

CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension: Pattern, Syllabus, Questions, Preparation Tips, Previous Year Questions

CAT Reading Comprehension 2026: Reading Comprehension (RC) is a very important part of the Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC) section in the CAT exam. CAT RC section has 66% weightage within the VARC section (16 Questions), while [CAT Verbal Ability section](#) has 33.33% weightage (8 questions). CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension section involves reading passages from different subject areas such as **literature, business, science, philosophy, and social sciences**, and answering a set of questions that test candidate's understanding. CAT Reading Comprehension passages **test a candidate's ability to understand complex information**, identify key ideas, draw inferences, and evaluate arguments. CAT RC passages are typically **400–600 words long**. CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension Preparation involves Improving Reading Speed, developing a Strong Vocabulary, Ability to Skim Passage and Questions, Learning to Eliminate Incorrect Options and Practicing to Solve RCs in Defined Time. Download **CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension PDF** for previous years' questions. Check CAT RC Pattern, Type of Questions asked in previous year CAT Papers, and how to prepare for CAT Reading Comprehension 2026. [CAT 2026](#) is expected to be held on November 29, 2026 (date to be officially confirmed by IIMs in last week of July).



Reading Comprehension for CAT 2026

**Pattern, Syllabus, Questions, Preparation
Tips, Previous Year Questions**

Before we discuss how to prepare for Reading Comprehension Section, it is useful to understand the overall CAT exam pattern. CAT 2026 exam pattern is expected to be similar to CAT 2025 exam pattern. Check table below.

CAT Exam Pattern 2026 (Expected)

Section No.	Section Name	Duration	MCQs	TITA	Total
I	VARC	40 min	20	4	24
II	DI and LR	40 min	11	11	22
III	QA	40 min	14	8	22
Total		120 min	45	23	68

CAT Reading Comprehension Pattern 2026

CAT Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension (VARC) section is sub divided into two parts:

- CAT Reading Comprehension passages were based on literature, business, science, philosophy, and social sciences areas. **Out of total 24 questions in VARC section in CAT 2025, there were 16 Questions on RC passages (66.66 % weightage in the VARC section).**
- CAT Verbal Ability Syllabus questions were based on Para Jumbles, Para Summary, and Odd One Out. **Out of total 24 questions in VARC section in CAT 2025, there were only 8 Verbal Ability Questions (33.33% weightage in the VARC section).**

Check CAT RC passages that appeared in all the three slots of CAT 2025 exam below. CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension Pattern is expected to be on the similar lines.

CAT Reading Comprehension Questions: CAT 2025 Slot 1

Question Type/Area	No of Qs.	Type
RC 1: Alienists and the art of diagnosing mental disorders	4	MCQ
RC 2: Income inequality and economic growth	4	MCQ
RC 3: Objections to Electronic Music as a musical genre	4	MCQ
RC 4: Complex Systems and the dynamics of tail events	4	MCQ
Total Number of Questions	16	MCQ

CAT Reading Comprehension Questions: CAT 2025 Slot 2

Area / Questions	No of Qs.	Type
RC 1: How tetrafish adapted and evolved	4	MCQ
RC 2: Biases of AI	4	MCQ
RC 3: The role of “Place” in literature	4	MCQ
RC 4: Science and culture	4	MCQ
Total Number of Questions	16	MCQ

CAT Reading Comprehension Questions: CAT 2025 Slot 3

Area / Questions	No of Qs.	Type
RC 1: Ill-effects of dams	4	MCQ
RC 2: AI and ethical decision-making	4	MCQ
RC 3: Forest Conservation Act, 1980	4	MCQ
RC 4: Tribal art	4	MCQ
Total Number of Questions	16	MCQ

CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension Syllabus: Topic Weightage & Question Types

Reading Comprehension (RC) is a very important part of the VARC section in the CAT exam. RC section involves reading passages from different subject areas such as literature, business, science, philosophy, and social sciences, and answering a set of questions that test candidate’s understanding. These passages test a candidate’s ability to understand complex information, identify key ideas, draw inferences, and evaluate arguments.

While there is no fixed syllabus for RC in CAT, according to previous year CAT exam analysis, we can understand topics which often appear in RC section. These topics are given in the table below.

CAT Reading Comprehension Syllabus 2026

Topic Area	Description
Psychology	CAT Reading Comprehension passages on Psychology explore how the human mind works. It covers cognitive processes, decision-making biases, memory, perception, and behavioural theories proposed by thinkers like Freud, Piaget, and Kahneman. These passages demand careful reading as they often blend scientific reasoning with abstract concepts, making inference-based questions particularly challenging.
Philosophy	CAT Reading Comprehension passages on Philosophy examine fundamental questions about knowledge, ethics, reality, and human existence. These passages draw from both Western and Eastern philosophical traditions. These passages are often abstract and argument-driven, requiring candidates to closely follow the

	author's line of reasoning to answer tone, inference, and logical structure-based questions accurately.
History	CAT RC passages on History are typically drawn from Indian, British, and American historical events, exploring themes of colonialism, social reform, and political change. These passages are generally fact-dense, requiring candidates to distinguish between stated facts and the author's interpretation.
Arts and Museum	CAT RC passages on Arts and Museum cover painting, sculpture, architecture, and curatorial practice. They often analyze how art reflects the cultural and historical context of its time. Candidates must pay close attention to the author's perspective and evaluative tone, as questions frequently test interpretation rather than factual recall.
Society	CAT RC passages on Society examine issues such as gender, inequality, social mobility, and community identity. These passages often present multiple viewpoints on complex social challenges. These passages tend to be opinion-driven, making it essential to identify the author's stance and distinguish it from views being critiqued.
Culture	CAT RC passages on Culture explore language, traditions, customs, and the interplay between different civilisations and communities. These passages are often descriptive yet nuanced, requiring candidates to grasp subtle distinctions in meaning and avoid over-generalising the author's observations.

Read more about [CAT Reading Comprehension](#) pattern, syllabus and preparation.

CAT Reading Comprehension 2026: Type of questions

Based on CAT previous year's papers, the question types expected in **CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension** are as below.

- **Main Idea-Based Questions:** Identify the primary theme of the passage.
- **Fact-Based or Detail-Based Questions:** Ask for specific details from the passage.
- **Inference-Based Questions:** Require deriving conclusions beyond the explicit text.
- **Tone and Attitude-Based Questions:** Understanding the author's perspective (e.g., optimistic, critical).
- **Vocabulary-Based Questions:** Word meaning, contextual usage.
- **Title-Based Questions:** Choosing the most appropriate title for the passage.
- **Logical Structure-Based Questions:** Understanding the flow and coherence of ideas.

CAT Reading Comprehension Preparation Strategy 2026

Tips for how to prepare for CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension section is given below.

1. **Improve Reading Speed Without Dropping Comprehension:** Read a variety of texts daily, including editorials, research papers, and opinion articles. Use techniques

like skimming for general ideas and scanning for specific details. Avoid the habit of “reading in your head” to increase speed.

2. **Develop a Strong Vocabulary:** Use a popular book “Word Power Made Easy by Norman Lewis” to build vocabulary. Learn the roots, prefixes, and suffixes to understand word meanings quickly. Maintain a vocabulary notebook and revise frequently.
3. **Identify and Adapt to Different Passage Types:** Some passages are fact-based, while others are opinion-driven. Business and Science passages may be dense with data, requiring focus on cause-effect relationships. Literature and Philosophy passages often require understanding the author’s tone and intent.
4. **Focus on the First and Last Paragraphs:** The introduction usually states the main idea. The conclusion often summarizes key takeaways or provides the author's final opinion. These two sections help in answering main idea and tone-based questions.
5. **Try to read the Questions First:** Skim the questions before reading the passage to identify what to focus on. However, for abstract or inference-heavy passages, it’s better to read the passage first.
6. **Learn to eliminate Incorrect Options Systematically:** Many incorrect answers contain extreme words like "always," "never," "must," or "completely." Some options may be factually correct but not relevant to the question. When confused, eliminate two wrong choices first, and then compare the remaining two options. You will have better chance of getting answer correct.
7. **Practice to Solve RCs in Defined Time.** In CAT, RC has a weightage of 66.66% of the VARC section. You should aim to complete one RC passage in 7-8 minutes, including answering questions.
8. **Analyze and Learn from Mistakes:** Maintain a note book of errors – take down incorrect answers and the reason behind mistakes. Try to identify patterns of your mistakes. After understanding reattempt passages after a few days to check for improvement.

CAT Reading Comprehension Books & Study Material

To prepare effectively, following CAT Reading Comprehension study material and books are very helpful:

- **How to Prepare for Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension for CAT by Arun Sharma, Meenakshi Upadhyay (12th Edition, 2025):** Arun Sharma CAT books have been widely used by CAT toppers. From 2025 onwards, Arun Sharma’s bestselling CAT preparation books are converted as ‘Courseware’, that combines traditional books with digital learning tools like videos and mock tests. Verbal Ability & Reading Comprehension (VARC) for CAT 2025 book has 500 new questions, 75+ videos, 15 new sectional tests, and solved CAT 2017–24 papers with detailed explanations. Read this article to check [Arun Sharma CAT books 2026](#) latest edition, prices, chapters and topics, cost and discounts.

- **Verbal Ability and Reading Comprehension for the CAT by Nishit K. Sinha (Pearson):** Known for its exhaustive collection of practice exercises and detailed solutions that focus on “Why an option is wrong.”
- **The IMS/TIME/Career Launcher Study Modules:** These booklets are highly specialized and very good study material.

CAT Reading Comprehension Passage Books Online Resources

CAT RC Passage Online Resources are also very useful to prepare for this section. Check details below.

- Aeon Essays and [The Guardian](#) – Good for high-quality, opinion-based reading
- [The Hindu](#) Editorials and [Indian Express](#) Explained Section – Helps in comprehension of complex contemporary topics.
- [New York Times](#), [The Economist](#) – Good for understanding global issues and developments

CAT Reading Comprehension Preparation Tips by CAT Toppers

Read the CAT **Reading Comprehension** Tips by CAT Toppers, shared during MBAUniverse.com interviews:

Ekansh Gupta, CAT Topper 99.91%; IIM Calcutta Student: “I started with reading 10 Books, a mix of fiction and non-fictional books for VARC Preparation and then switched to CR practice over free resources like the GMAT club. Also, I enrolled for GEJO's VARC 1000 that helped me know the techniques or strategies I was missing.”

Akhil Garg, CAT Topper 99.73%; IIM Ahmedabad Student: “I focused a lot on reading different articles and novels, conversing in English with friends and even watching English TV series and movies. I wrote down whatever new words I encountered after reading at least 5-6 newspaper articles every day.”

Gyayak Jain, CAT Topper 100%; IIM Ahmedabad Student: “I believe I was weak in VARC and therefore I started by looking into model answers given in the solutions and tried to understand if I associated with the logic given in the solution. If I was satisfied with the logic given in the solution, which was not always true, I tried to look problems from that point of view also in the next mock. When I was not convinced with the solution, I ignored the mistake and went ahead with my intuition/logic in next mocks too. If I find that same mistake is repeating, then I tried to find out situations where my logic will not work. I tried experimenting with various exam attempting strategies and realised I get fatigued if I do same kind of problems together in one go, so I mix-matched various types of questions.”

Rachit Gupta, CAT Topper 99.83%; IIM Lucknow Student: “I was very weak at the verbal section. The key reason was the slow reading speed. I took course material from TIME and my strategy was to emphasize more on my weakness which was the Verbal section.”

Sai Praneeth Reddy, CAT Topper 100%: Praneeth felt that he needed hard work in VARC which he did in the last one month to CAT. Mocks helped him to improve a lot in CAT preparation. His advice on Verbal Ability preparation for CAT is to learn from mistakes and

don't miss AIMCAT. To improve in VARC the best way, is to start reading novels and articles.

Best Daily Reading Sources for CAT 2026 RC Preparation

Building a strong reading habit is the foundation of CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension preparation. The sources listed below form the ideal CAT Reading List that covers the range of topics, writing styles, and complexity levels that appear in CAT RC passages.

Indian Newspapers and Editorials

- **The Hindu Editorial and Opinion Pages:** This is the most recommended daily reading source for CAT RC preparation. Covers politics, economy, science, and society in a formal, argument-driven style that closely mirrors CAT passage tone.
- **Indian Express Explained Section:** This section is excellent for understanding complex contemporary issues presented in a clear, analytical format.
- **Business Standard and Mint Newspaper:** These papers are essential for cracking business, economy, and policy-related RC passages that regularly appear in CAT exam.

International Publications

- **The Economist:** Highly recommended for its dense, opinion-rich writing style. Reading one article daily significantly improves speed and comprehension of complex passages.
- **The Guardian Long Reads:** Covers society, culture, science, and arts which are high-frequency CAT RC topic areas.
- **The New York Times:** Good for global affairs, science, and cultural perspectives.

Long-Form and Academic Reading

- **Aeon Essays (aeon.co):** The most CAT-relevant long-form reading resource available online. Aeon articles on philosophy, psychology, science, and society closely replicate the style, length, and complexity of actual CAT RC passages. Reading Aeon articles daily is widely recommended by CAT toppers and coaching institutes alike. Search **Aeon Articles for CAT** to find curated reading lists shared by the CAT prep community.

CAT Reading Comprehension PDFs and Practice Material

- **CAT Previous Year RC Passages PDF:** Practising from official CAT papers remains the most effective preparation method. Download CAT Reading Comprehension Previous Year Questions PDF free from MBAUniverse.com. This covers CAT past five years' RC passages solutions.
- **1000 Reading Comprehension PDF for CAT:** Several coaching institutes including IMS, TIME, and Cracku offer compiled RC practice sets. These are useful for building reading stamina and exposure to diverse passage types beyond official CAT papers.

Pro Tip: Don't be a passive reader! After every passage/article, pause and ask yourself — *What is the central argument? What is the author's tone? What inference can I draw logically?* This habit transforms daily reading into active CAT 2026 RC preparation.

CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension Questions

According to Toppers, CAT Mock Tests and Previous Year Question Papers play a very important role in CAT Reading Comprehension Preparation. You can take CAT RC Sectional Mock Tests free on MBAUniverse.com. These tests provide instant, data-backed performance analytics, allowing you to identify accuracy gaps before they impact your actual percentile. Click on the links below and take test now.

- [CAT Reading Comprehension Mock Tests](#)
- [CAT Reading Comprehension Previous Years Question Papers](#)

CAT Reading Comprehension Previous Year Questions PDF

CAT Previous Year Question Papers play a very important role in CAT 2026 Reading Comprehension Preparation. For practicing CAT 2026 reading comprehension questions, you can download CAT RC Previous Year Question Papers free from MBAUniverse.com. Click on the links below and take test now.

Summary

In summary, CAT Reading Comprehension preparation 2026 involves reading passages from literature, business, science, philosophy, and social sciences, and answering questions based on your understanding. Above article covers CAT Reading Comprehension Pattern, Type of Questions asked in previous year CAT Papers, and how to prepare. Reading Comprehension for CAT PDF download is available above. You should read the Hindu and Business Standard or Mint newspaper for CAT Daily Articles. Also read about [CAT 2026 Preparation](#), [CAT Verbal Ability Preparation](#), and take free [CAT Mock Tests](#).