

Quiz Date: 5th May 2020

Directions (1-5): Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow accordingly. Some of the words have given in bold.

The Dust Bowl, considered one of the greatest man-made ecological disasters, was a period of severe dust storms that lasted nearly a decade, starting 1931, and engulfed large parts of the US. The dust storms originated in the Great Plains—from states like Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Colorado and Kansas. They were so severe that they **choked** everything and blocked out the sun for days. Sometimes, the storms travelled thousands of kilometers and blotted out monuments such as the Statue of Liberty. Citizens developed “dust pneumonia” and experienced chest pain and difficulty in breathing. The storms damaged the soil in around 100 million acres of land, leading to the greatest short-time migration in the American history, with approximately 3.5 million people abandoning their farms and fields.

Dust storms are an annual weather pattern in the northern region of India comprising Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan and Punjab, as also in the Sindh region of Pakistan. But, they are normally low in **intensity** and accompanied by rains. In fact, people welcome dust storms as they bring down temperatures and herald the arrival of the monsoons. But, the dust storms that have hit India since February this year have been quantitatively and qualitatively different from those in the past. They are high-powered storms travelling long distances and destroying properties and agricultural fields. Since February, they have affected as many as 16 states and killed more than 500 people. Cities like Delhi were choked in dust for days, with air quality level reaching the “severe” category on most days.

The Dust Bowl areas of the Great Plains are largely arid and semi-arid and prone to extended periods of drought. The US federal government encouraged settlement and development of large-scale agriculture by giving large parcels of grasslands to settlers. Waves of European settlers arrived at the beginning of the 20th century and converted grasslands into agricultural fields. At the same time, technological improvements allowed rapid mechanization of farm equipment, especially tractors and combined harvesters, which made it possible to operate larger parcels of land.

For the next two decades, agricultural land grew manifold and farmers undertook extensive deep ploughing of the topsoil with the help of tractors to plant crops like wheat. This displaced the native, deep-rooted grasses that trapped soil and moisture even during dry periods and high winds. Then, the drought struck. **Successive** waves of drought, which started in 1930 and ended in 1939, turned the Great Plains into bone-dry land. As the soil was already loose due to extensive ploughing, high winds turned them to dust and blew them away in huge clouds. Does this sound familiar? The dust storm regions of India and Pakistan too are largely arid and semi-arid. But they are at a lower altitude and hence less windy compared to the Great Plains. Over the last 50 years, chemical- and water-intensive agriculture has replaced the traditional low-input agriculture. Canal irrigation has been overtaken by the groundwater irrigation. In addition, mechanized agriculture has led to deeper ploughing, loosening more and more topsoil. The result has been devastating for the soil and groundwater. In most of these areas, the soil has been depleted and groundwater levels have fallen precipitously. On top of the man-made ecological destruction, the natural climatic cycle along with climate change is affecting the weather pattern of this region.

First, this area too is prone to prolonged drought. In fact, large parts of Haryana, Punjab, Delhi and western UP have experienced mildly dry to extremely dry conditions in the last six years. The Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI), which specifies the level of dryness or excess rains in an area, of large parts of Haryana, Punjab and Delhi has been negative since 2012. Rajasthan, on the other hand shows a positive SPI or excess rainfall. Second, this area is experiencing increasing temperatures. In fact, there seems to be a strong correlation between the dust storms and the rapid increase in temperature. Maximum temperatures across northern and western India have been far higher than normal since April

this year. Last, climate change is affecting the pattern of Western Disturbances (WDs), leading to stronger winds and stronger storms. WDs are storms originating in the Mediterranean region that bring winter rain to northwestern India. But because of the warming of the Arctic and the Tibetan Plateau, indications are that the WDs are becoming unseasonal, frequent and stronger.

The Dust Bowl led the US government to initiate a large-scale land-management and soil-conservation programme. Large-scale shelterbelt plantations, contour ploughing, conservation agriculture and establishment of conservation areas to keep millions of acres as grassland, helped halt wind erosion and dust storms. It is time India too recognizes its own Dust Bowl and initiates a large-scale ecological restoration programme to halt it. Else, we will see more intense dust storms, and a choked Delhi would be a permanent feature.

Q1. Which of the following statement is definitely false?

- (a) The storms damaged the soil in around 100 million acres of land, leading to the greatest short-time migration in the American history.
- (b) Over the last 50 years, traditional –low-input agriculture has replaced the chemical and water intensive agriculture.
- (c) Citizens developed “dust pneumonia” and experienced chest pain and difficulty in breathing due to the Dust Bowl.
- (d) WDs are storms originating in the Mediterranean region that bring winter rain to northwestern India.
- (e) People welcome dust storms as they bring down temperatures and herald the arrival of the monsoons.

Q2. What is/are the factor/s turning large parts of India into a Dust Bowl?

- (a) Rising temperatures
- (b) Changing weather patterns
- (c) Depleting groundwater
- (d) Unsustainable agriculture and deforestation
- (e) All of these.

Q3. What is the difference between dust storm regions of India and Great Plains of US?

- (a) The regions of India are less windy.
- (b) Dust storm regions of India are at lower altitude than that of US.
- (c) Dust storm regions in India are more intense than the ones in US.
- (d) Both (a) and (b).
- (e) Both (b) and (c).

Q4. What is the main reason that has led to the devastation of soil and depletion of groundwater?

- (a) High powered storms travelling short distances.
- (b) Deeper ploughing of soil and increased rate of using ground water source over canal water system.
- (c) Because parts of Indo-Gangetic Plains were getting engulfed in a thick cloud of dust last week.
- (d) WDs are becoming unseasonal, frequent and stronger.
- (e) None of these.

Q5. What does SPI (Standardized Precipitation Index) indicate?

- (a) Indicates the intensity of uv light in an area
- (b) Captures the effect of increased temperatures.
- (c) Computes the amount of moisture in the air.
- (d) Determines the air quality level.
- (e) Specifies the level of dryness or excess rains in an area.

Directions (6-7): Choose the word which is most nearly the SAME in meaning as the word printed in bold as used in the passage.

Q6. **Intensity**

- (a) Strength
- (b) Surrender
- (c) Dried
- (d) Deserted
- (e) Moderation

Q7. **Choked**

- (a) Unclogged
- (b) Freed
- (c) Obstructed
- (d) Accomplished
- (e) Unblocked

Directions (8): Choose the word which is the OPPOSITE in meaning as the word printed in bold as used in the passage.

Q8. **Successive**

- (a) Continuous
- (b) Signal
- (c) Announce
- (d) Sequential
- (e) Interrupted

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Directions (9-15): In the questions given below few sentences are given which are grammatically correct and meaningful. Connect them by the word given above the statements in the best possible way without changing the intended meaning. Choose your answer accordingly from the options to form a correct, coherent sentence.

Q9.

Although

- (A) Global coronavirus cases surpassed 3.5 million on May 4, with deaths nearing a quarter of a million.
- (B) We are now ready to hit the ground sprinting as we commence the re-opening of our facilities.
- (C) The well-being of citizens continues to be the least priority for various governments around the world.
- (D) The rate of fatalities and new cases has slowed from peaks reached last month.

- (a) Only C-D
- (b) Both A-D and C-B
- (c) Only B-C
- (d) Only A-D
- (e) None of these

Q10.

SO THAT

- (A) All research is easily tagged and categorizable
- (B) It could be safely moved to a different area
- (C) Researchers can filter through their many files to find the one they were looking for
- (D) They tranquilized the bear with a dart

- (a) Only A-B
- (b) Both A-C and D-B
- (c) Both B-C and A-D
- (d) Only A-D
- (e) None of these

Q11.

Even if

- (A) The AIBEA has urged bank managements to ensure stricter implementation of safeguards in branches.
- (B) The company prescribed under the standard operating procedures, as many staff have tested positive while two employees died of COVID-19 in Mumbai.
- (C) Students will have to pay full tuition fees of £9,250 this autumn.
- (D) Universities cannot open and courses are taught online, ministers have said.

- (a) Only C-D
- (b) Both A-D and C-B
- (c) Only B-C
- (d) Only A-D
- (e) None of these

Q12.

Lest

- (A) The other defendants in the case include Moolchand's guarantors and the persons.

- (B) When an unrighteous person brings you news, look carefully into it.
(C) You harm someone and be sorry for what you have done.
(D) The mortgaged properties had been sold and the legal heirs of the deceased guarantor.

- (a) Only C-D
(b) Both A-D and C-B
(c) Only B-C
(d) Only A-D
(e) None of these

Q13.

Only If

- (A) The rupee ended its four-day rally as weakness in domestic equities spilled over to the currency market.
(B) The chief minister of the state said the schedule of board exams would be announced.
(C) The greenback surged following safe-haven buying as uncertainty increased.
(D) Goa continued to be in the green zone.

- (a) Only C-D
(b) Only B-D
(c) Only B-C
(d) Only A-D
(e) None of these

Q14.

Provided that

- (A) Non-essential businesses will reopen to employees.
(B) Jio Platforms is a wholly owned subsidiary of Reliance Industries.
(C) It brings together Jio's digital apps, digital ecosystems and high-speed connectivity platform under one umbrella.
(D) They do not have gatherings of more than 10 in a location and allow employees to work with six feet of separation.

- (a) Only C-D
(b) Both A-D and C-B
(c) Only B-C
(d) Only A-D
(e) None of these

Q15.

Unless

- (A) According to employees, the company 'forcefully' sought resignations from hundreds of people on May 1.
(B) They said the company had agreed to pay salaries for 30 to 45 days.

BANKERS

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(C) Business owners who ban people from entry will face five years in jail and a \$63,000 fine under proposed laws.

(D) They haven't downloaded the government's coronavirus contact tracing app.

- (a) Only C-D
- (b) Both A-D and C-B
- (c) Only B-C
- (d) Only A-D
- (e) None of these



Solutions:

S1.Ans. (b)

Sol. The reverse of the given statement is true. Refer to the fourth paragraph, eighth line, it is mentioned that over the last 50 years, chemical- and water-intensive agriculture has replaced the traditional low-input agriculture. Hence it is a false statement. Rest all the statements hold true

S2.Ans. (e)

Sol. All of the above mentioned options hold true and are deducted from whole of the passage. The conditions of change in rising temperatures and unsustainable agriculture and deforestation are illustrated in the second last paragraph of the passage. "Canal irrigation has been overtaken by the groundwater irrigation. In addition, mechanized agriculture has led to deeper ploughing, loosening more and more topsoil. The result has been devastating for the soil and groundwater". This is mentioned in the fourth paragraph and proves the point of depleting groundwater. Hence (e) is the correct option.

S3.Ans. (d)

Sol. The answer is illustrated in the fourth paragraph of the passage where the author has mentioned that the dust storm regions of India too are largely arid and semi-arid. But they are at a lower altitude and hence less windy compared to the Great Plains of US. "Over the last 50 years, chemical- and water-intensive agriculture has replaced the traditional low-input agriculture. Canal irrigation has been overtaken by the groundwater irrigation."

S4.Ans. (b)

Sol. Refer to the fourth paragraph, last fifth line where it is mentioned that mechanized agriculture has led to deeper ploughing, loosening more and more topsoil. The result has been devastating for the soil

and groundwater. In most of these areas, the soil has been depleted and groundwater levels have fallen precipitously. Hence option (b) is the right choice.

S5.Ans. (e)

Sol. In the last paragraph of the passage the details of the Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) have been given which specify the level of dryness or excess rains in an area. These have been negative in the large parts of Punjab, Delhi, Haryana since 2012. Rajasthan, on the other hand shows a positive SPI or excess rainfall. Thus large parts of Haryana, Punjab, Delhi and western UP have experienced mildly dry to extremely dry conditions in the last six years.

S6.Ans. (a)

Sol. **Intensity** means of extreme force, degree, or strength.

Strength the capacity of an object or substance to withstand great force or pressure

Hence (a) is the most appropriate answer.

Deserted means empty of people.

Moderation the avoidance of excess or extremes, especially in one's behaviour or political opinions.

S7.Ans. (c)

Sol. Option (c) is the correct choice. **Choked** means fill (a space) so as to make movement difficult or impossible.

Obstructed means be or get in the way of.

Unclogged means remove accumulated matter from (a drain or other channel).

Accomplished means highly trained or skilled in a particular activity

S8.Ans. (e)

Sol. The correct choice is (e).

Successive means following one another or following others.

Interrupted means stop the continuous progress of (an activity or process).

Sequential means forming or following in a logical order or sequence

S9. Ans. (d)

Sol. A-D can be connected using **although** in the best possible way without changing their intended meaning. The sentence thus formed is,

Although global coronavirus cases surpassed 3.5 million on May 4, with deaths nearing a quarter of a million although the rate of fatalities and new cases has slowed from peaks reached last month.

Hence, **option (d)** is the right answer choice.

S10. Ans. (b)

Sol. Both Statements A-C and D-B can form a grammatically and contextually correct sentence using the conjunction 'so that' which is used as a subordinate clause to show purpose or to give an explanation. It is used to show an action producing an intended result or a cause producing an effect.' The sentences thus formed are:

(I) All research is easily tagged and categorizable so that researchers can filter through their many files to find the one they were looking for.

(II) They tranquilized the bear with a dart so that it could be safely moved to a different area.

S11. Ans. (a)

Sol. C-D can be connected using **EVEN IF** in the best possible way without changing their intended meaning. The sentence thus formed is,
Students will have to pay full tuition fees of £9,250 this autumn even if universities cannot open and courses are taught online, ministers have said.
Hence, **option (a)** is the right answer choice.

S12. Ans. (c)

Sol. B-C can be connected using **LEST** in the best possible way without changing their intended meaning. The sentence thus formed is,
When an unrighteous person brings you news, look carefully into it lest you harm someone and be sorry for what you have done.
Hence, **option (c)** is the right answer choice.

S13. Ans. (b)

Sol. B-D can be connected using **ONLY IF** in the best possible way without changing their intended meaning. The sentence thus formed is,
The chief minister of the state said the schedule of board exams would be announced only if Goa continued to be in the green zone.
Hence, **option (b)** is the right answer choice.

S14. Ans. (d)

Sol. A-D can be connected using **provided that** in the best possible way without changing their intended meaning. The sentence thus formed is,
Non-essential businesses will reopen to employees provided that they do not have gatherings of more than 10 in a location and allow employees to work with six feet of separation.Hence, **option (d)** is the right answer choice.

S15. Ans. (c)

Sol. B-C can be connected using **unless** in the best possible way without changing their intended meaning. The sentence thus formed is,
Business owners who ban people from entry will face five years in jail and a \$63,000 fine under proposed laws unless they haven't downloaded the government's coronavirus contact tracing app.
Hence, **option (c)** is the right answer choice.

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