THE PASSAGE | READING COMPREHENSION

> Inequality violates a basic democratic norm: the equal standing of citizens. Equality is a relation that obtains between persons in respect of some fundamental characteristic that they share in common. Equality is, morally speaking, a default principle. Therefore, persons should not be discriminated on grounds such as race, caste, gender, ethnicity, disability, or class. These features of human condition are morally irrelevant. The idea that one should treat persons with respect not only because some of these persons possess some special features or talent, for example skilled cricketers, gifted musicians, or literary giants, but because persons are human beings, is by now part of commonsense morality.

With reference to the above passage, the following assumptions have been made: (1) Equality is a prerequisite for people to participate in the multiple transactions of society from a position of confidence. (2) Occurrence of inequality is detrimental to the survival of democracy. (3) Equal standing of all citizens is an idea that cannot actually be realised even in a democracy. (4) Right to equality should be incorporated into our values and day-to-day political vocabulary. Which of the above assumptions are valid?

Valid Assumptions | Four-Statement Code | Hidden Trap: serious-sounding claims about survival and impossibility

(a) 1 and 2 only
Statement 2 overreaches. The passage says inequality violates a norm, not that democracy cannot survive it.

(b) 2 and 3 only
Both fail. Statement 2 overreaches and statement 3 clashes with equality as a default principle.

(c) 1 and 4 only ✓
Equal standing is the base norm (1), and as part of commonsense morality it belongs in everyday values (4).

(d) 3 and 4 only
Statement 3 says equality cannot be realised. The passage never says so.

CRACK THE HIDDEN RULE

Sort each statement into supported, overreaching or opposed. Supported statements follow from the passage's own claim. Overreaching ones push it to an extreme such as survival or impossibility.

Then read the code and keep the option that holds only the supported statements.

Supported = follows the claim. Overreach or opposed = reject.

1 AND 4	STATEMENT 2	STATEMENT 3
Supported by the norm	**Overreach: survival not claimed**	**Opposed: equality is a default**

WORKED IN 3 CLEAN STEPS

1 Read the core claim
Inequality violates the norm of equal standing. Equality is a default principle and part of commonsense morality.

2 Test each statement
1 follows from equal standing. 4 follows from commonsense morality entering everyday values. 2 stretches to survival. 3 says equality is impossible, which the passage never says.

3 Match the code
Only 1 and 4 survive. That is option (c).

ANSWER: (c) 1 and 4 only

THE 3-SECOND SHORTCUT

Spot the extreme words: survival in 2 and cannot actually be realised in 3. Reject them, and only one option is left.

core claim first | extreme words go | then match the code

→ Options (a), (b) and (d) each contain statement 2 or statement 3.
→ Only (c) avoids both.

WHY ASPIRANTS LOSE MARKS HERE

1. **Ticking statement 2 because inequality does harm democracy.** The passage calls it a violation of a norm, not a threat to survival.
2. **Ticking statement 3 because equality is hard in practice.** The passage treats equality as a default principle, not an impossibility.
3. **Dropping statement 4 as a mere wish.** It follows from equality being part of commonsense morality.

ATTEMPT	FLAG	SKIP
~55 sec	if statement 1 feels weak	rarely
Sort the four, then match the code.	It is implied. Check the options before dropping it.	Elimination makes it scoreable.

THE ONE-LINE TAKEAWAY

Keep the statements that follow the passage's claim, and drop the ones that stretch it to an extreme.

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