



Simplifying Test Prep



eBook

Comprehensive English for IAS Exam

Introduction

This e-book is a highly recommended for the IAS Exams preparation because English is the integral component for the IAS Prelims as well as the IAS Main Exam. The reasonable knowledge of English required for the IAS Exam is little more than the common mans vocabulary knowledge. Moreover this reasonable knowledge of English is little specific and is oriented in a different direction then the knowledge required in the common parlance.

In the IAS Prelims Exam, English forms a major proportion of the General Studies Paper II CSAT and after the CSAT Paper made qualifying only, it is very much sure that the English will play a major role in getting the minimum qualifying marks. English will play a major role in obtaining the qualifying marks in the CSAT Paper. Reading Comprehension is a major part of the IAS Prelims CSAT paper and this ebook devised various techniques to attempt the attempt the reading comprehension questions.

In the IAS Main Exam also, there is a compulsory paper of the English. Though this paper is qualifying in nature but around 2% candidates fail in this paper and their rest of the papers did not evaluated at all. However brilliant and genius a candidates is, his answer sheet will not be evaluated unless he qualifies the English Compulsory Paper.

Knowledge of English is very much useful for the day to day life and the administrative job ahead in life. It is the most common interface for the whole world and especially for the Internet. Internet is the repository of the information and English helps in searching the content and equally important for understanding the minute details. Most of the Hindi Medium students fears of English and due to this perception

We hope that this e-book will be helpful in the preparation of IAS Exam and will serve the purpose.

Jagranjosh Team

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All about English for IAS Exam

Introduction

Language is an important part in any form of administrative service to effectively manage a number of issues involving day-to-day responsibilities. Thus, it is no different for Civil Services Aptitude Test (CSAT). The candidates appearing for CSAT, like any other exam, are presumed to have a reasonable knowledge of English language.

CSAT tests the candidate's English language skills the way other tests do. It will be looking for the candidate's ability to comprehend the language, context, inferences of a passage and some other very basic grades of English.

As far as CSAT English is concerned, it is one section where candidates can boost up their overall score considerably if practiced regularly. The strategies will be discussed in this e-book further as you go ahead.

This e-book also answers why is it necessary to prepare English for CSAT preliminaries and the advantages a candidate can possess by preparing English for CSAT even otherwise in the IAS Main Exam.

It is very much necessary to understand that English language skills need to be practiced everyday to do well in both the IAS Prelims and IAS Mains Exam. This is what this book will focus on till its last page.

Why study English for IAS Exam?

To score well! As simple as that!

Even though you may not require a rich vocabulary and exceptional reading ability while administering your daily work, a good knowledge of English can make you more proficient when the situation demands.

English language section in CSAT is one of the easiest sections that can yield a decent score when prepared strategically. Of course, your English language skills cannot be built over night but a few topics can be learnt very quickly. That is what makes CSAT English section one of the easiest to improve your score.

Also, it is safe not to be over-confident as English skills cannot be developed in a week.

Practice makes it perfect!

Knowledge of English can do wonders!

Not in the case of CSAT, but as a matter of fact, knowledge of English can help you in many ways as it is used as a common medium of communication across countries and industries.

If you prepare CSAT English keeping this in mind, you will reap the results for sure. The strategy should be not to prepare for a test, CSAT in this case, but for a better experience and profession.

English can do wonders to your interpersonal skills because as a language it is not only simple, but an effective communication tool unlike Mathematics that involve complex formulas and equations. After all, we communicate words which contain immense knowledge and rich information.

How is this book useful?

For any CSAT aspirant, this book brings loads of information by explaining the strategies that need to be focused on in order to crack CSAT English in its simplest form. The syllabus of CSAT English will be analyzed in great detail and then will be broken down into simpler components that will help you prepare in easiest way possible.

Much importance will be given to the Comprehension and English language Comprehension skills parts as they look tedious to many. Approaches to crack both the forms of exercises will be dealt with in detail with examples.

To make things even simpler, this book also provides insight on synonyms, antonyms, one word substitution and idioms and phrases all from the passage itself with no tricks left behind.

This book will comprehensively approach CSAT English in a way that the aspirants don't feel the burden of preparing for an exam, but enjoy and have fun while learning!

Analysis of Syllabus

Reading Comprehension

The purpose of reading comprehension is to understand how much a student comprehends what is implied in the passage by correctly identifying the meaning of words and its way of usage in a passage. Even though, if meaning of all the words in the passage may not be understood by the student with a mediocre vocabulary, he may interpret the meaning by understanding the context of the passage.

Reading Comprehensions are asked in the CSAT paper just to check the ability of the candidates to relate the various facts and figures and interpret the outcome by analysing them objectively.

It is the test of the objectivity of the candidate through the given statements. Through the English Comprehension, rationality of the candidates is checked effectively.

Comprehension - An introduction

The Comprehension is an easy way to judge the comprehending abilities of the candidates. Moreover, the inference making qualities of the candidates are also checked. Basically the idea behind the reading comprehensions is to judge the accumulating qualities of the candidates by reading the comprehension the candidates make a database of the information in their mind and through answering the questions they are compelled to use and analyse that database as per the requirement of the questions. These qualities are very much required for an officer while reading a matter or a case file.

Thus the candidates need an in-depth understanding of the passage than a mere reading of it. The passage should be comprehensively grasped to understand the undertone and mood of the author and his opinions.

In other words, answers to the comprehension questions are not readily available from the passage or a one-time of its read. The correct answers could be picked only by understanding the flow of information or ideas in the passage.

Approach

Read regularly

Reading and comprehension skills cannot be developed overnight but could be developed inherently through course of time. In order to crack the reading comprehension part and to develop reading skills, it is very much required to develop the habit of reading every day. Reading capacity increases with the passage of time and with practice. More reading does not mean that you can become the master of the reading comprehension, it is the analysing capacity of what you read makes the difference.

The more you read and try to understand, it becomes much easier to understand the language and flow of information in the passage.

What to read?

Reading newspaper is a good option but just reading hard facts that happen every day cannot be up to the mark to develop your reading skills. So it is better to prefer feature stories, opinion pieces in editorials, magazines (like India Today, Outlook, frontline, Economic and Political Weekly etc.) can help you build your reading and comprehension skills quite faster.

How to read?

To begin with, just read without paying attention to the words only if you are not very much comfortable with the language. Take a newspaper and read out moderately loud without understanding the meaning to boost your confidence. Do this for a week and then you can start paying attention to the meaning.

Opinions and feature articles can help you improve your vocabulary quickly. As you come across any new words note them down along with their meanings with the help of a dictionary. Keep a pocket notepad to note down these words so that you can refer or revise them whenever possible. This is the best possible method to develop reading comprehension skills and vocabulary.

Always keep a Dictionary while reading and see the meaning of the difficult words as and when you come across the word. Even a Mobile can help but we suggest dictionary will be more useful. Dictionary is better here in this case because while reading dictionary one can read more than one word.

Practice!

Practicing for reading comprehension doesn't necessarily mean to stop your regular reading. As time advances you must raise your time dedicated for preparation. Practice will make the candidates more comfortable with reading of text and in the long run it will increase the speed of reading which in turn increase the analysing speed.

As you advance well in your habit of regular reading, take practice reading comprehension passages and try solving them. Again, you may come across many new words that can be noted down in your note pad.

The maximum number of times that you can read the passage if it is hard is two. In that case read the passage once and then go through the questions before reading the passage for the second time.

Now keep the questions in mind while reading the passage. Preparing mock questions while reading the passage also help the candidates while answering the questions asked at the end of the passage.

Frame your questions

While reading opinion pieces, feature articles or practicing reading comprehension passages, let your thoughts flow along with the passage and understand it. Meanwhile, ask questions about the passage that demands an answer. The answers may become obvious later in the passage. If not, this unanswered part may be a question towards the end.

Some questions that are worth thinking of:

1. What could be the best possible title for the passage?
2. What is the theme of the passage?
3. What is the style/structure of the passage?

By the time you finish answering all these questions, you would be able to answer mostly any form of question from the passage.

Make notes

It is also a time saving approach to make notes while you read the passage that may help you answer the questions quickly afterwards. You may also note down the words that you don't know the meaning of.

In such cases, by understanding the context of the passage and by proper elimination of the incorrect answer options, you may increase the chances of getting the answer right.

The Triple I method:

The following explained Triple I method may help you a lot in cracking reading comprehension questions.

The triple I's are:

- a. Information
- b. Inference
- c. Invalidation

These three concepts are not new and you may already be aware of them. This method gives them a logical form to help you remember and apply the techniques appropriately.

a. Information:

This is the first hand information available from the passage. Making notes can help you answer the questions within minutes instead of searching for the information. If you are very keen and remember and can retain information, it is not necessary to make notes. But it is highly recommended as human memory is not flawless.

The information can be either *obvious* or *implied* in the passage. In case if the information is implied, framing your own questions while reading the passage will help you a lot in this.

b. Inference

This may be considered similar to implied information discussed in the previous section. But it can be quite different. It is not just the implied information, but you need to apply a bit of your logical reasoning to answer these questions.

In-depth understanding of the whole passage is needed in this particular case. Only when you comprehensively understand the idea of the passage, you can think laterally to arrive at the logical conclusion intended to answer these types of questions.

Again inferences can be *simple* and *complex*. In *simple* inferences, you may have to just remember all the facts mentioned in the passage whereas in *complex* inferences it is a kind of taking roundabout to make inferences which are not quite obvious from the passages.

c. Invalidation

This can be your last resort when everything fails. After reading twice, if you cannot arrive at any answer, start eliminating the most improbable options and reduce the number of choices to two. Now zero-in on the question and try logical reasoning to arrive at the answer.

If you have a good basic understanding of the context or idea of the passage, this technique may get you just the right attempts.

Components of Reading Comprehension

To make your strategy work wonders, understand the components of the passage. The following can be considered as some basic building blocks of a reading comprehension passage.

- a. Words
- b. Style
- c. Flow

a. Words

Words are the building blocks of sentences or passages. English language Comprehension part will be more dependent on the words and hence it is necessary to pay attention to them. For example, if 'he' is used in a particular situation the question may ask, 'who does 'he' refer to in the situation?'

This is one example, where as when it comes to English language Comprehension part words can play a crucial role.

Even during comprehension, some words can be completely new to the candidate. Hence it is important to understand the context of the passage to deduce its meaning.

Also pay attention to basics of grammar in terms of tenses and prepositions to get obvious information from the passage.

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Publisher : Jagran Josh

Author : Jagran Josh Expert

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