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# Verbal Ability & Comprehension

for



# CAT 2014

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Price : ₹ 500

Typeset by Disha DTP Team



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# PREFACE

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The Common Admission Test is a crucial entrance exam taken by lakhs of management aspirants across India. Cracking the Common Admissions Test (CAT) or for that matter any other top B School Entrance Test is not as much a function of hard work as it is a function of smart work. Students preparing for CAT exam by and large remain undecided which books to refer and at what time. So, choosing the right CAT preparation books becomes important. The CAT preparation books should clear the fundamentals of the student along with providing all the tips, tricks and appropriate strategies. Only then the student can clear all his concepts in the most efficient way to solve the CAT questions.

DISHA has come up with this book which comprehends the concept of Common Admission Test or CAT. The book will make you understand the pattern and syllabus of CAT by going through the same to get the gist which will enable you to draft your own blueprint or strategy to follow for preparation for CAT. With Verbal Ability & Comprehension for CAT, you will be able to fully grab upon the concept, pattern and syllabus of CAT. It is being observed that compared to previous CAT exams, the cat questions have become lengthier and multifaceted with multiple concepts and the book has catered to all these .

**The book has been divided into THREE parts:**

**Part 1:** Verbal Ability comprises basic grammar, vocabulary, spotting errors, sentence correction, fill in the blanks and word usage. There are a wide range of examples and exercises which again have been categorized as Foundation Level, Standard Level and Expert Level.

**Part 2:** Verbal Reasoning is devoted to reasoning based verbal questions. All these types of questions are introduced and then methods are elaborated with the help of ample examples and exercises to build up problem solving approach. This part is comprised of Para Jumble, Logical completion of Paragraphs, Critical Reasoning and Facts, Inferences, Judgment. Again each chapter contains the three levels of exercises mentioned above.

**Part 3:** Reading Comprehension covers a paragraph followed by a host of questions which are based on the information given in the paragraph. This part provides with identifying different types of questions as well as the methodology to solve them. There are a wide range of examples and exercises which again have been categorized as Foundation Level, Standard Level and Expert Level.

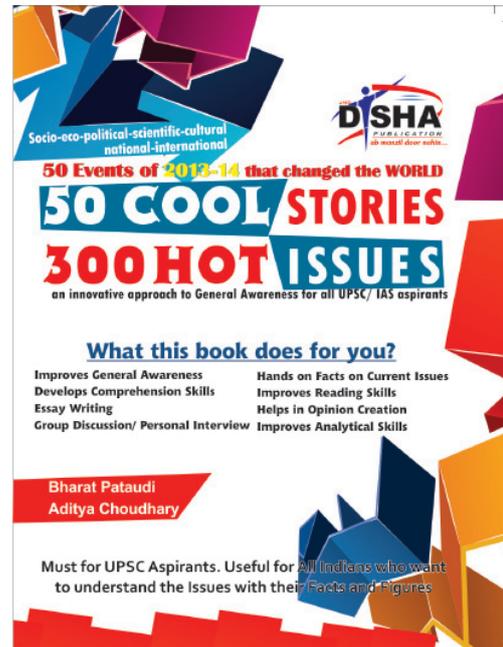
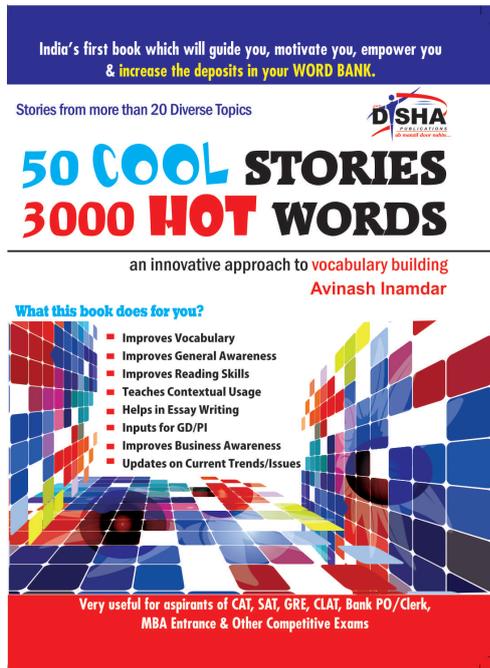
In the end the book provides 5 Mock Verbal Tests which will help you in evaluating your performance and further generating triggers to improve it.

Hard work will be the key to success. Practise as much as you can. Luck does play a role in the exam but do not expect it to favour you unless you really deserve it.

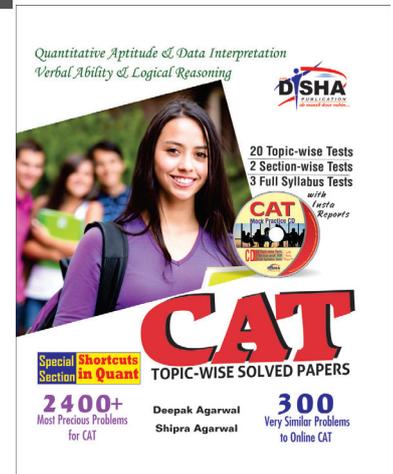
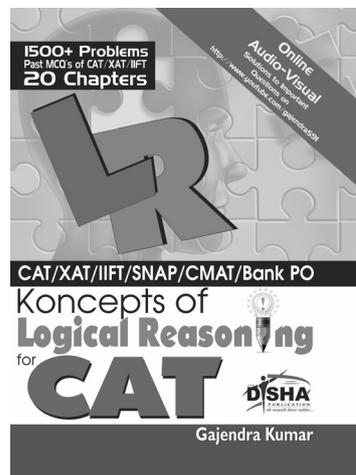
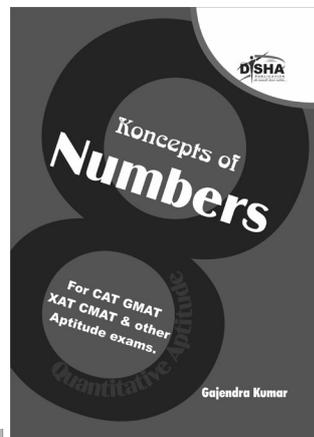
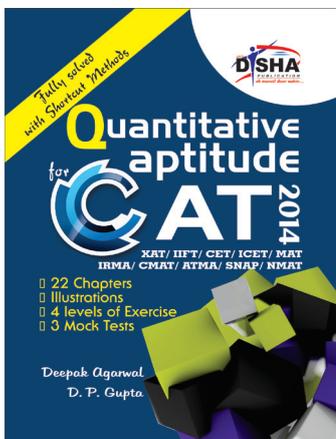
Though all efforts have been made to make the book flawless, any suggestion to better the book will be highly appreciated.

**Bharat Patodi**  
**Aditya Choudhary**

## Comprehension cum General Awareness Book



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# SECTION 1

## VERBAL ABILITY

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1. **Grammar— Basic Concepts & Common Mistakes**
2. **Spotting Error Problems**
3. **Sentence Correction Problems**
4. **Choose the Correct Sentence Problems**
5. **Vocabulary — Word Bank**
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10. **Word Usage Problems**
11. **Incorrect Word Usage Problems**



# CHAPTER 1

## Grammar— Basic Concepts & Common Mistakes



The most important part of any grammar learning is boredom. There are two ways you can avoid this:

Either you get the boredom out of Grammar by writing a really interesting book that blows the socks out of every other writer ever (Please don't do that. We anyway don't make a lot of money.) Or you could just let it pass away in front of your eyes. Gloss over the book as if zombified: 'Reading, yes, but understanding? Nooo. Eyes moving over the words, but pondering? Nooo.'

There is another way to do this. You can let yourself get bored, and study grammar. This might be a breakthrough in the field of boring exact linguistic sciences. People ready to get bored? Those English teachers cannot believe their ears.

I don't know how you are going to do this. But you have got to. I'll give you something to work with here: everyone who completes his grammatical learning can visit me and get an autographed copy of this book. (Please bring your own copy of the book)

Grammar is a crucial part of any competitive exam and it requires a lot of time and effort to perfect. But all the aptitude tests out there are not eager to ascertain whether you know all the grammar rules of traditional English. These tests focus on testing your usage of English language. For example: *Sandeep and me are going for work.*

This statement is wrong, because it uses the pronoun 'me' incorrectly. 'Sandeep and me' are acting as the subjects in the sentence, hence the correct form would be:

*Sandeep and I are going for work.*

These along with others are the type of grammar constructs that could be tested on CAT.

Before we head any further, it would be wise to go over the most important parts of grammar. Let us go over the basics of grammar in short.

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Grammar is a Latin word which refers to the study of the form and arrangement of word, sentences and phrases. This is why, first of all, we'll describe what a word, sentence or phrase really means:

(1) **WORD** – Word is the basic unit of a language, and blocks of words join together to form a sentence. A word can be divided into its 'stem' (the basic part which contains the meaning of the word) and its 'inflection' (the ending of a word which could identify whether it is singular or plural, or which tense is it in)

For example: In the words 'Cats' and 'Talked' the stem is 'cat' and 'talk'; whereas infinitives are 's' (showing that there are more than one cats) and 'ed' (indicating the past tense).

(2) **SENTENCE** – A sentence is a group of words which communicates a complete thought. The various parts of a sentence are:

(A) **Subject**: If we were to say in layman terms, the subject of a sentence is a name, person or thing about which the sentence is speaking. To know the subject of a sentence, ask who or what before the verb used in the sentence. For example, in the sentence: 'Sheela is singing a song', if we have to determine the subject, then we must ask, 'Who is singing the song?' The

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answer is *Sheela* and that is our subject.

- (B) **Predicate:** In simple words, we can say that a predicate is what remains in the sentence after removing the subject, so

**Sentence – Subject = Predicate**

Predicate is basically everything that's been written about the subject. For example: our predicate in "Sheela is singing a song" will be: is singing a song.

As you can see, every sentence contains a subject and a predicate.

- (C) **Object:** It is a person or a thing on which the action of the verb takes place in the sentence. Thus, it is something upon which the subject acts.

We can find out the object in a sentence by asking who or what before the subject of the sentence. For example: in 'Sheela is singing a song', if we ask, 'What is Sheela singing?', we get the answer as 'a song'. Thus, the object of the sentence is 'a song'.

### (3) PHRASES AND CLAUSES

**Phrase:** ... is a group of words that may have nouns or verbs but will definitely not have a subject. Clearly, the verbs or nouns present in the phrase will not be acting as the subject. For example:

... *bringing the mould*

... *before the burial*

... *growing a beard*

**Clause:** ... is a group of words that will have a subject performing an action or verb. For example:

... *since he is such a great man*

... *where the lights are out.*

## 1.2 PARTS OF SPEECH

It is now time to understand grammar in more detail by looking at the different parts of speech:

- (1) **NOUN:** It is a word which is used to name a place, person, an abstract idea or a thing. For example: in the sentence, *'Abhishek is a great person.*

There are two nouns being used: 'Abhishek' that names a person and 'person' which identifies a class of living beings.

There are different types of nouns, but a particular noun can belong to more than one type:

- (a) **Proper nouns:** A proper noun always starts with a capital letter, and it always refers to a specific person, place or thing. For example: days of the week, historical places, name of a university or a person etc. So proper nouns are always specific and indicate or refer to a particular thing or person. (The italicized words below are proper nouns)

I do not work on *Sundays*.

Travelling to India was indeed a great experience. My favourite place has to be the *Taj Mahal* in *Agra*.

- (b) **Common nouns:** In definition, it is completely opposite to a proper noun: it refers to a place, thing or person in general and not in a specific sense. As these nouns are not specific, therefore the initial letter will not be capitalized (unless of course, it is the first word of a sentence). Some examples:

The nearest *town* from here is 32 *miles* away.

I find it tough to understand why some *people* hate *smokers*.

- (c) **Concrete nouns:** These nouns identify things which can be perceived or felt through our senses: touch, sight, taste, hearing or smell. Thus, these nouns refer to objects that can be sensed. For example:

Whenever I take my *dog* for a *walk*, he always tries to run away.

- (d) **Abstract nouns:** These nouns can be defined as being contrary to concrete nouns because these do not refer to what can be experienced through our physical senses. These refer to abstract thoughts like truth, justice etc. For example:

Buying sweets for the party was an *afterthought*.

Thinking about my *childhood* always makes me nostalgic.

- (e) **Countable nouns:** These are the nouns which can be counted. So these refer to things which can be counted by us that can be either singular or plural. For example,

The *table* in my *room* looks terrific.

After leaving the job, he spent most of his *weekdays* reading *books*.

- (f) **Uncountable nouns:** As the name suggests, these are opposites to countable nouns. These nouns cannot be counted. They can be measured in some units but not counted. For example:

*Oxygen* is essential for human life.

I need some *water*.

- (g) **Collective nouns:** These nouns refer to a group of entities like things, animals or people. For example:

He was the smartest in his *class*.

The *flock* of sheep destroyed the garden.

- (2) **PRONOUNS:** These are those parts of speech which can be used in place of the nouns. Use of pronouns makes the sentences less repetitive or cumbersome. For example: Dheeraj went to the market to buy the chocolates which he liked the most.

If we used 'Dheeraj' instead of the pronoun 'he' then our statement would have been a bit awkward and redundant. Take a look

at this example:

*Soumitra wants his assets to be divided between his sons and their wives.*

Here, if we didn't use any of the pronouns, then the sentence would have looked something like this:

*Soumitra wants Soumitra's assets to be divided between Soumitra's sons and Soumitra's sons' wives.*

Pronouns are a great way of expressing ourselves without complicating the sentence with excessive repetition of the nouns.

There are several types of pronouns:

#### (a) Personal pronouns

These are used to refer to a specific thing or person. These are of two types:

##### (i) Subjective personal pronoun

Those personal pronouns which act as the subject of a sentence are known as subjective personal pronouns (I, you, he, she, it, they, we). For example:

I didn't expect this from you.

My birthday? Oh, it was indeed special!

##### (ii) Objective personal pronoun

These pronouns act as the object of an infinitive phrase (*a phrase which begins with 'to'*), a verb, a compound verb (*more than one verbs*) or a preposition. Me, you, her, him, it, us, you, them, are examples of objective personal pronouns. For example:

**After reading the book, Ram threw *it* away.**

Here, *it* is acting as the direct object for the verb *threw*.

**I have been told that Mickey will meet us in the cafeteria.** (Here, '*us*' is acting as the direct object of the compound verb: '*will meet*'.)

**Come on! Give that pen to *me*!** (Here, '*me*' is acting as the direct object for the preposition '*to*')

##### (iii) Possessive personal pronouns

Pronouns which indicate possession, or identify ownership, or tell who owns something or someone, are known as possessive personal pronouns. Mine, your, hers, its, ours, theirs, his, etc. are possessive personal pronouns. For example:

**Is that your purse?**

Here, a question is asked to know if that purse belongs to someone.

**Ours is the one parked outside the garage.**

Here, '*ours*' is acting as the subject of the sentence and is indicating that the speaker owns the car.

**That Ferrari is *mine*.**

Here, the pronoun '*mine*' is indicating that a particular Ferrari is owned by the one who spoke this statement.

Note: In the above example, the possessive personal pronoun *mine* is also acting as a subject complement. Subject complements are those words which follow the linking verb. A subject complement could be a noun, pronoun or an adjective.

#### (b) Demonstrative pronouns

These pronouns basically point to thing(s) or identify them. For example, '*this*' points to something which is nearby, either in time or space. This, that, those, these are some of the common demonstrative pronouns (*this* and *that* refer to singular nouns or noun phrases; whereas, *these* and *those* are used to refer to plural nouns or noun phrases.) For example:

***This* is something which I have never seen before!**

Here, '*this*' is the subject and it is referring to a noun which is nearby to the speaker.

**I really want to visit *that* place.**

The demonstrative pronoun, '*that*', points to some place which is not nearby to the speaker.

#### (c) Interrogative pronouns

The pronouns which are used to ask questions are called as interrogative pronouns. Who, whom, which, what are some of the interrogative pronouns. The compounds formed by adding the suffix 'ever' to these are also interrogative pronouns, viz. whoever, whomever, whichever, whatever.

Usage of interrogative pronouns: *who*, *whom* and sometimes *which* is used to refer to people. Whereas, *what* and *which* are normally used in cases of things and animals. (*refer to the common errors section*). For example:

**Who else is coming for tonight's party?**

Here, the interrogative pronoun '*who*' is the subject of the sentence

**To whom does this belong?**

Here, '*whom*' is acting as the object.

**What is there?**

Here, '*what*' is the object of the verb: '*is*'.

#### (d) Relative pronouns

Relative pronouns are those pronouns which are used to link or join a phrase or clause, to another phrase or clause. Who, whom, that, which are used as relative pronouns. Adding the suffix 'ever' leads to other relative pronouns, i.e. whoever,

whomever, whichever, etc.

Again, *who* and *whoever* are used to refer to subjects; whereas, *whom* and *whomever* are used in cases of objects.

**Whoever broke this vase will surely be in trouble soon.**

'Whoever' acts as the subject here.

**You may select whatever you like.**

Here, 'whatever' is the object of the compound verb 'may select'.

**The player who plays the best, wins the 'man of the match' award.**

'Who' is acting as the subject of the verb and as the relative pronoun that also introduces the subordinate clause, 'who plays the best'.

*Note:* A subordinate clause is also known as a dependent clause. They start with a subordinate conjunction or a relative pronoun, and contain a subject and a verb but still cannot act as standalone sentences: an additional thought or information is required to complete or finish the thought.

#### (e) Indefinite pronouns

These pronouns do not refer to something or someone specific, but still some entities that are identifiable. Following are some of the indefinite pronouns: all, another, any, anybody, anyone, anything, each, everyone, everybody, everything, few, many, nobody, none, one, several, somebody, someone, etc. For example:

**Many came to the party, but still it wasn't great to be a part of it.**

*Many* acts as the subject, and we can see that it is not referring to someone specific, not even in number.

**He donated everything he found in his old basement.**

As you can see, *everything* isn't referring to something specific and is neither pointing to something in particular.

#### (f) Reflexive pronouns

The subject of a clause or sentence is referred to, by using reflexive pronouns. Following are some reflexive pronouns: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves. For example:

**Even though alcoholics know that drinking is harmful, but still they are unable to stop themselves from consuming alcohol.**

**I was angry at myself for insulting an old man.**

#### (g) Intensive pronouns

These pronouns are used to intensify their antecedents. The reflexive pronouns mentioned above can also be used as intensive pronouns. For example:

**The chief minister himself said that sincere efforts will be made to develop the state.**

The intensive pronoun *himself* is intensifying its antecedent, i.e. the chief minister.

**They themselves promised to fulfil the prophesy.**

The antecedent here is 'they'.

### (3) ADJECTIVES

The words which modify nouns or pronouns are known as adjectives. They identify, quantify or describe nouns or pronouns. Normally, these adjectives precede the noun or pronoun they modify. For example:

**His mansion is wonderful and massive.**

**Wow! That blue dress is beautiful!**

There are many different types of adjectives:

#### (a) Possessive adjectives

These are similar to possessive pronouns (my, your, hers, its, ours, theirs, his). The only difference is that their use modifies a noun or pronoun. For example:

**I could not attend my class.**

Here, the word 'my' describes the noun 'class'.

**Where is your pen?**

'Your' describes or tells something about the noun 'pen'.

#### (b) Demonstrative adjectives

Again, these are similar to demonstrative pronouns (this, that, these, those) but they work as adjectives by modifying the noun or noun phrase. For example:

**While running, I tripped over that cord.**

In the given sentence, the demonstrative adjective 'that' modifies the noun 'cord'.

**This painting is indeed spectacular!**

'This' modified the noun 'painting'.

#### (c) Interrogative adjective

These are identical to interrogative pronouns (which, what) but here, they work as adjectives by modifying the noun or noun phrase instead of just standing on their own. For example -

(a) Which paintings do you want? (Here *which* modified the noun *paintings* by defining or informing about the paintings)

referred to in the sentence)

(b) What luggage are you carrying? (*what* modifies the *luggage*)

**(d) Indefinite adjective**

Again, these are similar to indefinite pronoun except that they modify the noun, pronoun or noun phrase like in the following sentences:

(a) Many Indians go abroad for higher studies. (*Here* many modifies the noun *Indians*)

(b) I will not listen to any advice you have for me (*any* modifies *advice*)

**(4) VERB**

Verb is arguably considered to be the most important part of a sentence. It asserts or tells something about the subject of the sentence, and also depicts the state of being, events or actions. Verb is a critical element of the predicate of a sentence.

Given below are some of the examples of verbs:

**(i) He is *drinking* orange juice.**

Informs the action the subject of the sentence is doing.

**(ii) I *will go* there soon.**

It is a compound verb which describes an action taking place in the future.

Verbs can be divided into three types –

(i) Action Verb – these verbs represent an action, which could either be physical or mental. Example:

(a) The car *hit* him. (physical action)

(b) He *was singing* all day long. (compound verb showing physical action)

(c) I am *imagining* something. (mental action)

(ii) Verbs of being (forms of be) – These verbs show a state of existence:

(a) His paintings *are* a work of art.

(b) He *was* in his room some time back.

(c) I *have been* there.

(iii) Linking verbs – these verbs link the subject with its complement.

**(5) ADVERB**

We have seen in the previous section, how adjectives modify nouns or pronouns. Similarly, adverbs also work as modifiers to verbs, adjectives, clauses, phrases or even another adverb. An adverb can do the following:

1. Indicate manner, time, place, cause, or degree of a noun, pronoun or an action.

2. Questions like how, when, where and how much, can also be answered by an adverb.

For example:

**Our cook *quickly* made the food, when we told her that we were very hungry.**

The adverb '*quickly*' modifies the verb '*made*' and also tells how fast the food was made.

**Johnson wasn't getting picked for the team, but he was determined to *patiently* wait for his chance.**

The adverb '*patiently*' modifies the verb '*wait*' and also shows the manner in which Johnson decided to wait.

**We urged him to undertake rock climbing *more carefully*, otherwise he could be paralyzed for life.**

Here, the adverb '*carefully*' is in fact modifying another adverb (*more*).

***Luckily*, I reached on time.**

The adverb '*luckily*', modifies the whole sentence.

The verbs which join two clauses together are known as **conjunctive adverbs** (consequently, finally, furthermore, hence, however, incidentally, indeed, instead, likewise, meanwhile, nevertheless, next, nonetheless, otherwise, still, then, therefore, thus). But a conjunctive adverb requires a semicolon to join two independent clauses. For example:

**He could not prepare his car; *therefore*, he took a taxi.**

**It took us two days; *finally*, we got the tickets for show.**

**(6) CONJUNCTIONS**

These words are used to link words, phrases and clauses; therefore, it is essential to know their use in order to form logical and coherent sentences. For example:

(a) I bought apples *and* oranges.

(b) Do it *when* you are free.

These are just some basic examples, but now will look at conjunctions in more depth.

There are two types of conjunctions –

**(i) Co-ordinating Conjunctions**

These words (*and, but, or, nor, for, so, or yet*) are used to join individual words, phrases and independent clauses. For example (*all of the italicized words are co-ordinating conjunctions*):

(a) Eggs and fishes are rich in proteins. (Two nouns are linked with 'and')

(b) He was sad, for he had suffered a lot. ('for' is linking two independent clauses)

**(ii) Subordinating conjunctions**

A dependent clause is introduced with a subordinating clause, and it also indicated the kind of relationship that exists between the dependent and independent clause. The most common subordinating conjunctions are:

after, although, as, because, before, how, if, once, since, than, that, though, till, until, when, where, whether, and while.

We will now give some examples of its use; the italicized words indicate the subordinating conjunction.

- i) *After* he talked with his friends, he felt better. (*After he talked with his friends* is a dependent clause)
- ii) If I call you, please pick up the phone. (*If I call you* is the dependent clause)
- iii) He realized that he needs to work harder when he saw his exam results. (*when he saw his exam results* is the dependent clause)

### (iii) Correlative conjunctions

These always come in pairs and are used to link equivalent sentence elements both...and, either...or, neither...nor, not only...but also, so...as, and whether...or'. The examples are given below, as the italicized words show correlative conjunctions:

(i) Both my father and mother are doctors. ('both' 'and' conjunction pair is used to link two noun phrases which also act as the compound noun of the sentence)

(ii) I will either go to Greece or Canada in my holidays. ('either' 'or' conjunction pair is linking two nouns here)

## (7) PREPOSITIONS

Nouns, pronouns and phrases are linked to the other words of the sentence via prepositions. The object of the prepositions is the word which it introduces.

Spatial or temporal relationship the object has to the rest of the sentences is indicated by prepositions; the following examples depict that:

- (i) The laptop is *on* the table
- (ii) The laptop is *beneath* the table.
- (iii) He was leaning *against* the lamp.
- (iv) His house is *beside* the regional park.
- (v) I saw him *over* the bridge.
- (vi) He talks a lot *during* the class.

A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition, the object of preposition and any associated adjective or adverb. There are around 150 prepositions, but the most common ones are about, above, across, after, against, along, among, around, at, before, behind, below, beneath, beside, between, beyond, but, by, despite, down, during, except, for, from, in, inside, into, like, near, of, off, on, onto, out, outside, over, past, since, through, throughout, till, to, toward, under, underneath, until, up, upon, with, within, and without.

Examples showing use of prepositions:

- i) Excessive pollution is a cause of concern throughout the world. ('throughout' introduces the noun phrase 'the world'; this prepositional phrase acts as the adverb because it describes the location of problem)
- ii) He always did his work with enthusiasm and dedication. (here the preposition 'with' introduces the nouns enthusiasm and dedication which act as the compound noun in the given sentence; the prepositional phrase here is an adverb because it describes how he did the work)
- iii) The teacher was searching for his book in the cabin. (in introduces the noun 'in' the cabin and the prepositional phrase acts as an adverb because it describes where the teacher was searching)

## (8) INTERJECTIONS

Some of the more interesting parts of speech are the interjections. These are used to express emotions or feelings and are mostly the easiest to identify. The examples include, greetings like Hi, Hello, Goodbye, expressions like Great, Oh, Wow!, Bravo!, etc. Interjections are normally used as part of active speech where the writer has to express immediate feelings.

*Hi, my name is Gaurav.*

*Oh dear! That would hurt.*

*Excuse me! Please make way for the pregnant lady.*

**There's another category of words that you might come across a lot:**

## (9) DETERMINERS

These words introduce a noun with words like a/an, the, this, every, those, many, etc. These are placed before the noun so that it is clear what the noun refers to. For example:

'People' just means a group of human beings, but '*these people*' indicates the people referred to in the phrase/clause and hence, '*these*' is used as a determiner here.

There are several classes of determiners:

### (I) Definite articles

This is a definite article which comes under determiners, and is amongst the most frequently used words in English. We will list some of the cases or situations in which it is used:

- (a) **It is used to refer to something which is unique, or only one of such a type exists.**

For example:

(1) *The Pope* gave a great speech yesterday.

There is only one Pope, and this is signified or indicated by the definite article '*the*' used before it.

(2) *The Sun* is hiding in the clouds today!

As we know, there is only one Sun, so it is appropriate to introduce, or mention it by having a definite article before it to convey this oneness.

(3) *The king* of India was well known for his generosity.

It indicates that there was only one king at that particular time.

(b) **A definite article is also used before superlative adjectives, again indicating that *only one* of such kind exists.**

For example:

(1) He is *the smartest* student in our class

There can only be one who would be deemed *the smartest*.

(2) He is the *tallest* person in our family

Again, there can be only *one* who can be considered the *tallest*.

(c) **To refer to something we have already mentioned.**

This is similar to the only one thing, because we are referring to something or someone unique, i.e. just the one we have already mentioned. Thereby, we are being very particular and we intend to refer to only that entity.

For example:

**A boy was running down *the* streets and he suddenly fell as he tried to avoid *a* collision.**

***The* boy was lucky that he did not suffer any serious injuries.**

You could argue the necessity of this '*the*', but with this determiner, it is indicated that we are not referring to just *any* boy, we refer to that one boy we just mentioned. Thus, it helps in removing this small ambiguity.

(d) **To imply one trait or just something about *all the* entities referred to by the noun.**

For example:

(1) *The dogs* are often reliable.

'*The*' helps convey a trait which *all the dogs* have.

(2) *The* moms are always very emotional about their kids.

The definite article helps say something about '*all the moms*'.

(e) **When we are referring to a system or service.** For example:

(1) *The fire brigade* took just five minutes to arrive at the site.

(2) Did you listen to *the radio* last night?

(3) *The police* did a commendable job.

(f) **When referring to a specific group of people.** For example:

(1) *The rich* should do more charity.

(2) It's heartrending to see *the poor* suffer so much.

(3) She works to make lives of the *orphans* better.

(g) **Before naming a country (*the United Kingdom*), some unique place (*the Bermuda triangle*), organization (*the WHO*), well known buildings or works of art (*the Taj Mahal*), hotels or pubs or restaurants (*The Oberoi hotel*), or geographical features (*the Mountain*) and even families (*the Thakurs*).**

## (I) Indefinite articles

Let us now move on to the indefinite articles: A and An.

Definite articles are used before stating something that is very specific or unique. On the other hand, indefinite articles are used to refer to non-specific nouns. The use or significance of both these indefinite articles is the same, but '*a*' is used before a noun which has a consonant sound. Whereas, '*an*' is used before a noun which has a vowel sound. For example:

**Are you reading *a* novel?**

**I saw *an* elephant while going to school!**

The situations or cases in which these two indefinite articles are used:

(1) **Before a countable noun when the user does not exactly know what we are referring to. For example:**

(a) *I am looking for a red pen.*

Now which pen is specifically talked about, is not known.

(b) *I need a cigarette.*

Which cigarette? The reader or hearer does not know that.

(2) **Use it to indicate that something is a part of the group, or is a constituent.**

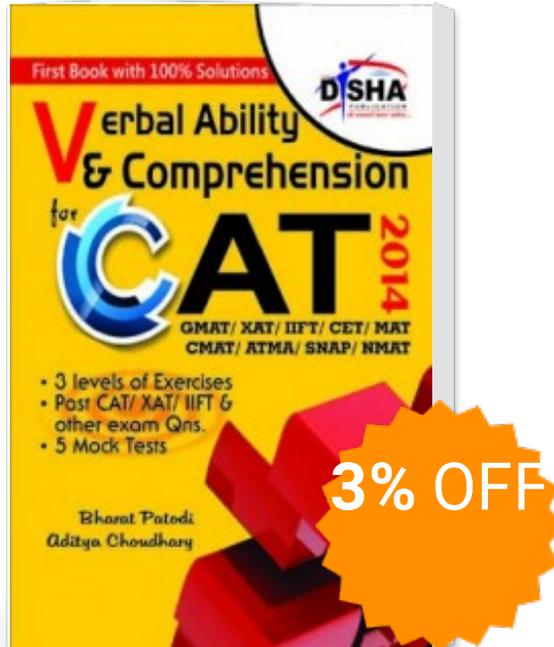
For example:

(a) *She is a student in the Bangalore University.*

She is one of the students who studies in this university.

(3) **Never use an indefinite article with an uncountable or plural noun.**

# Verbal Ability and Comprehension Cat 2014



Publisher : Disha Publication

ISBN : 9789384089795

Author : Disha Publication

Type the URL : <http://www.kopykitab.com/product/3663>



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