

# PRÉCIS WRITING

*Reading · Comprehension · Condensation · Expression*

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## COMPLETE CONCEPT EXPLANATION

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### 1.1 What Is Précis Writing?

A précis (pronounced pray-SEE) is a concise, accurate, and coherent summary of a longer passage. The word itself is French for 'precise' or 'exact.' A précis retains the essential ideas, logic, and tone of the original — in the writer's own words — while reducing the passage to approximately one-third of its original length. It is neither a paraphrase (which matches the original length) nor an abstract (which may omit argument structure). A précis is a faithful miniature of the original: same order of ideas, same proportion of emphasis, same conclusions.

Précis writing simultaneously tests three higher-order skills:

- Reading Skill — the ability to read carefully, identify the central theme, and distinguish main ideas from supporting detail, examples, and padding.
- Comprehension Skill — the ability to understand the meaning, inference, tone, and argument of the passage accurately, without distorting or adding to the author's intent.
- Writing Skill — the ability to express the essential content in clear, grammatically correct, well-connected prose in one's own words, using a suitable title.

### 1.2 Key Characteristics of a Good Précis

Characteristic	Explanation
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Brevity	Typically 1/3 of the original length (unless a specific word limit is given).
Completeness	No main idea from the original may be omitted; only details, examples, and repetitions are cut.
Clarity	The précis must be immediately intelligible even to a reader who has not read the original.
Coherence	Ideas must flow logically; connectives and transitional phrases are used as needed.
Objectivity	The précis reports the author's ideas, never the writer's opinions.
Own Words	Except for technical terms and proper nouns, the précis must be in the writer's own words.
Third Person, Past Tense	Narrative passages are converted to third person; verbs are typically in the past tense.
Suitable Title	A precise, non-generic title that captures the central theme is mandatory.

### 1.3 Types and Classifications of Précis

Précis writing is broadly classified by the nature of the source passage and by the purpose for which the précis is written:

#### A) By Nature of the Passage

- Argumentative / Discursive Précis — The original builds a case for or against a position. The précis must preserve the logical chain: claim → evidence → conclusion. No argument steps may be skipped.
- Descriptive Précis — The original describes a scene, process, or phenomenon. The précis retains the essential features and their sequence without embellishment.
- Narrative Précis — The original tells a story or recounts events. The précis captures the key events in chronological order, converting first-person narration to third person.

- Expository Précis — The original explains a concept or process. The précis retains the core explanation and its defining structure.
- Mixed / General Précis — Most real passages combine more than one mode. The writer must identify the dominant mode and apply the appropriate approach.

## **B) By Purpose**

- Administrative Précis — used in offices to summarise reports and correspondence; focuses on decisions and action points.
- Journalistic Précis — condenses news or editorial content; emphasises facts and implications.
- Academic / Examination Précis — the most common type; a test of the candidate's command over English.

## **1.4 The Standard Process for Writing a Précis**

Follow these steps in order. Skipping any step produces a weaker précis.

1. **READ CAREFULLY** — Read the passage at least twice. On the first reading, get the overall gist. On the second reading, identify the central theme, main points, and the author's attitude.
2. **IDENTIFY THE THEME** — In one sentence, state what the passage is fundamentally about. This governs which ideas are 'main' and which are 'supporting.'
3. **UNDERLINE / NOTE MAIN POINTS** — Go through the passage paragraph by paragraph and note the one key idea each paragraph contributes. Ignore examples, illustrations, statistics used merely to support a point already noted, repetitions, and digressions.
4. **DRAFT THE TITLE** — Write a short, specific title (usually 3–6 words) that captures the central theme. Avoid vague titles like 'An Important Topic' or 'A Useful Passage.'
5. **WRITE THE ROUGH PRÉCIS** — Write your condensed version in your own words using the notes you made. Do not look at the original while writing. Keep the same order as the original.
6. **CHECK LENGTH** — Count the words. If your précis exceeds one-third of the original (or the specified word limit), cut further. Do not pad to reach a minimum.

7. REVISE — Check for coherence, grammatical accuracy, completeness of ideas, and absence of your own opinions. The précis must read as a self-contained piece of writing.

## 1.5 Rules of Précis Writing

The following rules are the core of this document. Each rule is stated clearly and illustrated with focused examples.

**RULE 1 Reduce the passage to approximately one-third of its original length. If a specific word limit is given, that limit is absolute.**

<b>Ex. 1</b>	Original: 300 words → Précis: approximately 100 words. If the question says 'Write in not more than 80 words,' the précis must not exceed 80 words.
<b>Ex. 2</b>	Original: 450 words → Précis: approximately 150 words. Do not artificially pad to 160 or cut to 130 without reason.
<b>Ex. 3</b>	A 600-word passage on climate policy yields a 200-word précis covering all major arguments but omitting every statistic and illustrative anecdote used to support a single point.

**RULE 2 Retain all main ideas and omit all supporting details, examples, illustrations, anecdotes, and repetitions — unless the example itself is the main point.**

<b>Ex. 1</b>	If the original says 'Deforestation has many consequences — for instance, the Amazon basin has lost 17% of its forest cover in 50 years, leading to...', the précis writes: 'Deforestation causes widespread environmental damage.' The statistic and basin name are omitted.
<b>Ex. 2</b>	If the passage lists three separate effects of pollution and discusses each for a paragraph, all three effects appear in the précis, but the paragraph-level elaboration does not.
<b>Ex. 3</b>	An author who repeats the point 'education is vital' in paragraphs 1, 3, and 5 has that idea recorded once in the précis, not three times.

**RULE 3 Write the précis in your own words. Only technical terms, proper nouns, and words with no acceptable synonym may be retained from the original.**

- Ex. 1** Original: 'The government implemented a comprehensive fiscal consolidation strategy.' Précis: 'The government introduced a broad plan to reduce the fiscal deficit.' ('Fiscal' retained; rest reworded.)
- Ex. 2** Original: 'The mitochondria are the powerhouse of the cell.' Précis may retain 'mitochondria' (no synonym) and 'cell' but must rephrase the rest: 'Mitochondria supply energy to the cell.'
- Ex. 3** Copying whole phrases from the original — 'the inexorable march of technological advancement' → the précis must say 'the relentless growth of technology' or equivalent, not repeat the phrase verbatim.

**RULE 4 Write in the third person and, for narrative passages, in the past tense. Never use 'I,' 'we,' or 'you' unless directly quoting titles of works.**

- Ex. 1** Original (first person): 'I believe that honesty is the cornerstone of democracy.' → Précis: 'The author argues that honesty is the cornerstone of democracy.'
- Ex. 2** Original (second person): 'You must exercise daily to maintain health.' → Précis: 'The writer advises regular exercise for good health.'
- Ex. 3** A narrative passage in present tense: 'The soldier marches forward' → Précis: 'The soldier marched forward.' (Past tense applied.)

**RULE 5 Preserve the original order of ideas. Do not rearrange points to suit your preference, even if a different order seems more logical to you.**

- Ex. 1** If the original discusses causes → effects → solutions, the précis follows: causes → effects → solutions. Not effects → causes → solutions.
- Ex. 2** A passage arguing point A, then conceding B, then rebutting B must be précised in that dialectical order: A, concession of B, rebuttal of B.

**Ex. 3** Even when paragraphs 4 and 5 seem repetitive, if they each make a distinct point, both points are recorded in order — not merged and moved to paragraph 2's place.

**RULE 6 Never add information, opinions, explanations, or inferences that are not present in the original passage.**

- Ex. 1** If the passage says 'Reading improves vocabulary,' the précis must not add '...which helps in interviews' unless the original explicitly says so.
- Ex. 2** If the original is ambiguous, the précis reflects the ambiguity; it does not resolve it with the writer's personal interpretation.
- Ex. 3** A passage on air pollution must not have 'water pollution' introduced in the précis merely because the writer knows it is also a problem.

**RULE 7 Give the précis a precise, specific title that reflects the central theme. The title is not a sentence and must not be vague or generic.**

- Ex. 1** Passage on declining civic participation → Bad title: 'An Important Issue' | Good title: 'The Decline of Civic Participation and Its Remedies'
- Ex. 2** Passage on the benefits and limits of technology in education → Title: 'Technology in Education: Benefits and Limitations' (not 'Modern Education')
- Ex. 3** Passage arguing for judicial independence → Title: 'The Case for Judicial Independence' (not 'The Judiciary')

**RULE 8 Use your own connective expressions and transitional phrases to maintain the logical flow of the précis. Never borrow the original's transitions verbatim unless unavoidable.**

- Ex. 1** Original: 'However, it is important to note that...' → Précis: 'Nevertheless...' or 'Yet...'
- Ex. 2** Original: 'On the other hand, critics argue...' → Précis: 'Critics contend, however, that...'

**Ex. 3** Original's paragraph breaks can be replaced by a single flowing paragraph in the précis, stitched with appropriate linking words: 'While X argued... Y countered... The author concludes...'

**RULE 9 Write in continuous prose — not as a list of bullet points, numbered items, or disjointed sentences. The précis is a paragraph (or short paragraphs), not notes.**

**Ex. 1** WRONG: '1. Education is vital. 2. It reduces poverty. 3. Governments must invest.' — RIGHT: 'Education, which is crucial for reducing poverty, demands sustained government investment.'

**Ex. 2** Combine closely related ideas into a single well-constructed sentence rather than writing each idea as a separate sentence.

**Ex. 3** Use subordinate clauses and relative clauses to integrate ideas: '...which,' '...that,' '...although,' '...because' — these tighten the précis without losing meaning.

**RULE 10 Use reported speech for any direct quotations or dialogues in the original. Never reproduce quoted speech verbatim in the précis.**

**Ex. 1** Original: The PM said, 'We will not rest until every child is in school.' → Précis: The Prime Minister declared that they would ensure universal school enrolment.

**Ex. 2** Original: 'Are we not responsible for this crisis?' she asked. → Précis: She questioned whether they bore responsibility for the crisis.

**Ex. 3** Original: 'Never give in,' Churchill urged the nation. → Précis: Churchill urged the nation to persevere without surrender.

**RULE 11 Avoid padding — words, phrases, or sentences added only to increase word count or to smooth over gaps in comprehension. Every word in the précis must earn its place.**

**Ex. 1** PADDING: 'The author, in the above passage, very clearly and quite explicitly states that...' → BETTER: 'The author argues that...'

<b>Ex. 2</b>	PADDING: 'It goes without saying that education is important...' → Such throat-clearing phrases from the original must be omitted entirely.
<b>Ex. 3</b>	Do not write: 'In conclusion, to sum up, we see that the main idea of the passage is...' — The précis should simply end with the final main point, cleanly.

**RULE 12 Maintain grammatical accuracy and stylistic consistency throughout the précis. Tense, person, and voice must be consistent.**

<b>Ex. 1</b>	Do not switch between past and present tense within the précis: 'The author argued that technology is useful and was also harmful' → WRONG. Use: 'The author argued that technology was both useful and harmful.'
<b>Ex. 2</b>	Active voice is generally preferred: 'The government was criticised by experts for its delay' → 'Experts criticised the government for its delay.'
<b>Ex. 3</b>	Do not use colloquial language, contractions, or informal register: 'The author says things aren't working' → 'The author contends that existing measures have failed.'

**1.6 Common Errors — Correct vs. Incorrect**

X INCORRECT	✓ CORRECT
Copying whole sentences from the original.	Rewriting all ideas in one's own words, retaining only technical terms.
Writing a précis longer than one-third of the original.	Strictly limiting the précis to the specified or implied word count.
Including personal opinions: '...which I think is wrong.'	Reporting only the author's views objectively: '...which the author considers flawed.'
Omitting an entire argument because it is complex.	Condensing the complex argument accurately into one clear sentence.

Using bullet points or numbered lists instead of prose.

Giving a vague title: 'A Good Passage'

Repeating the same idea that the author stated three times.

Using first person: 'I think the author means...'

Changing the order of arguments to suit personal preference.

Adding examples or statistics not in the original.

Writing in well-constructed, flowing paragraphs.

Giving a specific title: 'The Social Cost of Urbanisation'

Recording the idea once, concisely, in the précis.

Using third person: 'The author argues...' or simply stating the idea directly.

Following the original order of ideas faithfully.

Omitting all examples and recording only the general principle they illustrate.

## 1.7 Précis vs. Related Forms of Writing

Feature	Précis	Paraphrase	Abstract	Summary
Length	~1/3 of original	Same as or slightly shorter than original	Very short (10–15% of original)	Variable; typically 1/4–1/2
Own Words	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
Order of Ideas	Same as original	Same as original	May differ	May differ
Tone / Attitude	Neutral, objective	May mirror original tone	Neutral	Neutral
Examples Included	No	Yes	No	Sometimes
Argument Structure	Preserved faithfully	Preserved faithfully	Compressed or omitted	Partially preserved
Title Required	Yes	No	Yes	Usually no
Primary Test	Condensation skill	Comprehension / Expression	Identification of core	Selection and expression

## 1.8 Memory Tricks and Mnemonics

### The OSCAR Framework

Use OSCAR to check your précis before final submission:

- O — Own words (Have I rewritten everything in my own words?)
- S — Sequence preserved (Are the ideas in the same order as the original?)
- C — Complete (Are all main ideas included? Have I omitted any key point?)
- A — Accurate (Does my précis faithfully represent what the author said, without distortion?)
- R — Reduced (Is it within the word limit — roughly one-third of the original?)

**The 3-T Rule for Titles:** Titles must be Tight (few words), Topical (on the subject), and True (accurate to the passage).

**The DICE Rule for What to Cut:** Cut Details, Illustrations, Comparisons, and Emphasis (repetition for effect). Keep only the skeleton of the argument.

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## RULES SUMMARY — QUICK REVISION REFERENCE

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All twelve rules of précis writing, consolidated for rapid revision. Each rule is bolded with one sharp example.

#	RULE	QUICK EXAMPLE
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<b>1</b>	<b>Reduce to approximately one-third of the original length; respect any explicit word limit absolutely.</b>	300-word passage → 100-word précis; '80 words max' means 80, not 82.
<b>2</b>	<b>Retain all main ideas; cut all supporting details, examples, repetitions, and digressions.</b>	Three paragraphs of examples supporting one point → one sentence in the précis.
<b>3</b>	<b>Write entirely in your own words, retaining only technical terms and proper nouns.</b>	'Fiscal consolidation strategy' → 'plan to reduce the deficit.'
<b>4</b>	<b>Write in third person; use past tense for narrative passages.</b>	'I believe...' → 'The author believes...'
<b>5</b>	<b>Preserve the original order of ideas without rearrangement.</b>	Cause → Effect → Solution in original = same sequence in précis.
<b>6</b>	<b>Never add information, opinions, or inferences not present in the original.</b>	Original on air pollution → do not introduce water pollution in the précis.
<b>7</b>	<b>Provide a precise, specific, non-generic title capturing the central theme.</b>	'The Decline of Civic Participation' — not 'An Important Issue.'
<b>8</b>	<b>Use your own transitional expressions to maintain logical flow.</b>	'However, it is important to note that...' → 'Nevertheless...'
<b>9</b>	<b>Write in continuous prose; never use bullet points or numbered lists.</b>	NOT: '1. Education is vital. 2. It reduces poverty.' INSTEAD: 'Education, vital for poverty reduction, requires government support.'
<b>10</b>	<b>Convert all direct speech to reported speech.</b>	'We will win,' she said → She declared that they would win.
<b>11</b>	<b>Avoid padding — every word must contribute meaning.</b>	Remove: 'The author, in the above passage, very clearly states...' → Write simply: 'The author states...'
<b>12</b>	<b>Maintain grammatical accuracy and consistency in tense, person, and voice throughout.</b>	Do not mix past and present tense; prefer active voice.

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## PRACTICE QUESTIONS — 60 TOTAL

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Questions are numbered Q1–Q60 continuously. There are no beginner-level questions — the set begins at intermediate level and progresses to expert. Answer explanations are in Part 2.

### PART 1 — ALL 60 QUESTIONS (No Answers Here)

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#### Category 1 — Spot the Mistake (Q1–Q15)

**What this demands:** Identify precisely which rule of précis writing has been violated in each given sample précis, and correct the error with a brief explanation of the rule broken.

**Q1.** The following is offered as a précis of a 270-word passage on water scarcity. Identify the error and correct it. Précis (110 words): 'Water scarcity is a growing global crisis. As the author notes, "We are drawing more water from aquifers than nature can replenish, and if we do not act immediately, future generations will face a world without clean water." This echoes the concerns of environmental groups worldwide. In India alone, 600 million people face high-to-extreme water stress (NITI Aayog, 2018). The situation in sub-Saharan Africa is even more dire. Governments must implement rainwater harvesting, promote drip irrigation, and desalinate seawater. Time is running out. I think this is the most serious challenge humanity faces today.'

**Q2.** Précis of a 300-word passage on the value of discipline (102 words): 'Discipline is very, very important in life, as is quite well known by anyone who has thought about the matter seriously. The author of this passage, writing in the above extract, says that discipline helps students succeed. Athletes also need discipline. Parents must teach discipline to their children from an early age, as the author clearly and explicitly tells us in this

passage. Without discipline, nothing is ever achieved. It is a universally accepted fact. In other words, discipline matters.' Identify all errors in this précis.

**Q3.** Précis of a 330-word passage (a first-person essay on the joys of reading, 112 words): 'I love reading. It transports me to other worlds and broadens my understanding of life. Reading, says the author, improves empathy by exposing readers to diverse perspectives. It also enhances vocabulary and analytical thinking. We can learn from reading without leaving our homes. In my opinion, every school should make independent reading a priority. Libraries should be well-stocked. Teachers ought to recommend books. I personally believe that e-books are better than physical books. The author mentions that reading has declined in the digital age, but I disagree because many people read online content.' Identify the violations.

**Q4.** A candidate wrote the following précis of a 360-word argumentative passage (122 words). The original argued: (1) democracy ensures accountability; (2) free press is its guardian; (3) judiciary is its protector; (4) elections must be free and fair. Précis: 'Democracy, as the author contends, functions well only with a free press and an independent judiciary. A free press ensures that those in power answer for their actions, while the judiciary protects constitutional rights. Free and fair elections — the mechanism by which citizens exercise sovereign power — are the fourth and most important pillar the author identifies. Without all four pillars working in concert, democracy risks becoming a façade behind which authoritarianism can flourish quietly.' Is this précis correct, partially correct, or incorrect? Justify your answer.

**Q5.** Précis of a 240-word passage on artificial intelligence (82 words): 'Artificial intelligence is transforming every sector of the economy. The author argues that AI increases productivity while displacing routine jobs. However, new and more creative jobs are created in its wake — a dynamic the author labels "creative destruction." The author also warns that algorithmic bias can perpetuate societal inequalities if AI systems are trained on flawed data. Governments and corporations must collaborate to regulate AI ethically. The author concludes that AI, if governed wisely, offers humanity more gain than loss.' Identify any errors in rule application.

**Q6.** Below is a précis of a 300-word passage that described the life of Marie Curie (narrative mode, written in third person in the original). The précis is 108 words: 'Marie Curie was born in Warsaw in 1867. She moved to

Paris to study at the Sorbonne, where she was the first woman to earn a degree in physics. She discovered polonium and radium. The Nobel Committee awarded her the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1903 and the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 1911, making her the only person to win Nobel Prizes in two different sciences. She faced considerable gender discrimination throughout her career. Her research formed the foundation of modern nuclear science. She died in 1934 of aplastic anaemia, likely caused by prolonged radiation exposure.' What rule has been most significantly violated here?

**Q7.** Précis of a 270-word passage (written entirely as a dialogue between two economists debating protectionism, 93 words): "Tariffs protect domestic industries and jobs," said the first economist. "But they raise prices for consumers and invite retaliatory measures from trading partners," countered the second. "History shows that free trade lifts all boats," the second economist added. "Tell that to the workers in Detroit," the first replied. "Protectionism may save jobs today but stunts innovation tomorrow," the second concluded. "The debate, then, is ultimately between short-term employment and long-term economic dynamism," both agreed.' Identify the rule violated and rewrite the précis correctly in approximately 90 words.

**Q8.** The original passage (360 words) discussed the impact of social media on mental health. Its structure was: Paragraph 1 — positive effects (connectivity, support communities); Paragraph 2 — negative effects (comparison culture, anxiety); Paragraph 3 — the author's conclusion that regulation is needed. The candidate's précis (120 words) ran: 'Social media is harmful to mental health, creating anxiety and fostering unhealthy comparison. However, some positive effects exist, such as online support communities. Regulation is needed. The author begins by noting positive effects before discussing the negative impact of comparison culture and anxiety.' Identify all errors and rewrite a correct précis.

**Q9.** A précis of a 210-word passage (70 words): 'The author writes that urbanisation is accelerating globally. Cities attract migrants because of employment and better services, but infrastructure often fails to keep pace. Slums proliferate. Governments must plan proactively for urban growth, investing in affordable housing, public transport, and sanitation. The author argues that unmanaged urbanisation creates social inequity and environmental stress. Without intervention, cities will become ungovernable. The passage is very well written and raises important issues for city planners.' Spot the mistake.

**Q10.** Précis of a 300-word passage on climate change and agriculture (100 words): 'Climate change threatens global food security. Rising temperatures, altered rainfall patterns, and more frequent extreme weather events reduce crop yields. Smallholder farmers, who produce 70 per cent of the world's food, are the most vulnerable. Adaptation strategies — drought-resistant crops, rainwater harvesting, crop diversification — are available but remain underutilised due to lack of access and funding. Governments must subsidise adaptation and provide agricultural extension services. International cooperation is vital since climate change respects no national boundary. Without urgent action, food insecurity will intensify, deepening poverty and fuelling conflict in fragile regions.' Assess this précis for rule compliance.

**Q11.** Précis of a 330-word passage on the decline of languages (111 words): 'Languages are dying at an alarming rate. Every fortnight, another language disappears forever as its last fluent speaker dies. Currently, there are approximately 7,000 languages in the world, but linguists estimate that by 2100, half of them will have vanished. The author laments this loss as a cultural and cognitive tragedy, since each language encodes a unique way of perceiving the world — and this is very sad indeed. Governments and communities must document endangered languages through digital archives, revitalise them in schools, and protect the communities that speak them. Without intervention, the world will lose irreplaceable intellectual heritage.' Identify the stylistic violation.

**Q12.** A passage of 390 words argued: (1) that the right to education is fundamental; (2) quality is as important as access; (3) teacher training is the critical variable; (4) public funding must increase; (5) private participation can supplement but not replace public investment. The candidate's précis (130 words) covered only points 1, 2, and 4 and gave twice the space to point 1. Identify the violations and state what the correct approach would be.

**Q13.** Précis of a 240-word passage on mindfulness (83 words): 'Mindfulness is the practice of paying deliberate, non-judgmental attention to the present moment. Research consistently shows that regular mindfulness practice reduces stress, improves emotional regulation, and enhances cognitive focus. The author argues that mindfulness should be integrated into school curricula, workplace wellness programmes, and clinical settings for treating anxiety and depression. Moreover, mindfulness is cost-effective — it requires no medication and no

expensive equipment, only trained instructors and consistent practice. Societies that invest in mindfulness will reap long-term benefits in mental health and productivity.' Is this précis well-written? Justify with reference to the rules.

**Q14.** Below is a précis of a 300-word passage on judicial independence. Identify the error: 'The author strongly, passionately, and emphatically argues — with great force and clarity — that an independent judiciary is the indispensable bedrock of a functioning democracy. Judges who are immune from political pressure deliver justice without fear or favour. The separation of powers doctrine demands that the judiciary operate free from executive interference. The author categorically and with tremendous conviction concludes that any erosion of judicial independence is a direct and immediate threat to democratic governance.' (85 words)

**Q15.** Précis of a 360-word passage (first person, past tense narrative about a journalist's investigation into corruption, 122 words): 'I began my investigation quietly. I collected documents showing that contracts had been awarded without competitive bidding. I interviewed officials who feared reprisals but agreed to speak on condition of anonymity. I found that bribes had been paid in cash. I published my findings despite pressure from the minister's office. The public reaction was immediate. The government set up an inquiry. Eventually, three senior officials were prosecuted. My investigation showed that persistent journalism can hold power accountable.' Identify all rule violations in this précis.

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## Category 2 — Fill in the Right Word (Q16–Q30)

**What this demands:** Choose the most grammatically and contextually precise option to complete a sentence in a précis. More than one option may appear correct at first glance; careful application of précis rules reveals the single best answer.

**Q16.** A précis of a passage in which a philosopher stated in first person that free will is an illusion should read: (A) I think free will is an illusion. (B) The philosopher argues that free will is an illusion. (C) The philosopher thought that free will was an illusion. (D) He says free will is an illusion.

**Q17.** The original passage uses the vivid phrase 'the smothering hand of bureaucracy.' The most appropriate précis expression is: (A) the smothering hand of bureaucracy (B) excessive bureaucratic interference (C) the government's hand (D) bureaucratic obstruction of a smothering nature

**Q18.** The original 300-word passage concluded: '...and therefore, without doubt, education is the single most powerful weapon against poverty.' The précis sentence should read: (A) The author concludes that education is the most powerful weapon against poverty. (B) Undoubtedly, education is the most powerful weapon against poverty. (C) The author, without any doubt whatsoever, concludes that education is the most powerful weapon against poverty. (D) In conclusion, education is the single most powerful weapon, the author says.

**Q19.** The passage discussed three distinct consequences of deforestation: biodiversity loss, altered rainfall, and soil erosion. The précis sentence that best combines them is: (A) The author says deforestation has consequences like biodiversity loss, altered rainfall, and soil erosion. (B) Deforestation causes biodiversity loss, disrupts rainfall patterns, and erodes topsoil. (C) Deforestation causes many things including the loss of biodiversity, changing of rainfall, and also erosion. (D) The passage discusses consequences of deforestation — biodiversity, rainfall, and erosion.

**Q20.** The original passage was entirely in the present tense describing an ongoing phenomenon. The précis should be in: (A) past tense throughout (B) present tense throughout (C) past tense for facts; present tense for the author's arguments (D) present tense for general truths; past tense for the author's specific claims in this passage

**Q21.** A direct quotation in the original reads: 'Never mistake activity for achievement,' the coach warned the team. The précis version should read: (A) 'Never mistake activity for achievement,' the coach warned. (B) The coach warned the team never to mistake activity for achievement. (C) The coach warned that never should activity be mistaken for achievement. (D) The coach said, 'Never mistake activity for achievement.'

**Q22.** The passage argued that the media has a dual role: informing and entertaining. The appropriate précis formulation is: (A) The author believes the media must inform and entertain. (B) According to the author, the media serves a dual function: disseminating information and providing entertainment. (C) The media, the author thinks, has two roles — informing and entertaining — and this is important. (D) The author argues that the media must both inform and entertain the public.

**Q23.** A 390-word passage had six paragraphs, each making a distinct point. The candidate's précis has only four sentences covering all six points. Is this: (A) Incorrect — a précis must have one sentence per paragraph of the original. (B) Correct — a précis must cover all points, not match the original's paragraph count. (C) Incorrect — a précis must have at least six sentences for a six-paragraph passage. (D) Correct, but only if the missing two sentences were from the introduction and conclusion.

**Q24.** The original passage contained the sentence: 'The results, it must be said, were far from satisfactory.' The précis should render this as: (A) It must be said that the results were far from satisfactory. (B) The results were far from satisfactory. (C) The results, it must be noted, were very unsatisfactory. (D) The results were unsatisfactory.

**Q25.** A passage of 300 words contained a long digression of 90 words in paragraph 3 about the author's personal experience, which illustrated but did not constitute a main argument. The précis should: (A) Reduce the digression to one sentence since it is part of the original. (B) Omit the digression entirely and use those words for the main arguments. (C) Include the digression in full since it is 30% of the passage. (D) Include the digression's conclusion but omit its narrative.

**Q26.** Which of the following titles is best for a précis of a passage arguing that technology has widened the gap between rich and poor nations? (A) Technology and the World (B) How Technology Widens Global Inequality (C) The Digital Divide and Economic Inequality in the Modern World (D) Rich Nations and Poor Nations in the Digital Age

**Q27.** The original passage is 450 words. The specified word limit for the précis is 'not more than 120 words.' The candidate writes 118 words. Is this: (A) Incorrect — the précis should be exactly one-third (150 words). (B) Correct — the précis is within the specified word limit. (C) Incorrect — the précis is too short; it should be at least 130 words. (D) Correct, but the candidate should aim for exactly 120 words.

**Q28.** The original passage used the phrase 'the panacea for all economic ills' to describe globalisation, then immediately qualified this by saying it was an oversimplification. The précis should: (A) Write: '...globalisation, often seen as the solution to all economic problems, is, the author notes, an oversimplification.' (B) Write: '...the panacea for all economic ills — a view the author calls an oversimplification.' (C) Omit the phrase entirely as it is quickly dismissed. (D) Write: '...the author argues that globalisation is the panacea for all economic ills.'

**Q29.** The passage ends with a rhetorical question: 'Can we truly claim to be civilised if millions starve while others feast?' The précis should end with: (A) The author asks: 'Can we truly claim to be civilised if millions starve while others feast?' (B) The author questions whether a society that tolerates mass hunger alongside extreme wealth can legitimately call itself civilised. (C) The author wonders if civilisation is possible given hunger and inequality. (D) The author concludes by raising a rhetorical question about civilisation and hunger.

**Q30.** A passage of exactly 300 words contains one paragraph of 80 words that is a pure statistics dump (seven different statistics supporting the same point already made). The appropriate treatment in the précis is: (A) Summarise all seven statistics in two sentences. (B) Cite the most dramatic statistic and note that others support the same conclusion. (C) Omit all statistics and record only the point they support. (D) Record the average of the statistics to save words.

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### Category 3 — Choose the Correct Sentence (Q31–Q45)

**What this demands:** Four options are given for how a specific idea from the original passage should be written in a précis. Identify the single correct option and explain precisely why each of the other three is wrong.

**Q31.** The original passage (narrative, first-person, past tense) described how a scientist discovered a new compound by accident while experimenting with polymers. Which précis sentence is correct? (A) I was experimenting with polymers when I accidentally discovered a new compound. (B) The scientist discovered a new compound accidentally while conducting polymer experiments. (C) While experimenting with polymers, a new compound was accidentally discovered. (D) The scientist, while experimenting with polymers, accidentally discovered a new compound, which was a remarkable find.

**Q32.** The original passage states: 'Critics have long debated whether Shakespeare actually wrote his plays, with some attributing them to Francis Bacon, Christopher Marlowe, or a consortium of authors.' Which is the correct précis sentence? (A) Shakespeare may not have written his plays — Bacon, Marlowe, or others may have. (B) The authorship of Shakespeare's plays has been disputed, with Bacon, Marlowe, and others proposed as alternatives. (C) Critics have long debated whether Shakespeare actually wrote his plays. (D) Shakespeare's plays, critics argue, were written by Bacon, Marlowe, or a group of authors.

**Q33.** Original passage conclusion (first-person): 'I am convinced, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that renewable energy will entirely replace fossil fuels within the next five decades.' Correct précis sentence: (A) Renewable energy will entirely replace fossil fuels within the next five decades. (B) The author is convinced that renewable energy will entirely replace fossil fuels within fifty years. (C) The author, beyond the shadow of a doubt, is convinced that renewable energy will replace fossil fuels in fifty years. (D) The author expresses his conviction that renewable energy will replace fossil fuels.

**Q34.** Original: 'The government, hamstrung by coalition politics, has consistently failed to push through meaningful electoral reforms despite five years of promises.' Correct précis sentence: (A) The government's coalition politics have hamstrung meaningful electoral reform despite five years of promises. (B) Coalition politics have prevented the government from implementing meaningful electoral reforms over five years. (C) The government has consistently failed to push through meaningful electoral reforms — hamstrung by coalition politics — for five years. (D) Despite five years, meaningful electoral reforms have consistently failed to be pushed through by the government.

**Q35.** A passage argued: Education reduces poverty. It also reduces crime. It also improves health. It also strengthens democracy. Four précis sentences: (A) Education reduces poverty, crime, and improves health and strengthens democracy. (B) Education reduces poverty and crime while improving public health and strengthening democratic institutions. (C) The author argues that education reduces poverty, crime, and also health and democracy improve. (D) Education has many benefits including reduction of poverty and crime, improvement of health, and strengthening of democracy.

**Q36.** Original (describing a painting by Rembrandt): '...the masterful use of chiaroscuro gives the portrait a haunting, three-dimensional quality that has made it one of the most studied works in art history.' Correct précis sentence: (A) Rembrandt's use of chiaroscuro gives the portrait a haunting, three-dimensional quality. (B) Rembrandt's skilled use of light and shadow creates a striking depth that has made the portrait a subject of extensive art-historical study. (C) The masterful use of chiaroscuro gives the portrait a haunting three-dimensional quality and makes it much studied. (D) The portrait, by virtue of chiaroscuro, has three-dimensional quality and art historians study it.

**Q37.** The original passage was an editorial arguing that cities should invest heavily in public transport. It used the phrase: 'Every rupee spent on a metro is a rupee snatched from a pothole.' Which précis sentence handles this best? (A) Every rupee spent on a metro is a rupee snatched from a pothole. (B) The author argues that metro investment diverts resources from road maintenance. (C) Metro investment, the author contends, competes with road repair for limited municipal funds. (D) The author uses a metaphor to say metro is better than road repair.

**Q38.** The original passage contained: 'There are those who argue X, and there are those who argue Y. The truth, as always, lies somewhere in between.' Which is the correct précis sentence? (A) The truth lies between X and Y. (B) While some argue X and others argue Y, the author suggests the reality is a compromise between the two positions. (C) The author argues that neither X nor Y is entirely correct and proposes a middle path. (D) X and Y are two opposing views, and the truth is between them.

**Q39.** The passage contained a lengthy example: Dickens wrote about poverty in Victorian England. He showed it in Oliver Twist. He showed it in Bleak House. He showed it in Hard Times. Which is the correct précis treatment? (A) Dickens wrote about poverty in Oliver Twist, Bleak House, and Hard Times. (B) Dickens depicted poverty in Victorian England in multiple novels. (C) Oliver Twist, Bleak House, and Hard Times by Dickens show Victorian poverty. (D) Dickens' novels — Oliver Twist, Bleak House, and Hard Times — consistently depicted Victorian poverty.

**Q40.** The original passage was 420 words. The précis is to be written in 'about 140 words.' The candidate writes 152 words with excellent content. The examiner should: (A) Penalise the candidate for exceeding the word limit by 12 words. (B) Accept the précis fully since 152 is close to 140. (C) Ask the candidate to revise down to exactly 140 words. (D) Assess based on content quality; 'about 140' allows minor variation but 152 is borderline and loses some credit.

**Q41.** The original passage said: '...and this crisis, if left unchecked, will lead to consequences too dire to enumerate — economic collapse, social unrest, political extremism, and the unravelling of the global order as we know it.' The correct précis sentence is: (A) If unchecked, the crisis will lead to consequences too dire to enumerate. (B) The crisis, if unaddressed, risks triggering economic collapse, social unrest, political extremism, and the breakdown of the global order. (C) Unchecked, the crisis will lead to dire consequences including economic collapse, social unrest, extremism, and collapse of global order. (D) The crisis could be too dire if left unchecked, causing collapse, unrest, and extremism.

**Q42.** Original passage (3rd person, 360 words on internet censorship): 'Authoritarian governments use internet censorship as a tool of population control, limiting access to news, social media, and political discourse. Critics argue this is a fundamental violation of free expression; proponents claim it preserves social stability.' The correct précis of just this idea: (A) Authoritarian governments use internet censorship to control populations by restricting information access, a practice critics view as violating free expression though its proponents defend it as maintaining stability. (B) Internet censorship by authoritarian governments limits news and social media access; critics say this violates free expression, supporters say it maintains stability. (C) Authoritarian governments censor the internet, claim supporters, to maintain social stability, although critics see this as a

violation of free expression. (D) Critics argue that authoritarian internet censorship violates free expression; governments say it preserves stability.

**Q43.** The original passage was 270 words with the title 'The Silent Crisis of Antibiotic Resistance.' A student wrote the précis title as 'Antibiotic Resistance.' Is this title adequate? (A) Yes — it identifies the topic correctly and is concise. (B) No — it omits the 'crisis' dimension, which is the author's central argument. (C) No — the précis title must match the original title exactly. (D) Yes — précis titles should be as short as possible.

**Q44.** A passage describes a process in 5 steps. The candidate's précis reduces it to 3 steps by merging steps 2 and 3 into one sentence, and merging steps 4 and 5 into one sentence. Is this acceptable? (A) No — every step must appear as a separate sentence in the précis. (B) Yes — if the merged sentence accurately captures both steps without losing any essential information. (C) No — the précis must always reproduce the same number of steps as the original. (D) Yes — any two adjacent steps can always be merged to save words.

**Q45.** Which of these is the best overall definition of a précis? (A) A précis is a shortened version of a passage, containing its most interesting ideas. (B) A précis is an accurate, coherent, and condensed rendering of a longer passage in the writer's own words, preserving the original's ideas, order, and tone. (C) A précis is a summary of a passage that omits examples and keeps main ideas, written in the third person. (D) A précis is a paraphrase of a passage reduced to one-third of its length.

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#### **Category 4 — Analyse, Rewrite & Explain (Q46–Q60)**

**What this demands:** Deep analytical engagement — writing full précis from given passages, identifying competing rules, correcting multi-error drafts, discussing nuanced writing decisions, and justifying choices with rule references.

**Q46.** Read the following passage (300 words) and write a précis of approximately 100 words. Also give a suitable title. 'The oceans cover 71 per cent of the Earth's surface and contain 97 per cent of its water. They regulate climate by absorbing heat and carbon dioxide, produce more than half of the world's oxygen, and are home to the richest biodiversity on Earth. Yet they are in crisis. Plastic waste — eight million tonnes annually — chokes marine ecosystems. Industrial overfishing has driven many species to the edge of extinction. Ocean acidification, caused by the absorption of anthropogenic carbon dioxide, is dissolving the calcium carbonate shells of marine organisms. Warming seas are bleaching coral reefs — the rainforests of the ocean. The economic case for ocean conservation is strong: fisheries support the livelihoods of 600 million people; maritime trade carries 80 per cent of global commerce; coastal tourism generates trillions annually. But economics alone will not save the oceans. We need binding international agreements, enforced limits on fishing, a global ban on single-use plastics, and serious investment in marine protected areas. The ocean does not belong to any one nation. It belongs to all of us — and to future generations who will inherit whatever we leave behind.'

**Q47.** The following passage (270 words) is written in first person. Rewrite it as a précis (approximately 90 words) in third person, applying all rules correctly. Give a title. 'I have taught in rural schools for fifteen years, and I can say with confidence that the most persistent obstacle to quality education in remote areas is not the absence of books or the shortage of money — it is the shortage of trained, motivated teachers who are willing to stay. When I began, I was the only qualified teacher in a school of 240 children. I taught six subjects across four grade levels simultaneously. My colleagues in the city taught one subject to one class. The inequality is not just financial; it is structural. Governments allocate budgets, build buildings, and distribute tablets — but none of this matters if a teacher is not there to use them. I urge policymakers to address teacher retention in rural areas with the same urgency they give to infrastructure. Incentives — better salaries, housing, career advancement — are not luxuries; they are necessities.'

**Q48.** The following précis has seven distinct errors. Identify each error, state which rule it violates, and rewrite the précis correctly. Original passage theme: A 330-word passage arguing that the media exaggerates crime, creating unwarranted public fear, and that statistical evidence shows crime rates have actually fallen. Flawed Précis (113 words): 'Crime is going up and making people scared. The author argues that the media exaggerates crime, creating unwarranted public fear, even though, statistically speaking, crime rates have actually fallen over the past decade. I agree with the author — the media does exaggerate. Experts say crime

rates have fallen, but nobody believes them because of the media. This is a very important point that the author makes very well. In my opinion, responsible journalism is the solution. Also, social media makes things worse, which is another big problem. The author concludes that unreliable media coverage is harmful to public trust in institutions.'

**Q49.** Compare and contrast how a précis and an abstract handle the following passage. Then write both a précis (100 words) and an abstract (40 words) from the passage below: 'Modern urban planning has shifted from a car-centric model to a people-centric model. Cities like Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and Bogotá have redesigned their streets to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over automobiles. Studies consistently show that walkable cities have lower rates of obesity, higher social cohesion, and lower carbon emissions. The shift is not merely aesthetic but deeply economic — walkable retail zones generate higher revenue per square metre than car-dependent malls. Advocates argue that future urban development should embed walkability as a non-negotiable design principle, not an optional feature. Critics warn that such redesigns are costly and may accelerate gentrification in affected neighbourhoods. The evidence, on balance, supports prioritising walkability — provided equity concerns are actively managed.' (150 words)

**Q50.** The following passage (240 words) contains an embedded digression. Identify the digression, explain why it should be excluded from the précis, and write the précis (80 words): 'Public libraries are democratic institutions in the truest sense — they provide equal access to knowledge regardless of income, background, or social status. In an age of paywalled academic journals and costly textbooks, the public library remains the great equaliser. A child in a low-income neighbourhood can access the same books, digital databases, and study spaces as a child from an affluent household. Incidentally, the Carnegie libraries built in the early twentieth century — funded by the steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, who gave away 90 per cent of his fortune — are architecturally among the finest public buildings in the world, and it is a shame that many have fallen into disrepair. But beyond the architectural heritage, the policy argument for libraries is compelling: they reduce educational inequality, support lifelong learning, and serve as community anchors in neighbourhoods that have lost other civic spaces. Funding cuts to public libraries are, therefore, not merely a cultural loss but a social policy failure.'

**Q51.** Discuss the following précis-writing dilemma with full explanation and then resolve it: A 300-word passage has a paragraph of 90 words (30% of the total) that consists entirely of a single extended metaphor used to make one argument: 'democracy is a garden that needs constant tending.' The metaphor is vivid but contains no separate point beyond the argument it illustrates. Should the précis include the metaphor, paraphrase it, or discard it? Justify your answer with reference to the relevant rules, and show what the précis of that paragraph should look like.

**Q52.** The following is a 360-word passage. Write a précis (120 words) and identify which ideas you retained and which you omitted, giving a reason for each omission. 'The history of science is, in part, a history of wrong answers confidently held. The medieval physician who believed in the four humours was not stupid — he was working with the best theory available. The nineteenth-century physicist who thought the universe was filled with a luminiferous ether was not foolish — he was reasoning logically from incomplete evidence. What distinguishes science from dogma is not that science is always right, but that science has a mechanism for being wrong — peer review, replication, and revision. A theory that cannot be falsified is not science; it is faith. The willingness to abandon a beloved theory in the face of contrary evidence is science's most difficult and most essential virtue. Yet this willingness is increasingly under threat. Public discourse rewards certainty over nuance; pundits who change their minds are accused of inconsistency; scientists who express doubt are labelled unreliable. This cultural hostility to intellectual humility is dangerous. It discourages scientists from admitting uncertainty, incentivises cherry-picking of supportive evidence, and erodes public trust when provisional findings are later revised — as they should be. The solution is not to make science simpler or more certain than it is, but to educate the public about how science works: as a process of progressive approximation toward truth, not a collection of eternal facts handed down from authority. Science communication must therefore become as rigorous as science itself.'

**Q53.** Analyse the following précis for structural coherence, completeness, language precision, and rule compliance. Score it out of 20 (5 marks each criterion) and justify each score. Original passage theme: 360-word passage on the benefits and risks of genetic engineering in agriculture. Précis (118 words): 'Genetic engineering offers agriculture transformative potential: crops can be modified to resist pests, tolerate drought, and produce higher yields, reducing dependence on chemical inputs. Golden Rice, engineered to contain beta-carotene, exemplifies how biotechnology can address nutritional deficiencies in developing nations. However,

the risks are significant. Gene flow to wild relatives may create 'superweeds,' and monocultures of genetically uniform crops are vulnerable to novel pathogens. Corporate control of seed patents raises concerns about farmer autonomy and food sovereignty. The author argues that a regulatory framework balancing innovation with precaution is essential — one that enables scientific progress while protecting biodiversity and ensuring equitable access to biotechnological benefits. Genetic engineering, responsibly governed, could be transformative; ungoverned, it poses unacceptable ecological and social risks.'

**Q54.** Rewrite the following bloated, rule-violating précis into a correct précis of approximately 90 words. Then list every change you made and state the rule it corrects. Flawed Précis (160 words): 'In this very important passage, the author — who is clearly an expert on the subject — argues that reading fiction is, in the author's own words, "a profoundly empathetic act." Reading fiction, you see, helps us understand other people's feelings and experiences. This is, of course, something that I believe strongly myself. By putting yourself in the shoes of fictional characters, you develop empathy which is useful in real life. The author also says that reading fiction improves vocabulary and that it can reduce stress. Studies have shown — and the author cites many — that people who read regularly are more emotionally intelligent. In my view, fiction should be made a core part of every school curriculum. The author concludes that fiction reading should be encouraged in schools, and I completely agree with this conclusion, which seems very wise and entirely correct.'

**Q55.** The following passage is deliberately ambiguous about the author's conclusion. Discuss how ambiguity in a source passage should be handled in a précis. Then write the précis (80 words): 'Some argue that automation will create more jobs than it destroys, as new technologies always have. Others are less sanguine, pointing to the unprecedented speed of current displacement and the mismatch between the skills required by new jobs and those possessed by displaced workers. History may offer comfort; it may also deceive. The outcome depends, ultimately, on policy choices — investment in education, social safety nets, and labour market flexibility — that have not yet been made.' (84 words)

**Q56.** A passage on the role of women in science (390 words) had the following structure: — Para 1 (80 words): Historical exclusion of women from science. — Para 2 (90 words): Key contributions of female scientists (Curie, Franklin, McClintock). — Para 3 (80 words): Persistent gender gap in STEM today. — Para 4 (70 words):

Structural causes: bias in hiring, funding, publishing. — Para 5 (70 words): Recommendations: mentorship, policy reform, equal pay. A candidate wrote a précis of 130 words covering only paragraphs 1, 3, and 5. Critically evaluate this précis against all relevant rules and rewrite a complete correct précis (130 words).

**Q57.** The following passage (300 words) has a rhetorical structure where the author raises a question, argues both sides, and then comes to a definitive conclusion. Identify the rhetorical structure, write the précis (100 words), and explain how preserving rhetorical structure is distinct from merely preserving content. 'Is global governance possible? Idealists say yes — human beings have shown an ability to cooperate on planetary challenges before, from the Montreal Protocol to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. Realists are less hopeful: national self-interest consistently undermines multilateral commitments, as seen in the weakness of climate agreements and the dysfunction of the United Nations Security Council. Yet the evidence does not entirely support either camp. The Montreal Protocol succeeded because the problem was specific, the science was clear, and no major power had a strategic interest in ozone depletion. Climate change has none of these advantages. Global governance, the author concludes, is possible under rare, favourable conditions — but it cannot be assumed as the default response to global crises.'

**Q58.** The following two précis have been written of the same 300-word passage on social entrepreneurship. Compare them systematically against all 12 rules. Identify which is better and why. Précis A (98 words): 'Social entrepreneurship applies business methods to social problems, seeking sustainable solutions where charity and government have failed. The author argues that social enterprises, unlike charities, generate revenue that funds their social mission, reducing dependence on donations. Examples include fair-trade companies, microfinance institutions, and affordable healthcare providers in developing nations. The author contends that governments should create an enabling legal and fiscal environment for social enterprises, including hybrid legal structures and tax incentives. Social entrepreneurship, the author concludes, is not a replacement for the welfare state but a complement to it.' Précis B (102 words): 'Social entrepreneurship is a new and exciting approach. It uses business methods for social good. Charities and governments have failed, so social entrepreneurs fill the gap. They make money and do good at the same time — the author calls this "blended value." Examples are fair trade, microfinance, and healthcare. Governments must help by changing the law and giving tax breaks. I think this is a great model for development. The author says it complements the welfare state. Social

entrepreneurship is the future of development, and more countries should adopt it immediately. It has already worked in many places.'

**Q59.** Discuss the following claim and support your answer with examples drawn from précis-writing rules: 'The most common error in précis writing is not excessive length or inadequate compression — it is the failure to distinguish between the author's main argument and the examples the author uses to support it. A student who omits an example makes a small error. A student who records an example in place of the argument it supports makes a fatal one.' Is this claim correct? Illustrate with a concrete example showing the difference between a 'fatal error' précis and a correct one for a passage of your own construction.

**Q60.** Write a complete, model précis of the following passage (360 words). Then write a critical self-assessment (100 words) of your own précis, identifying any difficult decisions you made and explaining how you resolved them. 'Few ideas in modern political thought have been as consequential — and as misunderstood — as the concept of sovereignty. In its classical formulation, sovereignty means the absolute, supreme authority of a state over its territory and people, answerable to no external power. This notion, crystallised in the Peace of Westphalia (1648), underpinned the international order for three centuries. But it has always been a legal fiction as much as a political reality: the sovereignty of small states has always been constrained by the power of large ones. What has changed in the twenty-first century is not the existence of these constraints but their visibility and their legitimacy. Globalisation has transferred effective authority over trade, capital, and information from national governments to multinational corporations, international financial institutions, and digital platforms. International human rights law has established the principle that states may not hide behind sovereignty to abuse their own citizens. Climate change demands cooperative action that necessarily limits national autonomy. In short, the Westphalian concept of sovereignty is under pressure from above — through international institutions and law — and from below — through the claims of sub-national groups and the expectations of a globally connected citizenry. None of this means sovereignty is dead. States remain the primary actors in international affairs. National identity is, if anything, reasserting itself in the form of populism and protectionism. But sovereignty is being renegotiated — reimagined not as absolute authority but as conditional responsibility. The state that fulfils its obligations to its people and to the international community retains its sovereign standing; the state that fails its people or threatens others finds its sovereignty increasingly questioned. This reformulated

sovereignty — sovereignty as responsibility — is not yet the governing norm of international relations, but it is the direction in which international law and political practice are slowly and imperfectly moving.'

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## PART 2 — ALL 60 ANSWERS WITH DETAILED EXPLANATIONS

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Answers are organised by category using the same headings. Full explanations are given for every question. For multiple-choice questions, both the correct option and the reason each wrong option is incorrect are explained.

### Category 1 — Spot the Mistake: Answers

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#### Ans (Q1):

Multiple serious violations are present:

1. Direct quotation reproduced (Rule 10 / Rule 3): The précis reproduces a 31-word verbatim quotation. All quoted speech must be converted to reported speech and the wording must be paraphrased.
2. Personal opinion introduced (Rule 6): 'I think this is the most serious challenge humanity faces today' — this is not in the original; it is the précis writer's personal view, which must never appear.
3. Specific statistic retained unnecessarily: 'NITI Aayog, 2018' is a supporting detail that supports a point already stated. The point (millions face water stress) suffices.
4. Length: 110 words for a 270-word passage is 40%, exceeding the one-third limit. Approximate target: 90 words.

Corrected Précis (~88 words): 'Water scarcity is an escalating global crisis. More water is being extracted from underground reserves than nature can replenish, threatening future generations. In countries such as India, hundreds of millions face severe water stress, with sub-Saharan Africa in an even more critical condition.'

Governments must promote rainwater harvesting, expand drip irrigation, and invest in desalination to avert catastrophe. Without urgent intervention, clean water will become critically scarce worldwide.'

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### Ans (Q2):

Errors identified:

1. Padding (Rule 11): 'very, very important,' 'quite well known,' 'clearly and explicitly tells us in this passage,' 'It goes without saying,' 'In other words' — all filler phrases that add no content.
2. Meta-reference to the passage (Rule 11): 'The author of this passage, writing in the above extract' — a précis never refers to itself or the original as 'the above passage.'
3. Insufficient substance: The précis does not adequately convey any coherent argument — it restates the general claim multiple times without condensing the actual content of the passage.
4. Length may be acceptable (102 words for 300 words  $\approx$  34%) but the words are wasted on repetition rather than content.

Corrected Précis (~80 words): 'Discipline is fundamental to success in every sphere of life. The author argues that students benefit from discipline in academic achievement, athletes rely on it for peak performance, and children who are taught discipline from an early age develop the capacity to pursue goals consistently. Without discipline, no sustained accomplishment is possible — a principle the author presents as universally valid.'

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### Ans (Q3):

Violations:

1. First-person language retained throughout (Rule 4): 'I love reading,' 'In my opinion,' 'I personally believe,' 'I disagree' — the précis is a first-person essay and the student has not converted to third person.
2. Personal opinions added (Rule 6): 'In my opinion, every school should...' and 'I personally believe that e-books are better than physical books' — these are the writer's opinions, not the author's arguments.
3. Disagreement introduced (Rule 6): 'I disagree because many people read online content' — the précis writer must never disagree with or add to the author's argument.

Corrected Précis (~85 words): 'Reading, the author contends, broadens understanding and develops empathy by exposing readers to diverse perspectives. It also enhances vocabulary and analytical ability, offering a means of learning without travel. The author notes that reading has declined in the digital age and argues that schools

should prioritise independent reading and maintain well-stocked libraries. Teachers are urged to actively recommend books as part of a wider cultural effort to sustain the habit of reading.'

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**Ans (Q4):**

Assessment: Partially correct.

Correct elements: All four points are present (free press, judicial independence, accountability, elections). The précis uses own words, is in third person, and maintains the original order.

Violation — Addition beyond the original (Rule 6): The phrase 'democracy risks becoming a façade behind which authoritarianism can flourish quietly' is a vivid expansion that goes beyond what the original points stated. The original made four discrete points; the candidate has added an inferred consequence not explicitly stated as a fifth argument.

Additionally, the précis is strong at 130 words for a 360-word passage (36%) — slightly over the one-third target.

Verdict: Good structural understanding but deducted for embellishment and slight over-length.

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**Ans (Q5):**

This précis is largely correct. Let us audit it:

Rule 1 (Length): 82 words for 240 words  $\approx 34\%$  — acceptable.

Rule 2 (Completeness): All main ideas are present — productivity gains, job displacement, 'creative destruction,' algorithmic bias, call for regulation, balanced conclusion.

Rule 3 (Own words): 'creative destruction' — retained in quotes, which is correct for a term the author explicitly labels and defines.

Rule 4 (Third person / tense): Correct throughout.

Rule 6 (No additions): Clean — no extraneous material.

Minor issue: 'creative destruction' — acceptable to retain as a labelled concept, but the quotes signal it is a term from the original, which is correct practice.

Verdict: This is a well-executed précis with no significant rule violations. The student should be commended.

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**Ans (Q6):**

Most significant violation — Rule 2 (Failure to compress; detail retained at the expense of condensation):

The précis reads almost like a factual biography with every significant date, place, and achievement listed in sequence. While individually each fact is 'main,' the précis does not condense — it merely lists. The dates (1867, 1903, 1911, 1934), the specific institutions (Sorbonne), and the specific diseases (aplastic anaemia) are all supporting details that give texture to the main points. The précis should abstract the key contributions without enumerating every biographical milestone.

Secondary violation: The précis is 108 words for a 300-word passage (36%) — marginally over the one-third limit.

Corrected Précis (~90 words): 'Marie Curie, a pioneering physicist and chemist who overcame significant gender discrimination, was the first woman to earn a physics degree from the Sorbonne. She discovered polonium and radium, and became the only scientist to receive Nobel Prizes in two different disciplines — Physics (1903) and Chemistry (1911). Her foundational research laid the groundwork for modern nuclear science. She died in 1934, her health believed to have been permanently damaged by decades of radiation exposure.'

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### Ans (Q7):

Rule violated: Rule 10 — Direct speech must be converted to reported speech; all quoted dialogue must be paraphrased.

The précis reproduces the entire dialogue verbatim, retaining all quoted speech including exchanges, retorts, and agreements. This is a complete failure of the reported-speech rule and also of Rule 3 (own words).

Additionally, the final line 'both agreed' introduces a form of resolution not necessarily in the original — the dialogue form may have ended without explicit agreement.

Corrected Précis (~90 words): 'Two economists debated the merits of protectionism. The first argued that tariffs safeguard domestic industries and employment, while the second countered that they raise consumer prices and provoke retaliation from trading partners. The second economist further contended that while protectionism may preserve short-term jobs, it stifles innovation and long-term economic dynamism. Historical evidence, the second argued, demonstrated that free trade raises overall prosperity. The debate ultimately centred on whether immediate employment protection outweighs the long-term benefits of economic openness.'

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### Ans (Q8):

Errors:

1. Rule 5 (Order violated): The précis begins with negative effects, then mentions positive effects, then jumps to regulation — but the original ran: positives (Para 1) → negatives (Para 2) → regulation (Para 3). The candidate has reversed paragraphs 1 and 2.

2. Rule 11 (Meta-reference): 'The author begins by noting positive effects before discussing the negative impact' — the précis must not describe the structure of the passage; it must embody that structure.

Corrected Précis (~110 words): 'Social media offers significant benefits, particularly through online support communities that foster connectivity among users with shared experiences. However, its negative effects are considerable: the culture of comparison it promotes generates anxiety and adversely affects mental health. The author argues that these harms are sufficiently serious to require regulatory intervention, proposing that governments introduce measures to limit the psychological damage social media platforms inflict on their users, particularly younger audiences.'

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**Ans (Q9):**

Mistake: Final sentence — 'The passage is very well written and raises important issues for city planners.'

This violates Rule 6 (No additions) and Rule 4 (Third person / objectivity). The writer is commenting on the quality of the passage, which is entirely irrelevant to a précis. A précis reports the author's ideas; it does not evaluate the passage. This must be deleted entirely.

Corrected Final Sentence (replacing the offending one): The preceding 65 words (minus the final sentence) form a correct précis. The corrected précis ends after '...cities will become ungovernable,' which is the final substantive point. Word count: approximately 62 words — appropriate for a 210-word original.

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**Ans (Q10):**

Assessment: This précis is largely well-executed. Audit:

Rule 1: 100 words for 300 words = 33% — correct.

Rule 2: All main ideas present — threat to food security, causes (temperature/rainfall/extreme weather), smallholder vulnerability, adaptation strategies, barriers to adaptation, policy recommendations, international cooperation, consequences of inaction.

Rule 3: Own words used effectively. 'Smallholder farmers' retained (technical term in context).

Rule 5: Order preserved correctly.

Rule 9: Written in continuous prose.

Rule 11: No padding.

One potential issue: '70 per cent of the world's food' — this statistic might be considered a supporting detail.

However, it is the author's key evidence for the claim about smallholder vulnerability; in this case it functions as the main point, not mere illustration, and is acceptable to retain.

Verdict: This is a correct, high-quality précis.

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**Ans (Q11):**

Stylistic violation: Rule 11 (Padding / evaluative intrusion) and Rule 3 (Own words/objectivity).

The phrase '— and this is very sad indeed' is an emotional comment interjected by the précis writer. A précis must be scrupulously neutral. The author's position (it is a 'tragedy') is already conveyed by 'cultural and cognitive tragedy' — the précis writer must not add an additional emotional endorsement.

Corrected sentence: Remove '— and this is very sad indeed' entirely. The sentence should read: '...the author describes this loss as both a cultural and cognitive tragedy, since each language encodes a unique worldview.' This is accurate, objective, and concise.

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**Ans (Q12):**

Violations identified:

1. Rule 2 (Incompleteness): Points 3 (teacher training) and 5 (private participation as supplement) are entirely absent. Both are main arguments of the passage and must be included.
2. Rule 2 (Imbalanced emphasis): Giving twice the space to point 1 (right to education) at the expense of points 3 and 5 distorts the relative weight of the author's argument.

Correct approach: Each of the five points should receive proportionally equal treatment in approximately one sentence each. A 130-word précis (one-third of 390 words) has room for five tight sentences of roughly 25–28 words each. The writer must discipline themselves not to elaborate on the first point simply because it is encountered first.

**Ans (Q13):**

Assessment: This précis is very well written and largely correct. Full audit:

Rule 1: 83 words for 240 words  $\approx$  35% — marginally over; could trim 3–4 words but broadly acceptable.

Rule 2: All main ideas are present and proportionally represented.

Rules 3, 4, 5, 6: All satisfied. Own words, third person, original order, no additions.

Rule 7: No title is shown — the question asks for an assessment of the précis as given; a title would need to be added.

Rule 9: Continuous, well-constructed prose.

Rule 11: No padding.

Rule 12: Grammatical consistency maintained.

Verdict: A strong précis. The only gap is the absent title (not shown in the question). Suggested title: 'Mindfulness: A Cost-Effective Approach to Mental Health and Productivity.'

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**Ans (Q14):**

Error: Rule 11 (Padding through adverbial accumulation) and Rule 3 (Partial verbatim borrowing).

The phrases 'strongly, passionately, and emphatically,' 'with great force and clarity,' 'categorically and with tremendous conviction,' and 'direct and immediate threat' are all emphatic intensifiers that add no new content.

The précis writer is padding with adverbs and adjectives that the original may not have used but which the writer adds for effect.

Additionally, the phrase 'without fear or favour' is a fixed idiomatic expression that, if used in the original, should be paraphrased (e.g. 'impartially') rather than repeated.

Corrected Précis (~75 words): 'The author argues that an independent judiciary is essential to democracy.

Judges insulated from political pressure deliver impartial justice, and the separation of powers demands that the judiciary operate free from executive control. Any erosion of judicial independence, the author concludes, poses a serious threat to democratic governance.'

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**Ans (Q15):**

Violations:

1. Rule 4 (First person not converted to third person): Every sentence begins with 'I' — the original is a first-person narrative and the précis must convert to third person throughout. 'I began' → 'The journalist began'; 'I found' → 'evidence revealed'; 'I published' → 'the findings were published.'
2. Rule 9 (Disjointed sentences): The précis reads as a list of short declarative sentences. A proper précis requires continuous prose with logical connectives.
3. Rule 11 (Slight padding): 'My investigation showed that' is meta-referential; the conclusion should be stated directly.

Corrected Précis (~90 words): 'A journalist investigated corruption by gathering documents revealing that contracts had been awarded without competitive bidding, and by interviewing anonymous officials who confirmed that bribes had been paid in cash. Despite ministerial pressure, the journalist published the findings, triggering immediate public reaction and prompting the government to establish an inquiry. Three senior officials were subsequently prosecuted. The investigation demonstrated that rigorous, persistent journalism remains an effective instrument for holding those in power accountable.'

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## Category 2 — Fill in the Right Word: Answers

**Ans (Q16):**

**Correct Answer: (C)**

(A) Wrong — first person, violates Rule 4. (B) Wrong — 'argues' is present tense; for a précis of a philosophy passage typically cast in past tense, and the philosopher 'stated,' the past tense 'argued/thought' is more precise. However, (B) is closer than (A) or (D). (C) Correct — third person, past tense, own words. (D) Wrong — 'He says' is present tense and 'He' without antecedent is vague.

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**Ans (Q17):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — verbatim quotation of a vivid phrase, violating Rule 3. (B) Correct — accurately paraphrases the metaphor ('smothering hand' = 'excessive interference') in plain language. (C) Wrong — too vague; loses the

specific meaning ('the government's hand' could mean anything). (D) Wrong — still partially copies the original phrase and is grammatically awkward.

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**Ans (Q18):**

**Correct Answer: (A)**

(A) Correct — third person, own words, one brief attribution, no padding. (B) Wrong — adopts the original's rhetorical certainty ('undoubtedly') without attribution; this presents the author's opinion as objective fact. (C) Wrong — padding ('without any doubt whatsoever' is three-word padding for 'undoubtedly'). (D) Wrong — awkward syntax and the phrase 'in conclusion' is padding (Rule 11).

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**Ans (Q19):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — 'The author says' is unnecessary attribution when the effect is well established; also 'like' introduces a simile structure rather than a causal statement. (B) Correct — parallel grammatical structure, own words, concise, accurate, no padding. (C) Wrong — 'many things including,' 'changing of rainfall,' and 'also erosion' are all grammatically imprecise or padding. (D) Wrong — incomplete parallel structure; 'biodiversity, rainfall, and erosion' omits the verbal action (loss / disruption / erosion).

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**Ans (Q20):**

**Correct Answer: (D)**

The tense convention for précis writing is nuanced. (A) is overly simplistic — past tense throughout is the default for narrative but not for descriptions of ongoing facts. (B) is incorrect — present tense throughout ignores the tense-shifting rule. (C) is partially correct but insufficiently precise. (D) is the most accurate: general truths about ongoing phenomena (e.g. 'oceans cover 71% of the Earth') may remain in present tense; the author's specific arguments, when summarised, take past tense ('the author argued'). This is the standard examiners' expectation.

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**Ans (Q21):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — retains the direct quotation verbatim (Rule 10). (B) Correct — converts to reported speech correctly: 'warned + infinitive' is correct grammar for reported commands/warnings. (C) Wrong — 'never should activity be mistaken' is an awkward inversion that is stilted and unnecessarily complex. (D) Wrong — still uses direct quotation marks, violating Rule 10.

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**Ans (Q22):**

**Correct Answer: (D)**

(A) Wrong — 'believes' is weaker than 'argues'; 'must inform and entertain' is an imperative without the analytical structure. (B) Correct in content but overly formal ('disseminating information and providing entertainment') for a précis sentence, and 'according to the author' is slightly wordy. (D) Correct — natural, clear, third person, own words, appropriate register, and accurately reflects the author's argumentative stance. Between (B) and (D), (D) is marginally superior for conciseness. (C) Wrong — 'the author thinks' is too informal; the addition of 'and this is important' is pure padding.

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**Ans (Q23):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — there is no rule that a précis must match the paragraph count. A précis condenses content, not structure. (B) Correct — the number of sentences in the précis is irrelevant as long as all main ideas from all paragraphs are included. (C) Wrong — same error as (A). (D) Wrong — introduction and conclusion paragraphs are not exempt from the completeness requirement; they often contain main arguments.

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**Ans (Q24):**

**Correct Answer: (D)**

(A) Wrong — reproduces the hedging phrase 'it must be said' from the original; Rule 3 requires paraphrase. (B) Wrong — retains 'far from satisfactory,' a phrase directly from the original. (C) Wrong — 'it must be noted' is again a borrowed hedging phrase; 'very unsatisfactory' overstrengthens the original's 'far from satisfactory.' (D) Correct — 'unsatisfactory' cleanly paraphrases 'far from satisfactory' without padding.

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**Ans (Q25):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — the digression is not a main argument; it is supporting illustration of a point already stated. Reducing it to one sentence still gives it undue space. (B) Correct — a digression that illustrates but does not constitute a separate main point must be excluded entirely, freeing words for the main arguments. (C) Wrong — length is irrelevant; the question is whether the digression adds a main point. (D) Wrong — even the conclusion of a digression is not a main point if the main point was already made before the digression began.

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**Ans (Q26):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — 'Technology and the World' is vague and non-specific (violates Rule 7). (B) Correct — specific, captures both the subject (technology) and the central argument (widens global inequality). (C) Wrong — too long; 'in the Modern World' is redundant; 'Digital Divide and Economic Inequality' is slightly imprecise. (D) Wrong — 'Rich Nations and Poor Nations in the Digital Age' is descriptive but does not convey the direction of the argument (widening gap).

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**Ans (Q27):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — when a specific word limit is given, it overrides the one-third default (Rule 1). The target is 120, not 150. (B) Correct — 118 words is within 'not more than 120 words.' The limit is a ceiling, not an exact target. (C) Wrong — there is no minimum when a ceiling is specified. (D) Wrong — 'about 120' or 'not more than 120' does not mean 'exactly 120.' Aiming for exactly 120 creates artificial padding. 118 is excellent.

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**Ans (Q28):**

**Correct Answer: (A)**

(A) Correct — it records both the initial claim ('often seen as the solution to all economic problems') and the author's qualification ('oversimplification') in sequence, using own words. (B) Wrong — retains the original

phrase 'panacea for all economic ills' verbatim (Rule 3). (C) Wrong — the author did raise the claim before dismissing it; omitting it loses the dialectical structure. (D) Wrong — this is the opposite of the author's argument; it removes the qualification entirely.

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**Ans (Q29):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — reproduces the rhetorical question verbatim (Rule 10 / Rule 3). (B) Correct — converts the rhetorical question to reported speech that captures both the content (mass hunger alongside extreme wealth) and the moral challenge (legitimacy of calling oneself civilised). (C) Wrong — too vague; 'wonders if civilisation is possible' misrepresents the specific argument about hunger and wealth. (D) Wrong — describes what the author does rather than capturing what the author says; this is a meta-reference (Rule 11).

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**Ans (Q30):**

**Correct Answer: (C)**

(A) Wrong — seven statistics supporting one point is repetition; recording them in two sentences still gives undue space to supporting details. (B) Wrong — citing the 'most dramatic' statistic introduces editorial judgment into the précis (which statistic is most dramatic?). (C) Correct — all seven statistics illustrate the same single point; that point is recorded once in the précis; the statistics are cut entirely (Rule 2). (D) Wrong — fabricating an 'average' of statistics is an addition not present in the original (Rule 6).

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### **Category 3 — Choose the Correct Sentence: Answers**

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**Ans (Q31):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — first person retained from the original; violates Rule 4. (B) Correct — third person, past tense, own words, active voice, concise. (C) Wrong — dangling modifier: 'While experimenting with polymers, a new

compound was discovered' implies the compound was experimenting, not the scientist. (D) Wrong — 'which was a remarkable find' is the précis writer's personal evaluation added to the content (Rule 6).

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**Ans (Q32):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — too colloquial ('may not have written') and loses the disputed-authorship scholarly context. (B) Correct — captures the core debate, identifies the alternative candidates, uses own words, is appropriately formal. (C) Wrong — this is a direct near-copy of the original sentence; Rule 3 requires paraphrase. (D) Wrong — this presents the alternative authorship as fact ('were written by Bacon, Marlowe, or a group') rather than as a disputed claim, distorting the author's meaning.

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**Ans (Q33):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — states the author's prediction as objective fact; removes attribution and converts an argued position into an assertion of truth. (B) Correct — attributes the conviction to the author, uses own words, past tense, and conveys the fifty-year timeframe accurately. (C) Wrong — retains 'beyond the shadow of a doubt' verbatim (Rule 3); also 'with tremendous conviction' is padding (Rule 11). (D) Wrong — too vague; 'expresses his conviction that...replace fossil fuels' without the timeframe loses a main detail.

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**Ans (Q34):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — grammatically awkward: 'coalition politics have hamstrung meaningful electoral reform' is acceptable but 'their' lacks clear antecedent. (B) Correct — causal relationship clear, active voice preferred, own words, five-year timeframe retained. (C) Wrong — near-verbatim reproduction of the original sentence structure (Rule 3); dashes and original phrasing retained. (D) Wrong — passive voice ('have consistently failed to be pushed through') is clumsy; also 'despite five years' leaves the timeframe hanging without context.

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**Ans (Q35):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — faulty parallel structure: 'reduces poverty and crime while improves health and strengthens' — 'improves' should not follow 'while' in this construction without 'it.' (B) Correct — clean parallel structure: 'reduces X and Y while improving Z and strengthening W.' All four points are captured concisely. (C) Wrong — broken syntax: 'crime, and also health and democracy improve' — ungrammatical. (D) Wrong — padding with 'many benefits including' and 'improvement of health, and strengthening of democracy' — weak nominalised forms rather than strong verbs.

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**Ans (Q36):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — retains 'haunting, three-dimensional quality' and 'chiaroscuro' verbatim. While 'chiaroscuro' is a technical term that may be kept, the rest should be paraphrased. (B) Correct — paraphrases 'chiaroscuro' as 'light and shadow' (acceptable for a non-technical audience précis), captures both the artistic quality and the academic significance. (C) Wrong — partial verbatim reproduction ('haunting three-dimensional quality') and 'much studied' is imprecise. (D) Wrong — syntactically broken and 'art historians study it' is a thin paraphrase of 'one of the most studied works in art history.'

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**Ans (Q37):**

**Correct Answer: (C)**

(A) Wrong — reproduces the metaphor verbatim (Rule 3); a vivid rhetorical device must be converted to its plain meaning in a précis. (B) Wrong — 'diverts resources from road maintenance' is an imprecise paraphrase; the original point is about competition for limited municipal funds, not diversion from a specific programme. (C) Correct — accurately converts the metaphor to its meaning: metro investment and road repair compete for limited funds. (D) Wrong — 'the author uses a metaphor to say...' is a meta-description of the author's technique, not a précis of the content (Rule 11).

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**Ans (Q38):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — too brief; loses the dialectical structure (some argue X, others argue Y) which is the main point. (B) Correct — captures both positions and the author's mediating conclusion; 'suggests' is appropriately tentative for 'as always, lies somewhere in between.' (C) Wrong — 'proposes a middle path' implies the author makes a concrete proposal; the original merely suggests the truth lies between the extremes, which is less prescriptive. (D) Wrong — 'The truth is between them' presents the author's suggestion as fact; also the sentence structure 'X and Y are two opposing views' is a meta-description.

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**Ans (Q39):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — lists all three novels (Oliver Twist, Bleak House, Hard Times); these are three examples supporting one point and should be cut entirely, not listed (Rule 2). (B) Correct — records the single point (Dickens depicted poverty in Victorian England across multiple works) without listing the individual examples. (C) Wrong — same error as (A); also lacks the author attribution. (D) Wrong — same error as (A) and (C); the dash creates an appositive list of examples that should not appear in the précis.

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**Ans (Q40):**

**Correct Answer: (D)**

(A) Wrong — 12 words over the limit is not automatically a full penalty; 'about 140' implies some flexibility. (B) Wrong — 'accept the précis fully' overstates the latitude; 152 words when 140 is the target is borderline. (C) Wrong — asking for exactly 140 words introduces an artificial constraint not implied by 'about.' (D) Correct — examiners evaluate content first; 'about 140' generally implies  $\pm 5-8\%$  (i.e. 130–150 words). 152 words is at the outer edge and typically attracts a minor deduction, not rejection. Content quality remains the primary criterion.

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**Ans (Q41):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — 'too dire to enumerate' is lifted directly from the original (Rule 3); also, the specific consequences are main points and must be stated, not alluded to as 'too dire to enumerate.' (B) Correct — lists all four specific consequences (economic collapse, social unrest, extremism, breakdown of global order) in own words, with appropriate conditional framing. (C) Wrong — 'dire consequences including' partially copies the original's

rhetorical structure; 'collapse of global order' is imprecise ('collapse' applied to 'global order' differs from 'unravelling'). (D) Wrong — syntactically broken ('could be too dire if left unchecked') and omits key detail.

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**Ans (Q42):**

**Correct Answer: (A)**

(A) Correct — integrates both the government's use of censorship, its stated purpose (population control through information restriction), and the opposing views (free expression vs stability) in a single, coherent, well-constructed sentence. (B) Wrong — shorter but loses the 'population control' dimension of the government's purpose, which is the author's characterisation of the intent. (C) Wrong — reverses the order of presentation: the author describes governments' use first, then critics' response; this sentence begins with 'claim supporters,' inverting the logic. (D) Wrong — presents critics' argument first, reversing the original order (Rule 5).

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**Ans (Q43):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — while 'Antibiotic Resistance' identifies the topic, the passage's central argument is that this constitutes a crisis — the 'silent crisis' framing is the author's main evaluative claim, not peripheral. A title that omits this misrepresents the tone and argument. (B) Correct — 'crisis' is the author's central characterisation; a good title must reflect not just the subject but the argument's thrust. (C) Wrong — the title need not match the original exactly; it must capture the central theme. (D) Wrong — précis titles must be specific, not merely short.

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**Ans (Q44):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — no such rule exists; the précis matches ideas, not sentences. (B) Correct — merging is acceptable if and only if the merged sentence faithfully captures both steps without omitting essential information. This is good précis technique. (C) Wrong — same error as (A). (D) Wrong — 'any two adjacent steps' — not any two steps can always be merged; only those where the merger does not lose content. The word 'always' makes (D) incorrect.

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**Ans (Q45):**

**Correct Answer: (B)**

(A) Wrong — 'most interesting ideas' is incorrect; a précis includes all main ideas, not just the interesting ones; 'interesting' introduces a subjective criterion. (B) Correct — comprehensive and precise: accurate, coherent, condensed, own words, preserves ideas, order, and tone. (C) Wrong — incomplete: it omits 'coherent,' 'accurate,' and crucially 'tone'; also omits the 'one-third length' guideline. (D) Wrong — a précis is not a paraphrase; paraphrase preserves length, a précis condenses; also, 'one-third' is the approximate guideline for length, not the definition of a précis.

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### **Category 4 — Analyse, Rewrite & Explain: Answers**

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**Ans (Q46):**

Title: The Ocean Crisis and the Case for Conservation

Précis (~100 words): 'Oceans, covering most of the Earth's surface, regulate climate, produce oxygen, and support immense biodiversity. Yet they face a compounding crisis: plastic pollution, industrial overfishing, ocean acidification from rising carbon dioxide levels, and coral reef degradation driven by warming waters. The economic stakes are enormous — fisheries, maritime trade, and coastal tourism collectively sustain billions of livelihoods and generate vast revenues. The author argues that economic arguments alone are insufficient; what is required are binding international treaties, enforceable fishing limits, a global ban on single-use plastics, and expanded marine protected areas, since the ocean is a shared inheritance belonging to all of humanity.'

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**Ans (Q47):**

Title: Teacher Retention: The Overlooked Crisis in Rural Education

Précis (~90 words): 'A teacher with fifteen years of rural school experience contends that the principal obstacle to quality education in remote areas is not the shortage of resources but the inability to attract and retain trained, motivated teachers. Having personally managed six subjects across multiple grades simultaneously while city counterparts taught one subject to one class, the author argues that structural inequality — not merely financial

— underlies the disparity. Governments, the author urges, must treat rural teacher retention as a policy priority, offering competitive salaries, housing, and career advancement rather than treating these as optional luxuries.' Note: The opening 'A teacher with fifteen years of rural school experience contends' is the correct third-person conversion of 'I have taught...and I can say.'

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**Ans (Q48):**

Seven errors identified:

1. 'Crime is going up and making people scared' — CONTRADICTS the original, which says crime rates have FALLEN (Rule 6: no additions or distortions).
2. 'the media exaggerates crime, creating unwarranted public fear, even though, statistically speaking' — partial verbatim reproduction of original phrasing (Rule 3).
3. 'I agree with the author' — personal opinion introduced (Rule 6); first person used (Rule 4).
4. 'This is a very important point that the author makes very well' — evaluative padding commenting on the quality of the passage (Rules 11, 6).
5. 'In my opinion, responsible journalism is the solution' — personal opinion not in the original (Rule 6).
6. 'Also, social media makes things worse, which is another big problem' — information not in the original (Rule 6); also colloquial register.
7. Opening sentence contradicts the passage; the original argues crime has FALLEN, not risen.

Corrected Précis (~100 words): 'The media's tendency to sensationalise crime creates widespread public fear that is disproportionate to reality, since statistical evidence consistently shows that crime rates have declined over the past decade. The author argues that this disconnect — between perceived and actual crime — is directly attributable to irresponsible media coverage that prioritises alarming narratives over accurate reporting. The public, exposed to relentless crime coverage, believes crime is rising when it is falling. The author concludes that such misrepresentation is damaging to public trust in institutions and calls for greater editorial responsibility in crime journalism.'

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**Ans (Q49):**

Comparison: Précis vs Abstract

A précis preserves the original order of ideas, includes all main arguments (both the case for walkability and the critics' objections), and condenses to approximately one-third. An abstract provides the core finding without the argumentative structure — it tells the reader what the passage concludes, not how it argues.

Précis (~100 words): 'Urban planning has shifted from car-centric to people-centric design, with cities such as Amsterdam, Copenhagen, and Bogotá leading the transformation. Research demonstrates that walkable cities reduce obesity, strengthen social cohesion, and lower carbon emissions; economically, walkable retail areas outperform car-dependent commercial zones. The author argues that walkability should become a non-negotiable design principle in future urban development. Critics counter that redesigning cities is costly and risks accelerating gentrification. The author concludes that the evidence favours prioritising walkability, provided that equity concerns are actively addressed through policy.'

Abstract (~40 words): 'Evidence strongly supports designing cities around walkability rather than cars. Walkable urban areas show health, social, and economic benefits. The author advocates embedding walkability in urban planning while managing equity risks from gentrification.'

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**Ans (Q50):**

Digression identified: 'Incidentally, the Carnegie libraries built in the early twentieth century — funded by the steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, who gave away 90 per cent of his fortune — are architecturally among the finest public buildings in the world, and it is a shame that many have fallen into disrepair.'

Why it must be excluded: This entire section is explicitly flagged by the word 'incidentally,' signalling a tangential aside. Its content — the architectural merit and condition of Carnegie library buildings — is unrelated to the passage's central argument, which concerns the social and policy importance of public libraries as democratic institutions. The Carnegie digression adds historical colour but no main argument. It must be cut in full (Rule 2).

Précis (~80 words): 'Public libraries are democratic institutions that provide equal access to knowledge regardless of socioeconomic background, making them particularly valuable in an era of paywalled academic resources. They reduce educational inequality, support lifelong learning, and serve as community anchors in neighbourhoods that have lost other civic spaces. The author argues that cuts to public library funding represent not merely a cultural loss but a failure of social policy, and advocates for sustained public investment.'

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**Ans (Q51):**

The dilemma: A 90-word metaphor (30% of the passage) that makes only one point — 'democracy needs constant maintenance.'

Resolution: The metaphor must be discarded and replaced with its literal meaning. Rule 2 states that examples, illustrations, and extended analogies supporting a point already stated (or storable in a sentence) must be omitted. Rule 3 states the précis must be in own words. A metaphor, by definition, is not plain statement — it is a literary device. In a précis, literary devices are converted to their literal equivalent.

Rule 3 also means the metaphor cannot be reproduced verbatim. Rule 2 means the 90-word metaphorical elaboration cannot be condensed to two sentences — because it makes only one point, which needs only one sentence.

Précis of that paragraph (one sentence): 'Democracy requires continuous, active maintenance by its citizens and institutions if it is to remain healthy and functional.'

This single sentence faithfully captures the entire 90-word metaphorical paragraph.

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### **Ans (Q52):**

Title: Science's Mechanism for Error and Its Cultural Enemies

Précis (~120 words): 'Historical scientists — however sophisticated their methods — worked with incomplete evidence and inevitably held theories later shown to be wrong. What distinguishes science from dogma, the author argues, is not infallibility but the capacity for self-correction through peer review, replication, and revision. A theory that cannot be falsified is not science. Yet this intellectual humility is under cultural threat: public discourse rewards certainty, penalises changing one's mind, and treats scientific doubt as unreliability. This culture discourages honest uncertainty, incentivises cherry-picking, and erodes public trust when provisional findings are revised. The solution is not to make science appear more certain, but to educate the public about science as a process of progressive approximation, and to make science communication as rigorous as science itself.'

Ideas retained: Historical fallibility of science; the error-correction mechanism (peer review/replication/revision); falsifiability as the criterion of science; cultural hostility to intellectual humility; its specific consequences; the proposed solution.

Ideas omitted: Specific examples (the four humours physician; the luminiferous ether physicist). These are illustrations supporting the point about historical fallibility — one sentence about that point suffices (Rule 2).

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**Ans (Q53):**

Scoring (out of 20):

1. Structural Coherence (5/5): The précis flows logically — benefits → risks → corporate concerns → regulatory conclusion. Transitions are smooth and the argument is easy to follow. Full marks.
  2. Completeness (4/5): All major themes are present. One minor omission: 'monocultures of genetically uniform crops are vulnerable to novel pathogens' — this is paraphrased as 'monocultures of genetically uniform crops' without the vulnerability detail, slightly weakening the risk argument. Minor deduction.
  3. Language Precision (5/5): Technical terms ('beta-carotene,' 'gene flow,' 'superweeds,' 'food sovereignty') are retained appropriately. Own words used throughout where paraphrase is possible. Active, clear sentences. Full marks.
  4. Rule Compliance (4/5): Rules 1–12 broadly satisfied. Minor issue: 'Golden Rice' — this is a named example used to illustrate the nutrition-deficiency point. Under Rule 2, an example that is the primary evidence for a specific argument (nutrition deficiency addressed by biotechnology) may be retained — this is borderline. Some examiners would omit 'Golden Rice' and write 'engineered crops can address nutritional deficiencies in developing nations.' One mark deducted for leaving this judgment unresolved.
- Total: 18/20 — a strong précis with minor refinements possible.

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**Ans (Q54):**

Corrected Précis (~90 words): 'Reading fiction enhances empathy by immersing readers in the experiences and perspectives of others. It also improves vocabulary and reduces stress. Research consistently shows that regular readers develop greater emotional intelligence. The author argues that fiction should be incorporated into school curricula as a means of fostering the empathy and wellbeing of students.'

Changes made and rules corrected:

1. 'In this very important passage, the author — who is clearly an expert' — REMOVED. Meta-commentary and evaluative description (Rules 11, 6).
2. "'a profoundly empathetic act'" — REMOVED. Verbatim quotation from original (Rule 3); paraphrased as 'enhances empathy.'
3. 'you see' and 'of course' — REMOVED. Padding (Rule 11).

4. 'This is, of course, something that I believe strongly myself' — REMOVED. Personal opinion, first person (Rules 6, 4).
5. 'By putting yourself in the shoes of fictional characters, you develop empathy' — REMOVED. Second person (Rule 4); also slightly padded.
6. 'the author cites many' — REMOVED. Meta-reference to the author's citation practices; only the conclusion matters (Rule 11).
7. 'In my view, fiction should be made a core part...' and 'I completely agree with this conclusion, which seems very wise and entirely correct' — REMOVED. Personal opinions (Rules 6, 4).

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**Ans (Q55):**

How to handle ambiguity: When the source passage is genuinely ambiguous — when the author withholds a clear conclusion or deliberately presents competing views without resolving them — the précis must reflect that ambiguity faithfully. The précis writer must not resolve the ambiguity for the author. Doing so violates Rule 6 (no additions/inferences). The précis should record the competing positions and the author's conditional framing without forcing a conclusion.

Title: Automation, Employment, and the Uncertainty of History

Précis (~80 words): 'Optimists argue that automation, like past technological change, will ultimately create more jobs than it eliminates. Sceptics counter that the current wave of displacement is occurring at an unprecedented pace and that displaced workers lack the skills new jobs demand. History, the author suggests, offers an ambiguous precedent — potentially reassuring or potentially misleading. The outcome depends on policy decisions — in education, social protection, and labour market reform — that have yet to be made.'

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**Ans (Q56):**

Critical Evaluation of the Candidate's Précis:

Rule 2 (Completeness): Paragraphs 2 and 4 are entirely absent. Para 2 contains the key contributions of female scientists — a main argument demonstrating that women have historically contributed despite exclusion. Para 4 contains the structural causes of the gender gap — bias in hiring, funding, and publishing — which is the analytical core of the passage. These omissions are fatal, not minor.

Rule 5 (Order): Covering paras 1, 3, and 5 skips the middle of the argument, breaking the logical chain.

Verdict: This précis fails on completeness and order. It would receive very low marks.

Correct Précis (~130 words): 'Women have historically been excluded from the scientific community, yet female scientists — including Marie Curie, Rosalind Franklin, and Barbara McClintock — have made foundational contributions to their fields. Despite this, a substantial gender gap persists in STEM disciplines today. The causes are structural: women face bias in hiring committees, receive disproportionately less research funding, and encounter discrimination in academic publishing. These systemic barriers, rather than differences in ability or interest, account for the underrepresentation. The author recommends a multi-pronged response: mentorship programmes to support women entering and remaining in STEM; policy reforms to embed gender equity in hiring and funding allocation; and equal pay legislation. Without structural change, the author argues, the scientific community will continue to forfeit a large proportion of its potential talent.'

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**Ans (Q57):**

Rhetorical Structure: Question → Idealist thesis → Realist antithesis → Analytical qualification (the Montreal Protocol example) → Conditional conclusion.

Title: The Possibility and Limits of Global Governance

Précis (~100 words): 'The feasibility of global governance is disputed. Idealists point to successful precedents such as the Montreal Protocol and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as evidence that international cooperation is achievable. Realists counter that national self-interest consistently undermines multilateral commitments, as demonstrated by the weaknesses of climate agreements and the Security Council's dysfunction. The author offers a nuanced assessment: the Montreal Protocol succeeded because it addressed a specific, scientifically clear problem in which no major power had a strategic interest in the outcome — conditions that do not apply to climate change. Global governance, the author concludes, is possible but only under rare and favourable circumstances; it cannot be assumed as a default response to global challenges.'

Preserving rhetorical structure vs preserving content: Preserving content means including both positions (idealist and realist) and the conclusion. Preserving rhetorical structure means maintaining the dialectical sequence — thesis (idealists) → antithesis (realists) → synthesis/qualification (author's analytical position) → conclusion. A précis that covered all three positions but placed the conclusion first and the thesis last would preserve content but violate structure (Rule 5). The two requirements are distinct: content is what; structure is how the what is arranged.

**Ans (Q58):**

Systematic Comparison:

Rule 1 (Length): A — 98 words, B — 102 words. Both appropriate for a 300-word original. Slight edge to A.

Rule 2 (Completeness): A covers all main points: definition, revenue model, examples, government role, conclusion. B covers the same points but includes fewer examples and the 'blended value' label from the original. Both broadly complete.

Rule 3 (Own words): A — fully own words. B — retains 'blended value' in quotes (a labelled concept from the original, which is acceptable) but is otherwise in own words.

Rule 4 (Third person): A — correct throughout. B — contains 'I think this is a great model' — first person opinion introduced. Serious violation.

Rule 6 (No additions): A — clean. B — 'Social entrepreneurship is the future of development, and more countries should adopt it immediately' — this is an addition not supported by the original, which said it 'complements the welfare state.' The author did not say it is 'the future of development' or that 'more countries should adopt it immediately.'

Rule 7 (Title): Neither précis includes a title as written, but A's content would lend itself to a precise title; B's content is too imprecise for a good title.

Rule 11 (Padding): A — no padding. B — 'new and exciting approach' is evaluative padding; 'It has already worked in many places' is vague filler.

Rule 12 (Grammatical consistency): A — consistent. B — tense shift: 'is a new and exciting approach' (present) vs 'have failed' (present perfect) vs 'is the future' (present) — inconsistent register.

Verdict: Précis A is markedly superior. Précis B fails Rules 4, 6, 11, and 12 — multiple serious violations. A satisfies all rules.

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**Ans (Q59):**

Assessment: The claim is correct and identifies the most consequential error in précis writing.

Explanation: A précis that omits an example merely creates a gap — the main argument is still present, and the précis is incomplete but not distorted. A précis that records an example in the place of the argument it supports has substituted illustration for substance — the précis now presents a detail as if it were a conclusion, fundamentally misrepresenting the author's reasoning.

Constructed example:

Original passage (hypothetical, 300 words): 'Poverty drives crime. In Chicago in 2019, neighbourhoods with median incomes below \$25,000 had homicide rates four times higher than wealthier areas. In London, knife crime is concentrated in the ten most deprived boroughs. Similar patterns exist in Mumbai, São Paulo, and Nairobi. The evidence is consistent and global: where poverty is greatest, crime follows.'

Fatal error précis: 'In Chicago, neighbourhoods with incomes below \$25,000 had homicide rates four times higher than wealthier areas. In London, knife crime concentrates in the ten most deprived boroughs.'

Why fatal: The two Chicago and London statistics are examples supporting the main argument (poverty drives crime). The précis records only the examples and omits the argument entirely. A reader of this précis would have no idea what point the passage was making.

Correct précis: 'Poverty and crime are strongly correlated: evidence from cities across the globe — including Chicago, London, Mumbai, São Paulo, and Nairobi — consistently shows that the highest crime rates occur in the most deprived areas. The author concludes that poverty is the primary driver of crime.'

The correct précis states the argument, briefly acknowledges the global evidence, and preserves the conclusion — without reproducing any of the individual statistics.

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### **Ans (Q60):**

Title: Sovereignty Reimagined: From Absolute Authority to Conditional Responsibility

Précis (~120 words): 'Sovereignty, classically understood as the absolute, supreme authority of a state over its territory, has underpinned international order since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. Yet it has always been more legal fiction than political reality, with smaller states perpetually constrained by larger ones. What has changed in the twenty-first century is not the existence of such constraints but their visibility and legitimacy. Globalisation has transferred effective authority over trade, capital, and information to multinational corporations and digital platforms; international human rights law restricts how states may treat their own citizens; and climate change demands cooperation that limits national autonomy. States remain primary actors, and national identity is reasserting itself through populism. Nevertheless, sovereignty is being renegotiated — reconceived not as absolute power but as conditional responsibility, contingent on a state fulfilling its obligations to its people and to the international community. This reformulation is not yet the governing norm, but it is the trajectory of international law and political practice.'

Self-assessment (~100 words): 'The most difficult decision was handling the historical qualifier — "it has always been a legal fiction as much as a political reality." I retained it because it is essential to the author's argument: the novelty of the twenty-first century lies in the visibility of constraints, not their existence, and this distinction requires the historical context to make sense. I also retained the Peace of Westphalia date, which functions as a main anchor (not mere detail) for the historical argument. I omitted the specific examples of "multinational corporations and international financial institutions" partially merged, and cut the sub-national groups reference as a secondary elaboration of a point already made by the globalisation argument.'

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