

PASSAGE No. 3

3. Read the following passage carefully:

(8 Marks)

Effective speaking depends on effective listening. It takes energy to concentrate on hearing and understanding what has been heard. Incompetent listeners fail in a number of ways. First, they drift off and finally they react. They let their personal feelings about the speaker of the subject, override the significance of the message which is being sent. What can a listener do to be more effective? The first key to effective listening is the art of concentration. If a listener positively wishes to concentrate on receiving a message, his chances of success are high. It may need determination. Some speakers are difficult to follow, either because of voice problems, or because of the form in which they send a message. There is then a particular need for the determination of a listener to concentrate on what is being said.

Concentration is helped by alertness. Mental alertness is helped by physical alertness. It is not simply physical fitness, but also positioning of the body, the limbs and the head. Some people also find it helpful to their concentration if they hold the head slightly to one side. One useful way for achieving this is intensive note-taking, by trying to capture the critical headings and sub-headings the speaker is referring to.

Note-taking has been recommended as an aid to the listener. It also helps the speaker. It gives him confidence when he sees that listeners are sufficiently interested to take notes; the patterns of eye-contact when the note-taker looks up can be very positive; and the speaker's timing is aided – he can see when a note-taker is writing hard and can then make effective use of pauses.

On the basis of your reading of the above passage, answer the following questions:

- a) What does effective listening lead to?
- b) What is one of the hurdles that come in the way of effective listening?
- c) Why is it difficult to understand what some speakers say?
- d) How is note making useful for the speakers?
- e) What should we do in order to concentrate?
- f) What can enhance our concentration?
- g) Find a word from paragraph No. 1 which means 'useless/unskilled'.