



Philosophy-Related WAT Bible

Most Common WAT Topics with Sample WATs

Hi,

Welcome to the Written Ability test or 'WAT' section for your MBA Admission process!

The WATs in this section have been curated by alumni of top business schools like IIM A, C, SP Jain, and SCMHRD. Few authors have been panellists for top business schools and have formal experience in taking interviews of the candidates.

The document and content below have been created concerning the past 5 years of WAT experiences for the top B-schools and will be useful for a quick walkthrough. Each category covers a wide range of topics followed by sample WATs. We recommend you read through the topics and the sample WATs for greater insights. Hope these add to your preparation and help you in levelling favours up your game plan in the admission process!

All the best!

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Written Ability Test (WAT) Preparation

WAT or Written Ability Test is one of the two shortlisting rounds conducted by b-schools to assess the candidate's reasoning abilities and written communication skills. The WAT concept started anew last year by top IIMs of the country (Indian Institute of Management) to replace the group discussion round (GD). Many other B-Schools followed the lead of this protocol and have incorporated WAT as one of their selection parameters for MBA Admissions. Major IIMs and other top b-schools of the country award a significant weightage to the WAT round (more than 20%), the second stage of their shortlisting process. This article summarizes all the tips and strategies devised by CL experts to help you with your WAT preparation. Without further ado, see how one should take necessary steps anent WAT Preparation to crack it successfully.

What is meant by WAT?

WAT (Written Ability Test) is a written examination that includes one unique essay question a student needs to answer within the time bracket of 10-20 minutes. This round is conducted somewhere between early afternoon to late afternoon. The style and type of the essay differ across several institutes. The WAT round's primary purpose is to evaluate the candidate on four major proficiency strands, i.e., understanding, fluency, problem-solving, and reasoning. This round is similar to an essay competition. Several IIMs (including new IIMs and Baby IIMs) have replaced the original group discussion round with the WAT round. The reason for this modification was threefold; the inability of candidates to creatively construct their opinions during the earlier group discussion round, the GD room's chaotic environment, and the lack of confidence amongst candidates to speak up their part without any hesitance.

What are the pivotal factors in any plan?

- The objective.
- The resources.
- The time available.

The objective is to compose an essay that displays clarity of thinking, simplicity of phrasing, breadth of viewpoint, and robustness of logic.

The following are the resources: We don't have any reference materials, so this is a little tough. As a result, we must rely on our memories. The assignment is somewhat easier if the topic is open to interpretation and allows the writer to pick a framework for debate. When it comes to a certain issue (such as 'The Demonetisation in India,' for example), we must rely on our existing understanding of the subject. As a result, all WAT candidates must be current on current events.

The amount of time you have: We must divide our time correctly among the essential processes, regardless of how much time we have, rather than committing it completely to the act of writing. Let's pretend we have 20 minutes on our hands to better comprehend the procedure

How to approach a WAT:

1. Understand your topic: Read the topic carefully and try to understand what is being conveyed
2. Take a stand: Based on your understanding, form your opinion and build your pointers.
3. Connect the dots: Organize your points and build your WAT.
4. Conclude: Make sure you conclude the essay well and proofread it before submitting it.

Types of WATs

The following types of WATs have been observed in the past 5 years:

1. Abstract based WAT
2. Business-related WAT
3. Current affairs-based WAT
4. Lifestyle based WAT
5. Philosophy based WAT
6. Politics based WAT
7. Science-based WAT

Let's dive into each type!

Philosophy-related WAT

This type of WAT is used to test your reasoning skills. You may be given an ethical dilemma and asked to write about it. In this type of WAT, you should look into both sides of the coin and then end it with a conclusion. You need to show that you are not biased to one point of view.

How to approach Philosophy -related WATs

This can also be thought in abstract but forming one opinion is very important as philosophy guides our lives.

Sample Philosophy related WATs

1. What is more important: temples or hospitals?
2. What is the reason behind the high student suicide rate in India?
3. Is the huge population of India an asset or liability?
4. Population Control Bill: Is it needed?
5. There is no room for ethics in business
6. Describe a situation when you had to be unethical and how you handled it.
7. We cannot always be ethical
8. Religion is the cause of all world suffering
9. Money can buy happiness: Comment
10. Even after 75 years of independence, we are far from achieving caste neutrality
11. Should the temple be freed from government control?
12. What is more important: religion or country?
13. Has intolerance increased in India?
14. Are all so-called ethical decisions ethical?
15. Difference between inspiration and motivation
16. Is killing animals for consumption unethical?
17. Does having more knowledge make us biased?
18. Why following passion is not always supported by parents?
19. Religion is the opium of the people
20. The world does not need religion

Sample Philosophy-related WATs

1. The world does not need religion.

Key points

- Morality is about reducing suffering in the world.
- Religion has served its purpose of uniting people, setting up structures in society, developing trust and cooperation.
- In the 21st century, we are thriving towards objective realities (Realities which exist no matter if people believe in them or not).
- The only thing it does is create differences in the world, brainwashes people, develops a hatred for other faiths, and provides rituals that are just shortcuts to become a good person.

Religions are a set of rules that guide individuals throughout their lives. And I firmly believe that they have served their purpose and do not need them anymore.

- Uval Noah Harari says, “We need now are morality and spirituality. Morality is about reducing suffering in the world. And spirituality is about questioning and looking for answers. Religions provide us with just answers and no scope of questions.”
- According to the book Sapiens, “Humans do better than animals despite being physically less powerful than most of them because of our ability to create and believe in myths. And those common myths develop trust and wider cooperation amongst us.” For example, human rights are not natural laws; they are not physical; they have been formed by humans (myths) to have a more organized world.
- Religions started in the same manner and had a more significant impact as they were not preached as laws made by humans but the laws given by a higher entity, which is the most powerful of all. These laws led to an organized kingdom, society, country following a hierarchy and a set of rules. Religions developed a shared belief system which led to trust and cooperation.
- In the past, every problem was dealt with with a religious solution. But now Science & Technology has taken over everything. We know the reasons for drought, earthquakes, windstorms, etc. they are a scientific phenomenon and not the wrath of gods anymore.
- Religion has served its purpose of uniting people, setting up structures in society, developing trust and cooperation. But in the 21st century, we are thriving towards objective realities (Realities which exist no matter if people believe in them or not. For Example Gravitational Force, Evaporation, etc.), and religion is an inter-subjective reality (Realities which will cease to exist if its believers change their beliefs or are dead). And

now, the only thing it does is create differences in the world, brainwashes people, develops a hatred for other faiths, and provides rituals that are just shortcuts to become a good person. (A Muslim may pray for 5 times a day; a Hindu may pray daily for hours in temples; a Christian may go to church every day five but still, be involved in immoral activities leading to other humans).

- At present and in future we need greater cooperation on an international level, to make this world a better place to live in. We need to encourage spirituality as now the spiritual questions are not just of philosophical importance but practical and scientific significance five.

2. Is the huge population of India an asset or liability?

Key points

- The huge population of India can be an asset or a liability: it all depends on how we use it.
- India is the second-most populous country in the world.
- With a population of 135 crores + people, we have a huge pool of talent.
- Add this fact to all this, India has the highest young population in the world.
- India has a huge population in the age group 25-35, which is the working age of the people.

The huge population of India can be an asset or a liability: it all depends on how we use it. A huge population brings with it a great market that can develop and nurture talents like anything. India is the second-most populous country in the world. With a population of 135 crores + people, we have a huge pool of talent.

China is the most populous country in the world and the way it has developed in the last few decades is an inspiration for us. We can follow the path of China and develop our country by leaps and bounds. China has become so strong that it can now challenge the USA head-on. The USA, which took more than three decades to reach the point, China reached there in just one decade.

We should be able to provide enough opportunities to our youth. They should get proper training. They should be allowed to make mistakes. This is how we nurture innovation. Education is the most important pillar in this direction. Government should try to improve education in our country. The second thing is improving entrepreneurial skills. The huge

population needs jobs. All these jobs cannot be created by the government, nor can be satisfied by the existing MNCs. We need to make people job givers instead of job seekers. This way they will not only bring innovation to the country but also give employment to a lot of people. For this, we must have ease of doing business.

Add this fact to all this, India has the highest young population in the world. We not only have a huge man-force, but this force is also the one that drives the country. India has a huge population in the age group 25-35, which is the working age of the people. We can benefit a lot from this population, only if we want to make use of it.

3. There is no room for ethics in business

I completely disagree with this statement. Ethics and business go hand-in-hand. There are countless examples where businesses followed unethical tricks and later, they were wiped out. No matter how cunning you think you are, you have to be ethical. Tata, Godrej, these huge conglomerates have survived for more than 100 years only because they have a very strong value system. Tata is synonymous to trust.

On the other hand, take the example of Kingfisher. It was such a great airline. Everyone was happy with their services. The company was establishing itself as one of the best airlines in the world. But then came the scam: the unethicity. And, everything came crashing down. Such a huge airline, with so many assets, suddenly became zero.

People wrongly assume that businesses are only concerned with making money. The work of a car is not to buy petrol. The work of business is not to make money. Cars help you reach from point A to point B. For business, money is like fuel that helps it achieve a larger goal of benefiting society.

So, in essence, business and ethics should always go hand-in-hand.

4. Religion is the cause of all world suffering

Religion was created to help people live life by values. All religions in this world help you reach closer to God. They teach you to be compassionate, loving, and humble. However, there are so many religions in the world, so no doubt, confusion will arise.

Many people believe that religion is the cause of all world suffering like wars. There is no denying the fact that there have been clashes in the past due to deeply held religious beliefs. These wars were gruesome and a lot of people died. One party tries to force its beliefs on the other party. However, if we look closely, the core message of every religion is that people should try to live in peace. This is called the Golden Rule. Every religion follows this simple teaching, you should treat others as you would like to be treated yourself. Every religion prize forgiveness as a strength and discourage people from taking revenge.

Some religions teach total non-violence like some sects of Hinduism and Buddhism. This is called Pacifism. The father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, led a successful non-violence movement against the British.

Shri Krishna in Shrimad Bhagwat Gita says that you should try your best to stop the war, but if all doors seem closed, you should not back an inch. War is the last option in many religions. So, all the suffering in this world is not because of religion, but because of a faulty understanding of religion. There are some groups of people who manipulate religion in their way to earn some bucks. You will not find even a single religion that teaches you to wage a war with others. All the religions are based on a simple truth: God is One and the only way to reach God is through Love. Every religion asks you to spread happiness in this world. It is we, who did not understand religions fully, engage in suffering, and later blame religion for it.

5. Even after 75 years of independence we are far from achieving caste neutrality

Yes, it is very true that even after 75 years of independence we are far from achieving caste neutrality. Caste neutrality refers to a society where everyone, no matter what caste he/she is from, earns the same amount of respect. People earn respect because of their deeds and not their caste. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar envisioned this type of society when he introduced the reservation system in India? He believed that when people see lower caste people occupying top positions in the Indian system and contributing to society, they would look at them with admiration. However, we are miles behind achieving this dream.

Even after 75 years of independence, you can find instances of low caste people being mistreated by high caste people. These people are against reservation but they will not help in bringing the society for which reservation was mandated. People who have already benefited from reservations will continue doing so even when they have reached a significant stage where they no longer need a reservation.

We live in a society that is more divided than ever. People are against each other. Brahmins are fighting against Sudras, Hindus are fighting against Muslims, and there are countless such examples. We should work towards making a more inclusive society. We should work hard to bring everyone to an equal level. We should work towards a day when everyone should respect a person who has contributed towards the society irrespective of their caste and creed.

