

# ENGLISH

**Passage:** Discursive Passage



## DISCURSIVE PASSAGE

A passage where the writer rambles from topic to topic is called a discursive piece of writing. The adjective discursive is often used to describe a speech or writing that tends to stray from the main point, but the word can also have almost the opposite meaning.

A discursive passage includes argumentative, interpretative and persuasive text. Such passages may include opinions or feedback. It allows students to arrive at a conclusion through reasoning and understanding rather than intuition. It presents a balanced and objective approach towards the subject being discussed.

Passages of this kind are analytical. Sometimes the author presents his views with great depth of reasoning or force of argument with the intention of convincing the reader to his point of view. Such texts have great persuasive power.

Discursive writing expresses opinions. It can be argumentative, i.e. may give reasons, explanations, or explore cause and effect relationship. Passages of this kind are analytical.

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### Sample - 1

Read the passage given below.

1. Roshni Bairwa remembers running all the way from her home in Tonk's Mahmoodnagar Dhani village to the room where the 'bal samooch' (children's group) met. "My grandparents are getting me married, you have to do something," the then 12-year-old told the 20 or so children sitting there.
2. The children, all aged between eight and 16, trooped up to Roshni's house and urged her grandparents to stop the impending wedding. Others, including village elders and teachers, joined in. The wedding was stopped. She had discovered a way out of the quagmire with the help of a local NGO and the village children.
3. When she was in class XII, the pressure to get married returned. This time her uncle found a match for her. When she resisted, she was taunted, and beaten. People would point to her as the girl who brought shame to her family and asked their children not to speak to her. "I was 16 years old and alone in the world. I walked to school with my eyes fixed to the ground. I would think sometimes, what have I done that is so terrible for everyone to hate me so much? to sleep," recalls Roshni, who lost her father when she was two and had been abandoned by her mother shortly after. But even in those dark moments, Roshni didn't give up, moving out of the village to Peeplu tehsil in Rajasthan where she rented a room and attended college.

4. With education and independence came a sense of confidence. "I kept in touch with the children in the village. Every time there was a child marriage, they would call me and I would go to stop it. I realized I had already been thrown out of the village, the worst had already happened, what else could the villagers do? So I went and fought with everyone who was getting their child married," she says with a laugh. So far she has stopped over a dozen marriages.
5. Even without the support of the law, young girls have been crusading against the practice. Earlier this month, 19-year-old Sushila Bishnoi from Barmer succeeded in getting her marriage annulled, submitting photographs and congratulatory messages from her husband's Facebook account to the court. The court accepted these as evidence that the union took place when oth bride and groom were 12 years old, and declared the marriage invalid.
6. Seema Bairwal (name changed) was 15 when she was married to a man a few years older. Later when she started attending 'bal samoooh' meetings with NGO Shiv Shiksha Samiti and Save the Children, it dawned on her that she had a choice. "I learnt that my life is mine. I have the power to say no to marriage.

**1.1** On the basis of your reading of the passage, answer the following questions by choosing the best of the given choices.

- a. The brides mentioned in the passage are rebels against .....
  - i. the dowry system
  - ii. child marriage
  - iii. purdah system
  - iv. arranged marriages
- b. When Roshni was twelve years old, she succeeded in her mission with the help of .....
  - i. 20 children aged between eight and sixteen
  - ii. her grandparents
  - iii. 20 children, her grandparents, village elders and teachers
  - iv. children and an NGO
- c. When she was sixteen the people of the village .....
  - i. taunted her and beat her up
  - ii. boycotted her
  - iii. were angry with her

- iv. were sympathetic and understanding
- d. Roshni moved out of the village in order to
  - i. seek a job
  - ii. escape the villagers
  - iii. attend college
  - iv. marry a boy of her choice
- e. "Give up" in para 3 means .....
  - i. stop attending classes
  - ii. stop doing something
  - iii. very eager
  - iv. voluntary help
- f. 'Annulled' in para 5 means .....
  - i. To state officially that something is not legally valid
  - ii. Help somebody
  - iii. impending doom
  - iv. social works

## 1.2 Answer the following.

- a. The children, all aged between eight and 16, trapped to ..... and urged her grandparents to stop the impending wedding.
- b. Roshni lost her father when she was only ..... years old.
- c. Education and independence made Roshni confident. [True/False]
- d. "Bal Samooch" meetings with NGO Shiv Shiksha Samiti and 'Save the Children' encouraged child marriage. [True/False]

## 1.3 Find words/expressions from the passage that have a meaning similar to the following.

- a. about to happen soon (paragraph 2)
- b. realised (paragraph 6)

## Answer

### 1.1

- (a) (ii) child marriage
- (b) (ii) 20 children, her grandparents, village elders and teachers.

- (c) (i) taunted her and beat her up
- (d) (iii) attend college
- (e) (ii) stop doing something
- (f) (i) To state officially that something is not legally valid

## 1.2

- (a) Roshni's house
- (b) two
- (c) True
- (d) False

## 1.3

- (a) impending
- (b) dawned upon her

## Sample - 2

The problem of unemployment is a serious problem in our country. If millions of people are without any jobs, its effect is very bad. A man without any employment is a burden on others. If he has got to maintain a family, the situation is worse. Such unemployed persons are reduced to poverty. It demoralises them and they are forced to do undesirable things. They may commit crimes. They may create trouble and spread discontent. In fact, they are a source of danger to society and the state.

The causes of unemployment are mainly the rapid growth of population, the prevailing system and underdevelopment of industry and trade. The population of India is growing very rapidly. It is very difficult to get jobs for all who are in need of it. The British Government had introduced a system of education in this country for carrying on administration only. It is being continued in free India also with very slight changes. The system of education prepares most young men to be clerks. But neither the Government nor private firms can absorb all the educated unemployed persons in their offices for clerical work. Industry and trade have not yet properly developed.

Cottage industries in the villages have been ruined owing to the establishment of large mills and factories in towns. Consequently, many artisans have been thrown out of employment. There has been great pressure on agricultural land because of the growth of population; consequently, many cultivators have got no land for cultivation. All these are mainly responsible for this acute problem of unemployment.

The acute problem of unemployment is a cause of unrest in the country. So the Government is seriously thinking over the matter and trying to find out a remedy. The remedy is to find

work for the people. The Government had earlier undertaken five-year plans for the material prosperity of the country. For carrying out these plans many mills and factories had been set up both by the Government and by industrialists. Many new offices had been started. Many educated young men were absorbed in offices as clerks and in mills and factories as skilled workers. Uneducated and unskilled men were being absorbed in mills and factories as labourers. But these measures have been proved inadequate.

Our government is now encouraging the revival of cottage industries in the villages. This will help many villagers to earn a living. Our Government is also trying to develop agriculture. But as yet, it has not been able to cope with the situation fully. The number of unemployed persons is increasing. So our Government should allow establishment of a large number of large and small technical and vocational institutions in the country. Only a limited number of bright young men should try to get higher education in the universities. Most young men try to enter technical or vocational institutions. After coming out of these, they may find jobs in factories and commercial firms. For this, of course, more factories must be set up throughout the country. Unskilled labourers should be taught various traits in technical institutes. They may find jobs in factories as skilled labourers. They may also set up cottage industries in their villages. Government will have to help them with loans to start their work. It is heartening to find that our Government has already taken some steps in this direction. Nationalised banks are now giving lump sum loans to intending young persons under self employment schemes.

### QUESTIONS

- a. On the basis of your reading of the above passage make notes on it using headings and sub-headings. Use recognisable abbreviations wherever necessary. Supply an appropriate title to it.
- b. Write a summary of the above passage in 80-100 words.

### Answer:

(a) Title Unemployment: A Serious Problem

### Notes

1. Consequence of Unemployment
  - a) Poverty
  - b) low morale
  - c) high crime rate
  - d) discontent
2. Causes of Unemployment
  - a) rapid growth of ppltn

- b)
- c) plan
- d) prevailing system of edu
  - prepares young people to be clerks
- e) underdevelopment of industry & trade

### 3. Remedy: Role of Government

- a) follow up 5-yr plans
  - set up many factories
  - create more job opportunities
- b) allow vocational & technical institutions to open
- c) help unskilled to become skilled
- d) revive cottage industries
- e) give loans for self-employment

### Key to Abbreviations

| Abbreviations | Words         |
|---------------|---------------|
| ppltn         | Population    |
| edu           | Education     |
| indty         | Industry      |
| yr            | Year          |
| &             | And           |
| optnts        | Opportunities |

### (b) Summary

The consequences of unemployment, a serious problem in India, are poverty, low morale, high crime rate and discontent in the population. The causes of unemployment are rapid



growth of population, the prevailing system of education which prepares young people to be clerks, and underdevelopment of industry and trade. The remedy is that the role of Government should change: it should follow up the 5-yr plans by setting up many factories to create more job opportunities. It should allow vocational and technical institutions to open to help the unskilled become skilled. Government should revive cottage industries by giving loans for self-employment.

### Sample - 3

Depression is a common problem of modern times. Both the rich and poor suffer from it. According to the World Health Organisation, by the year 2020, depression will become the second leading cause of disease in the world. Many solutions have been prescribed for the problem of depression but most have proved to be ineffective as a complete cure. They may offer temporary relief but fail to resolve the problem permanently.

Meditation is often advised to treat this problem of depression. But meditation focuses on the heart and modern science has established that the heart is merely an organ that pumps blood, whereas many kinds of depression stem from the mind. It is the mind that controls the heart and not vice-versa. In many cases, depression is non-physical and the heart is physical. How can a physical organ resolve a non-physical problem?

We also often hear about physical techniques to counter depression. But the reach of physical techniques is confined to the body and does not extend to the mind.

Many kinds of depression are the result of non-acceptance of reality. The real solution to this problem is the acceptance of reality. While non-acceptance creates the problem, acceptance of reality will solve it.

Our world is one of freedom, competition, challenge and clash of interests. This nature of human life is bound to create problems. No one is exempt from this process. This being so, to de-stress, learn the art of stress management rather than trying to eliminate the stress.

A person may become sad upon facing a loss in business or feeling discriminated against at work. He may give in to anxiety and frustration if he suffers a loss in an election, his love marriage turns into a problem or if he is offended by criticism. In all such cases, a person becomes negative because of being unaware of the real cause. He attributes the cause to another person and holds this person responsible for his difficulties. He fails to realise that all these are due to the law of nature. If you attribute the cause of the problem to the divine law of nature, it will arouse no negativity, but when you attribute it to a person, it brings on negative thinking. This is because the law of nature is not your rival, whereas you see a person as your competitor. When you attribute the cause of your problem to a rival, it will invariably arouse negative thoughts and cause anger. But when you attribute the cause to the law of nature, because it is not your rival and is equal in its treatment of all, it will lead to



introspection.

When you follow nature-based thinking instead of man-based thinking, you will try to discover its wisdom and will realise that whatever has happened is for your betterment. It was to activate your mind and enhance its creativity. It was a means of developing a realistic approach, fostering incentive, making you realise your mistake and helping you to re-plan practically.

When this thought comes to you, your mind will automatically change from negative to positive. You will be grateful towards the law of nature for bestowing this blessing in disguise. This thought will eliminate your stress and you will be able to live normally. This is a good way to help de-stress the mind.

### QUESTIONS:

- a. On the basis of your reading of the above passage make notes on it using headings and sub-headings. Use recognisable abbreviations wherever necessary. Supply an appropriate title to it.
- b. Write a summary of the above passage in 80-100 words.

### Answer:

(a) Title Depression: Accept It, Tackle It

### Notes

1. Depression
  - a) common prblm of modern times
  - b) acc to WHO, will soon become second leading disease
  - c) prescribed soln
    - offer temporary relief
  - d) no permanent cure
2. Kinds of Depression and its Cure
  - a) non-acceptance of reality
    - soln - acceptance of reality
  - b) Clash of interests
    - soln - learn stress mgmt
3. Causes of Stress / Depression

- a) attrib to another person cause of prblm
- b) fail to realise law of nature

#### 4. Ways to De-Stress

- a) attrib prblm to the divine law of nature
- b) don't attrib cause of problem to a person
- c) follow nature-based thinking
- d) this causes realisation that
  - whatever hpnd is for betterment
  - means of dvlpng a realistic approach
  - fostering incentive
  - helping you to re-plan
  - understanding mistake
- e) realisation eliminates stress

#### Key to Abbreviations

| Abbreviations | Words                     |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| prblm         | Problem                   |
| Acc           | According                 |
| WHO           | World Health Organisation |
| Soln          | solution                  |
| Mgmt          | Management                |
| Atrbt         | Attribute                 |
| Hpnd          | Happened                  |
| Dvlpng        | developing                |

**(b) Summary**

According to the World Health Organisation, depression is expected to become the second leading cause of disease in the world. Prescribed solutions offer temporary relief but offer no permanent solution. The cause is non-acceptance of reality or clash of interests.

Solutions are acceptance of reality and learning to manage stress. Stress is caused by attributing problems to other persons instead of understanding the law of nature. One should realise that whatever has happened is for the betterment. This enables development of a realistic approach to the problem and helps in re-planning. This realisation eliminates stress.

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