# VERBAL REASONING QUESTION TYPES

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# 1. Insert the Missing Letter (Word Formation)

In each question, there are two sets of words. Each set contains two words, with the last letter of the first word and the first letter of the second word missing. The task here is to find which letter is needed to make four words.

**Tips:**

- If the question is multiple-choice, check which letter fits to make four words. If it makes only two or three words it isn't correct.

- If it isn't multiple-choice, are there letters that immediately jump out at you to form words? You can also try each letter of the alphabet until you find a letter that fits in both spaces.

**Example:**

Q) Find the missing letter to complete both gaps and make four words.

**RA( )AS, BA( )AP**

A) The answer is **G** or **RA(G)AS, BA(G)AP**.

The four words formed are **RAG, GAS, BAG** and **GAP**.

# 2. Odd Words Out

Five words are given, three of which have something in common. The two words which don't have anything in common are the 'odd words out'.

Alternatively, there could be two groups with something in common, three words forming one group and two words forming another. In this case the smaller group of two words are the 'odd words out'.

**Tip:**

&#9827; First, identify the group of three words with a common theme, then check if the remaining two words are the odd ones out. If there is a second group of two words, make sure none of the words from the larger group are in fact part of the smaller group.

**Example:**

Q) Which two words are the odd ones out?

**LEMON CARROT FIG PRUNE CHEESE**

A) The items are all edible, so that won't be the group.

The first thought might be Lemon and Cheese as the odd words out, but that would leave Carrot, Fig and Prune which don't form a group

The two odd words out are **CARROT** and **CHEESE**. This is because Lemon, Prune and Fig are all types of fruit.

# 3. Alphabet Codes

In this question type, a word is either encoded or decoded. You will be given a word and its code, then asked to use that information to find the code for another word. Alternatively, you will be asked to work out a word from the code given.

**Tips:**

- First work out what each letter represents in the first word and code.

- From this information, you will be able to work out the sequence that is being used and apply this knowledge to work out the answer.

- If an alphabet line is not given, write one out yourself. It is useful in helping to work out the answer.

- Common sequences include moving a certain number of jumps forwards or backwards in the alphabet.

- Another sequence sometimes used is the 'mirror image' sequence. This can be best understood as the alphabet written forwards, on top of the alphabet written backwards. So A=Z, B=Y, C=X etc.

- An even more tricky sequence is the 'mirror image' sequence combined with jumps forwards or backwards. E.g. A two jump forward 'mirror image' sequence would consist of A=X, B=V, C=T etc.

**Example:**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Q) If the code for **MASK** is **OCUM**, what is the code for **TALK**?

A) The answer is **VCNM** and the sequence is to move two steps forwards in the alphabet.

# 4. Synonyms

Synonyms are words with similar meanings and can be found in a thesaurus.

In this question type, there are two groups of words. The challenge is to find two words (one from each group) that are the most similar in meaning.

**Tip:**

- If the answer doesn't jump out at you, you can use the technique of ruling out pairs of words one by one. So the first word in the first group would be paired with the first in the second group, then the first word in the first group would be paired with the second word in the second group and so on until a pair of synonyms is found.

**Example:**

Q) Find the pair of synonyms by selecting one word from each group.

(**ANGRY**, **SCARED**, **WORRIED**), (**MONSTER**, **ENRAGED**, **CURIOUS**)

A) The synonyms here are **ANGRY** and **ENRAGED**.

# 5. Hidden Words

A four letter word is hidden within a sentence. The word is often made by blending the end of one word with the beginning of the following word. It can also be hidden within a longer word.

**Tip:**

- To use a methodical method to find the word, you can start at the beginning of the sentence and group together four letters at a time until you find the word. So you would look at the first four letters, then the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th letters in the sentence. If you still don't find the word you would look at the 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th letters and so on.

**Example:**

Q) Find the four letter word hidden in this sentence.

A) The snow managed to silently cover the city in just over an hour.

The answer is **LENT** which is part of the word 'silently'.

# 6. Find the Missing Word

There is a sentence with one of the words incomplete. The incomplete word has three consecutive letters missing from it, these missing letters are themselves a three letter word.

**Tip:**

- Use the context of the sentence to help you in trying to think of the missing three letter word.

- If the question is multiple choice, you can identify which word fits to make a new word. Remember the word must make sense as part of the given sentence.

**Example:**

Q) The cake was **BAG** in the oven.

A) The missing word is **KIN** and the original word is **BAKING**.

# 7. Calculation (Letters to Numbers)

Letters are paired with numbers and a calculation involving those letters is then presented to you. The task is to complete the calculation and give your answer as a letter.

**Tip:**

+ This question type is very much algebraic. Ensure you work out the answer in the correct order, as some questions may involve calculations where the process of BODMAS/BIDMAS is required.

**Example:**

Q) **A= 6, B=12, C=18, D=24**

Using the above letter to number representation, complete the following calculation, giving your answer as a letter.

**A X B – C- D =**

A) **E**

The calculation with brackets is $(A \ X \ B) - C - D$ or $(6 \ x \ 12) - 18 - 24 = 30$.

**30** is equal to **E** as the sequence is going up in jumps of 6.

# 8. Antonyms

Antonyms are words that are opposite in meaning. This question type involves two groups of words. Two words need to be selected (one from each group) that are antonyms.

**Tip:**

+ Similar to the 'synonym' question type, you can use the technique of ruling out pairs of words one by one. So the first word in the first group would be paired with the first in the second group, then the first word in the first group would be paired with the second word in the second group, and so on until a pair of antonyms is found.

**Example:**

Q) Find the pair of antonyms by selecting one word from each group.

(**THICK**, **TRANSPARENT**, **SHINY**),
(**BLANKET**, **GLITTERING**, **OPAQUE**).

A) The answer is **TRANSPARENT** and **OPAQUE**.

# 9. Complete the Calculation

You will be given an equation (two part calculation equal on both sides) to work out. One of the numbers in the second half of the equation will be missing. Your task is to work out the answer to the first half of the equation and discover which number is needed to make both sides equal.

**Tip:**

- To work out the answer, you will need to follow the correct order of operations i.e. BODMAS/BIDMAS.

**Example:**

Q) Find the missing number to complete this calculation:

**23 + 7 x 13 = 12 x 12 − __**

A) The first step in answering this question is to insert brackets in the correct places.

**23 + (7 x 13) = (12 x 12) − __**

Then you work out the answer to the first half of the calculation which is 114.

Finally, you need to solve the second part of the equation by multiplying 12 by 12 which is 144, then working out the difference between 144 and 114.

Therefore, the answer is **30**.

# 10. Rearranging Letters (Word Formation)

Two words are given. Two new words must be made by moving one letter from the first word to the second word. You must work out which letter needs to be moved and whereabouts in the second word it must go.

## Tips:

- The order of the letters in both words must not be rearranged. The task is to move only one letter.

- You can take an orderly approach to working out the answer by selecting one letter at a time to remove from the first word. If a new word is made then you can move onto placing the removed letter into the second word. If a new word is not formed, you would then place that letter back in the word and remove a different letter.

## Example:

Q) Form two new words by moving one letter from the first word to the second word:

**CLASP, HAVE**

A) The 'S' from the first word is moved to the start of the second word.

The two new words formed are **CLAP** and **SHAVE**.

# 11. Number Relationships

There are three groups of numbers, but the middle number in the third group is missing. You need to work out what the missing number is.

**Tips:**

+ Each group of numbers in a question consists of three numbers. The middle number is the total and the two outer numbers are used to make that total.

+ All three groups in a question come up with their total numbers in the same way. You need to work out how this is done for the first two groups, then apply this knowledge by following the same method to come up with the third total i.e. the missing number.

**Example:**

Q) Find the missing number in the third group of numbers:

[2, 70, 33], [5, 59, 11], [3, __, 14]

A) The two outer numbers in each group are first multiplied by each other, then 4 is added.

The missing number is **46**, worked out by doing (3 x 14) + 4.

# 12. Alphabet Sequencing

This question type involves a sequence made up of letters. One letter or a pair of letters in the sequence is missing and you are required to find it. There may be one sequence or two sequences in one string of letters.

**Tips:**

- If the alphabet hasn't been written out, you may find it useful to write it down as it can help you with working out the sequence(s).

- Common sequences involve a certain number of jumps forwards or backwards in the alphabet. Other common sequences include numbers that double/halve, square numbers or two part sequences (e.g. double then add one).

**Example:**

Q) Complete the next letter pair in the sequence:

**AL, CM, EN, GO, IP, __**

A) The first letter in each pair has a sequence of taking two jumps forward in the alphabet: **A, C, E, G, I. K**.

The second letter in each pair has a sequence of taking one jump forward in the alphabet: **L, M, N, O, P, Q**.

So the answer is **KQ**.

# 13. Complete the Sentence

A sentence is provided and within the sentence are two groups of three words. Only one word from each group will fit logically as part of the sentence. Your task is to correctly choose both words to make the sentence complete.

## Tip:

+ The sentence will usually have objects, creatures or concepts with relationships to each other that you need to identify. Both parts of the sentence need to link in the same way i.e. have the same relationship.

## Example:

Q) Select one word from each group in order to logically complete the sentence.

**Pen is to [ink, paper, write] as pencil is to [pencil case, graphite, hold].**

> A) The answer is **ink** and **graphite**. This is because a pen contains ink, whilst there is graphite in a pencil.

Therefore, the sentence would read:

**Pen is to ink as pencil is to graphite.**

# 14. Word Codes

You will be presented with four words and three number codes. The task is to work out the code for another word containing the same letters. You are not told which words match with the three given codes.

Alternatively, you may be asked what the word is for a particular code.

**Tips:**

- There most probably won't be any sequencing or pattern involved, it will be a purely random letter to number assignment code that you need to work out.

- If you are being asked to find the code for a word, you need to first assign the three given codes to three of the words. You can do this by looking for clues such as repeated/double letters in a word. Once you have matched three of the words to their codes, you can work out the fourth word. Another strategy is to work out the code letter by letter e.g. If o=9, put a 9 under any o in the words.

- If you are being asked to work out the word for given numbers you would first follow the step above and then use the same code to work out the word.

**Example:**

Q) Work out the code for the word **LEARN**.

**LANE, REAL, LEAN, EARL**

**9167, 7641, 7163**

A) The words matched with numbers are:

**LANE – 7641, REAL – 9167, LEAN – 7163, EARL – 1697.**

The answer is **LEARN – 71694.**

# 15. Complete the Word Pairs

You are presented with three pairs of words, the second word in the third pair is missing and needs to be worked out. The second word in each pair uses some of the letters from the first word (in each pair). Additionally, it follows a sequence that is the same (in each pair).

**Tip:**

- Work out the sequence that is being followed in the first two word-pairs, then apply this knowledge to find the missing word in the third word-pair.

**Example:**

Q) Find the missing word in the third word-pair:

**(POCKET, POKE), (PARCEL, PACE), (SHREDS, _____ )**

A) The pattern here is that the third and sixth letter from the first word in each group are removed to make the second word in each group.

Another way of looking at it is that the second word in each group is made up of letter 1, letter 2, letter 4 and letter 5 from the first word.

If you remove the **R** and the **S** from **SHREDS** you get the answer, which is **SHED**.

# 16. Number Sequencing

This question type involves a sequence of numbers. The challenge is to find the next number in the sequence. Alternatively, there may be a number missing at the start or within the sequence that needs to be worked out.

**Tip:**

- To work out what the sequence is, start by working out by how much the number is increasing or decreasing each time.

- If the gap is uneven each time (e.g. 69, 45, 33, 27), try to notice patterns such as if the number of jumps is being doubled/halved as the sequence progresses. Could it be a square, triangular, cube or prime number? Does the sequence only involve odd/even numbers?

- There is a possibility that the series of numbers could be made up of two sequences. So, the first, third and fifth etc numbers are made up of one sequence and the second, fourth and sixth etc numbers are made up of another sequence.

**Example:**

Q) Find the next number in the sequence:

**6, 13, 27, 55, 111, ___**

A) The sequence here is that the next number is found by doubling the previous number, then adding 1.

Therefore, the answer is **223**.

# 17. Compound Words (Word Formation)

A compound word is formed by joining two words together to make a longer word.

In this question type, you are presented with two groups of words. The task is to make a compound word by selecting one word from each group.

## Tips:

- The word selected from the first group must be the first part of the compound word.

- You can use the methodical strategy of selecting the first word from the first group then matching it with the first word in the second group, the second word in the second group, then the third word in the third group. If you still haven't found a compound word, you can move onto joining the second word in the first group to the first word in the second group and so on.

## Example:

A) Make a new word by selecting one word from each group and joining them together.

**(tin, can, sauce), (cloth, pan, bottle)**

A) The answer is '**saucepan**'.

# 18. Create a Word

For each question there will be two groups of three words. The middle word in the second group is missing and the task is to work out what it is.

The middle word in each group contains letters from its two surrounding words.

**Tips:**

🔸 Both of the middle words in each word-group are made by following the same pattern. So, for example, if the middle word in the first group is made from the first and second letters of the first word and the second and fourth letters of the third word, you would take the letters from the same places in the second word-group.

🔸 Sometimes letters from the third word in the group are taken first to make the first part of a new word, and then letters from the first word in the group are used to make the end of the new word.

**Example:**

Q) Work out what the missing word in the second group is.

**(PASTA, STOP, OPEN), (CAMERA, _____, ATTENDANCE)**

A) The middle word in the first group is made by taking the third and fourth letters in the first group and the first and second letters in the third group. Following the same pattern, the second word in the second group can be worked out to be **MEAT**.

# 19. Homonyms

Homonyms are words with the same spelling and/or pronunciation, but different meanings.

In this question type, you will be presented with two pairs of words. Within each pair, the words are synonyms of each other e.g. (cup, glass). Additionally, there will be a separate group of five words. The task is find which of the five words is a homonym and links to both word-pairs.

## Tip:

- The words in the word-pairs are essentially definitions of one of the five words in the separate group.

## Example:

Q) Find the word that links best to both of the word pairs below.

**(arrangement, organisation), (booking, reservation)**

**neat, buy, order, hotel, company**

- A) Some of the words link to one of the word pairs, however the word '**order**' has a relationship with both groups and is therefore the answer.

# 20. Letter Relationships

This question type involves a sentence containing four pairs of letters. The task is to find the fourth letter-pair.

The first and second letter-pair are linked in some way and follow a specific sequence (or two sequences), the third and fourth letter-pairs are linked in the same way.

**Tips:**

- There will most likely be two sequences within the first and second letter-pair, and likewise a sequence following the same pattern for the third and fourth letter pair can be applied.

- If two sequences are being followed the first letter of each letter pair will follow the first sequence and the second letter in each letter pair will follow the second sequence.

- The sequence could move either forwards or backwards in the alphabet.

- You may find it helpful to write out the alphabet if it isn't already written out and use it to work out the pattern within each sequence.

**Example:**

Q) Complete the sentence below:

**EW is to GV as QR is to __.**

You can use this alphabet line to help you:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

A) The first letter in each pair follows a sequence of two jumps forward in the alphabet each time. The second letter in each pair follows a sequence of one jump backwards in the alphabet each time. Therefore the answer is UP.

# 21. Comprehension

Comprehension questions within Verbal Reasoning are essentially word problems that often require a couple of steps of working out before they are solved. They usually involve a longer passage of writing then a typical mathematical word problem would.

**Tip:**

- Use the information given to jot down a summary of what you know (as bullet points/a table etc). Once you have a clear idea of the information/clues provided within the question you can rule out/in answers and work out the question.

**Example:**

Q) Dinesh is three times as old as Paulo, who is 7. Tracy is five years older than Dinesh and 11 years older than John. If John was three years younger, he would be half the age of Martin. How old is Martin?

A) For this question, it is best to work out the ages of the other people first.

John is 15 years old.

Dinesh is 21 years old.

Paulo is 7 years old.

Tracy is 26 years old.

Martin is 24 years old.