

SECTION A

Reading Skills (20 Marks)

1. Read the following passage carefully:

(1) Saffron is a spice that's long been revered across the globe, captivating hearts and palates with its deep-red hue and complex flavour. It is one of the most prized spices that you can find on this planet. Just like gold is among the most valuable metals in the world, saffron means the same in the world of spices. Also known as 'kesar' in Hindi, it has a rich history and is often called an ancient spice. Saffron is being used since ages in various foods made for the rich and the elite as it contains medicinal properties.

Answer the following questions, based on the above passage:

(i) What is the tone of the writer in the given lines? Rationalise your response in about 40 words.

Answer:

The writer adopts an appreciative and informative tone, emphasizing saffron's esteemed status, historical significance, and multifaceted uses. By likening saffron to gold and noting its culinary and medicinal applications, the author underscores its exceptional value and uniqueness.

(ii) Which of the following statements best describes the comparison made in the sentence?

"Just like gold is among the most valuable metals in the world, saffron means the same in the world of spices."

(A) Gold and saffron have similar physical properties.

(B) Gold and saffron have equal monetary value.

(C) Saffron is considered the most valuable spice, similar to how gold is valued among metals.

(D) Gold and saffron are both rare commodities in the global market.

Answer:

(C) Saffron is considered the most valuable spice, similar to how gold is valued among metals.

This statement accurately reflects the analogy, highlighting saffron's esteemed position in the spice realm, akin to gold's prominence among metals.

(iii) List any two points why saffron is revered across the globe.

Answer:

1. Saffron's deep-red hue and intricate flavor profile make it a cherished ingredient in various cuisines.
2. Its extensive history and medicinal properties have solidified its esteemed status worldwide.

(iv) Fill in the blank from the given options:

In the phrase 'backbone of several iconic dishes', the word 'iconic' refers to —

(A) delicately cooked

- (B) widely recognised
- (C) peculiar and rare
- (D) strange and infamous

Answer:

(B) widely recognised

(v) Complete the sentence appropriately:

Saffron has a labour-intensive cultivation process which involves _____.

Answer:

Saffron cultivation demands meticulous hand-harvesting of delicate stigmas from each flower, a process requiring significant manual effort and precision.

(vi) State whether the following statement is True or False:

According to historians, saffron was first used in the kitchens in Iran.

Answer:

True.

(vii) Which of the following statements best describes the reason for saffron's high retail value?

- (A) Due to its magical or mystical properties.
- (B) Because it can only be grown in specific regions.
- (C) Due to its labour-intensive cultivation process and its relatively low yield per plant.
- (D) Because traders, conquerors, and world explorers hoard it.

Answer:

(C) Due to its labour-intensive cultivation process and its relatively low yield per plant.

(viii) Support the writer's view with evidence from the text that saffron is often adulterated.

Answer:

The passage indicates that due to saffron's high value, it is frequently subject to adulteration, with unscrupulous vendors mixing it with inferior substances to increase volume and profit.

2. Read the following passage carefully:

(1) Silk is a natural protein fibre, some forms of which can be woven into textiles. Silk has a long history in India. It is known as Resham in eastern and northern India, and Pattu in the southern parts of India. India is the second largest producer of silk in the world after China.

(2) Silk is renowned for its luxurious qualities with a natural soft and smooth texture that feels comfortable on the skin. One of its unique qualities is to absorb and release moisture, regulating body temperature and keeping the wearer cool and dry.

Answer the following questions based on the above passage:

(i) What does the phrase 'luxurious qualities' in paragraph (2) tell you about the silk fabric? Write in 40 words with evidence from the text.

Answer:

The term 'luxurious qualities' signifies silk's inherent softness and smoothness, offering comfort against the skin. Its ability to manage moisture and regulate body temperature further enhances its reputation as a premium, opulent fabric.

(ii) Select the option that is true for the assertion and reason given below.

Assertion: Silk production requires careful selection.

Reason: Long and uniform silk fibres give silk a glossy appearance.

(A) Both the assertion and the reason are true, and the reason is the correct explanation of the assertion.

(B) Both the assertion and the reason are true, but the reason is not the correct explanation of the assertion.

(C) The assertion is true, but the reason is false.

(D) The assertion is false, but the reason is true.

Answer:

(A) Both the assertion and the reason are true, and the reason is the correct explanation of the assertion.

(iii) Justify the following statement:

"Silk whispers luxury! Its price reflects not just its rarity but the value of the meticulous process behind its creation."

Answer:

Silk epitomizes luxury, with its cost reflecting both its scarcity and the intricate, labor-intensive processes involved in its production, from silkworm cultivation to the careful extraction of fine fibres.

(iv) According to the passage, mention the top two countries that produce silk.

Answer:

The leading silk-producing nations are China and India.

(v) "Factors like climate, availability of quality mulberry leaves, and time required by silkworms to complete their lifecycle are important factors for the production of silk."

State one inference that can be drawn from this.

Answer:

Silk production is highly dependent on environmental conditions and the availability of quality resources, indicating that successful sericulture requires optimal climate and nourishment for silkworms.

(vi) Complete the following with a suitable reason from the text:

"Though silk is considered one of the strongest fibres, it is _____."

Answer:

Though silk is considered one of the strongest fibres, it is susceptible to weakening when wet and can deteriorate under prolonged exposure to sunlight.

(vii) Based on the given text, mention the states which produced the most and the least amount of raw silk in India in the year 2021.

Answer:

In 2021, Karnataka led in raw silk production with 8,483 metric tonnes, while Uttar Pradesh produced the least, totaling 179 metric tonnes.

(viii) Complete the sentence suitably.

"104 kgs of mulberry leaves eaten by 3000 silkworms results in _____."

Answer:

104 kgs of mulberry leaves consumed by 3,000 silkworms yield approximately 1 kg of silk.

(ix) With reference to the given passage, give one reason why silk production is considered labour-intensive.

Answer:

Silk production is labor-intensive due to the necessity for skilled artisans