are sitting in a garden observing a yellow butterfly'. According to the passage:
 - A. Your statement could be doubted
 - B. The butterfly may actually be a blue one
 - C. The butterfly may not be there at all
 - D. You have been dogmatic in making that statement
 - E. You are correct in making that statement

3) The first paragraph of the passage is primarily concerned with?

- A. discussing what is the most difficult question to answer in this world
- B. defining and differentiating a field of study
- C. stating that we tend to get careless while answering difficult questions
- D. concluding that what appears to be a fact could actually be doubted
- E. proving the superiority of a particular field of study

Passage 2

As an instrument of intellectual culture, the study of Physics is profitable to all; as bearing upon special functions, its value, though not so great, is still more tangible. Why, for example, should Members of Parliament be ignorant of the subjects concerning which they are called upon to legislate? In this land of practical physics, why should they be unable to form an independent opinion upon a physical question? Why should the member of a parliamentary committee be left at the mercy of interested disputants when a scientific question is discussed, until he deems the nap a blessing which rescues him from the bewilderments of the committee-room? The education which does not supply the want here referred to, fails in its duty to England.

With regard to our working people, in the ordinary sense of the term 'working', the study of Physics would, I imagine, be profitable, not only as a means of intellectual culture, but also as a moral influence to woo them from pursuits which now degrade them. A man's reformation oftener depends upon the indirect, than upon the direct action of the will. The will must be exerted in the choice of employment which shall break the force of temptation by erecting a barrier against it. The drunkard, for example, is in a perilous condition if he contents himself merely with saying, or swearing, that he will avoid strong drink. His thoughts, if not attracted by another force, will revert to the public-house, and to rescue him permanently from this, you must give him an equivalent. By investing the objects of hourly intercourse with an interest which prompts reflection, new enjoyments would be opened to the working man, and every one of these would be a point of force to protect him against temptation.

- 1) What is the main purpose of the author in writing the passage?
 - A. To advocate that a particular subject be taught compulsorily nationwide
 - B. To discuss how the knowledge of a particular field of study can be used to stop men from indulging in immoral acts
 - C. To illustrate why the knowledge of a particular subject is important to everyone
 - D. To propose that the knowledge of a particular subject be a prerequisite for every Member of Parliament
 - E. To show how the common man can protect himself from temptation

- 2) Which of the following does the author suggest in the passage about the Members of Parliament?
 - A. They do not have any knowledge of Physics
 - B. They cannot be asked to legislate on matters that they are ignorant of
 - C. They prefer taking a nap to legislating on issues that they don't know much about
 - D. It is not a prerequisite that they legislate only on those matters that they have adequate knowledge of
 - E. They sometimes allow their personal interests to override the broader good of the people at large

3) Each of the following can be inferred from the information in the passage EXCEPT?

- A. The study of Physics is profitable to everyone
- B. The knowledge of Physics helps keep temptation away by educating man on the negative aspects of the same
- C. The direct action of the will is not enough to reform a man
- D. Physics can in an indirect manner be linked to the level of moral degradation in a society
- E. Man can in general be prevented from indulging in immoral acts by providing him another pursuit to channelize his energies on

Answers And Explanations

Passage 1

Topic & Scope

What comprises the study of Philosophy

Passage Map

¶ 1 starts by describing what is it that philosophy tries to do - answer questions critically.

¶ 2 goes on to state that from the point of philosophy, even the simplest things in life that we take for granted can actually be doubted and questioned

- 1) This is a Detail question that can be answered by reading lines '*not carelessly and dogmatically, as we do in ordinary life*' in the first paragraph. From these lines **(C) can easily be inferred**. The other answers all look logical on their own but none of them is actually supported by the passage.
- 2) From the last paragraph it clearly follows that even the most simplistic of our observations can be doubted. **Hence the answer has to be (A)**
- 3) The first para defines what is it that philosophy tries to do and also differentiates it from the other sciences. **Thus (B) should be the correct answer.**
 - A: While the passage does start off with this thought, the primary concern is to link this to the study of Philosophy
 - C: Too specific to be the main purpose
 - D: While the para does say this, this is not the main purpose but just a specific detail
 - E: The author is not *proving* anything in the 1st para

Passage 2

Topic

The importance of studying Physics for everyone

Passage Map

¶ 1 starts by stating how the study of Physics can be beneficial to everyone and then gives an example of the same with reference to Members of Parliament.

¶ 2 follows from para 1 and gives an example of how the study of Physics can help the common man, by engrossing him in a new interest, successfully keep temptation at bay

- 1) The author makes it clear in the first line of the passage that the study of Physics is profitable to everyone and then provides examples of how the same would benefit our Members of Parliament as well as the common man. **Hence (C) is the best answer**
 - A: The author makes no such *extreme* advocacy in the passage
 - B: While the passage does discuss this, the primary purpose of the entire passage is broader than just doing this
 - D: The author makes no such proposal
 - E: Again a specific detail from the passage but the primary purpose of the entire passage is broader than just doing this

- 2) The opening para clearly states that Members of Parliament are at times called upon to legislate on matters that they are ignorant of. Thus it is not a prerequisite that they have to be knowledgeable about the matter on which they are legislating i.e. **(D) should be the correct answer**
 - A: Extreme. It's true that some of them are ignorant of physics but this cannot be generalised to the entire group
 - B: Opposite as explained above
 - C: No such preference is mentioned in the passage
 - E: While this may be true in the real world, there is nothing in the passage to suggest the same

3) According to the last para, the knowledge of Physics can help keep temptation at bay by providing man another pursuit to channelize his energies on and NOT 'by educating him about the negative aspects of temptation'. Hence **(B) should be the correct answer**

A: This is the main idea of the passage

C: This can be inferred from these lines in the 2nd para – '*A man's reformation oftener depends upon the indirect, than upon the direct action of the will. The will must be exerted in the choice of employment which shall break the force of temptation by erecting a barrier against it*'

D and E: This is the gist of the 2nd para