

Tricks & Tips

As they say, “CAT is the mother of all tests.” The test is designed to not only test your comprehensive knowledge but also your overall personality, especially it tests your ability to handle high pressure. Until and unless somebody has paid a conscious attention on all skills right from an early age he cannot crack CAT. One cannot be a master in belling the CAT by all those crash courses offered by so many wisecracks. These ‘tricks’ are not tricks in the right sense. These are just tools which may help you develop your own tricks. Nobody can teach tricks of batting to a Mutthiah Muthitharan and tricks of spin bowling to a Sachin Tendulkar. The former can at the best be a part time batsman and the latter can be a part time bowler. But if somebody like Ramakant Achrekar gives a small tip to the likes of Sachin Tendulkar then that will work wonders for batting records. Most of the points discussed here are part of common sense and may help you open your eyes and ears to pick valuable clues.

Comprehension:

Basic Requirements:

Extraordinary Reading Speed: An average person can read about 300 to 400 words per minute if he is comfortable with the language. For reading long passages one needs a reading speed exceeding 1000 words per minute. It is too late to start practicing speed reading. If you are not a speed reader then a better strategy would be to skip some passages to save your time. Try browsing questions before reading a passage. This can help in identifying clues for answers. Try reading between the lines, in other words try to understand the hidden meaning of sentences.

Grammar Part: Use your common sense rather than grammatical theories to handle this section. Probably this is the easiest section of English in CAT examination.

Jumble Paragraph: Try making a coherent paragraph by using options instead of trying altogether on your own. This will help you reach the answer in a faster way.

All tips on English will help you if you have done your homework for getting a good command over the English language. As it is an alien language so mastering it takes years. Take example of your mother tongue. It must have taken your initial 15 years to master the language.

If you are from a big city then chances are you must be comfortable with English. If you are from a mofussil town then it can be your weak point. But irrespective of

your antecedents if you have exercised your grey cells since your school days then don't worry.

Data Interpretation:

Don't get overawed by the sheer size of the table in the CAT paper. They are just a tool to frighten you. Like in comprehension, read the question before scanning the data. This will help you avoid fighting with and filtering useless data.

Instead of doing exact calculation try approximation, while solving this section. All your hardwork during Maths preparation will help you in approximation.

Data Sufficiency:

The most common mistake a candidate does, while attempting this section, is he actually tries to solve the problem. There is no need. You need to judge if the data provided is enough or not to find the answer.

Quantitative Aptitude:

This is the section which takes 80% of your preparation time and probably doesn't give you even 50% of confidence. The golden rule is never take it on your ego if you fail to solve a problem. Most of the candidates, who think themselves smart in numbers, take it on their pride and in their attempt to take the bull by its horns waste their precious time. You are not supposed to solve 100% of the questions. So, take it easy and select or reject a question based on your strong and weak areas.

Use Options as Weapons: Imagine a world without options where you are thrown complicated questions like they put in CAT paper and then you will understand the value of options. Take following example:

1. The sum of two numbers is 20 and their geometric mean is 20% lower than their arithmetic mean. Find the ratio of the numbers.

- A. 4: 1
- B. 9: 1
- C. 1: 1
- D. 17: 3
- E. 5: 1

By conventional method this question can be solved assuming x and y as two numbers and making following equations:

$$x + y = 20$$

$$\text{Arithmetic mean} = 10$$

$$\text{Geometric mean} = 10 \times 80\% = 8$$

$$\Rightarrow \sqrt{xy} = 8$$

$$xy = 64$$

By taking value of x in y's terms or vice versa any person with basic knowledge of equations can solve this problem, but that will take at least 5 precious minutes.

Try solving through options:

Option 1: 4, 1

$$\text{AM} = 2.5$$



$$\text{GM} = 2$$

2 is 20% lower than 2.5 and you have finished the question.

Now you can understand the power of options as tool.

Develop your own short cuts: If you have good grasp of the concept you can develop your own short cuts and you would never need to memorize them.

Try to avoid using pen and paper while solving this section. Once the examiner forces you to use pen and paper then he succeeds in trapping you in the maze of endless calculation which is known as mathematics. Make your brain's RAM and

hard disk to perform at its maximum potential so that it can start solving the question right from the first word it reads.

You can argue that every question cannot be solved by mental mathematics. Even in question which requires calculation keep the last part for using pen and paper.

