

Directions: *There are 2 passages in this section. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A), B), C) and D). You should decide on the best choice and mark the corresponding letter on Answer Sheet 2 with a single line through the centre.*

Passage Two

Questions 51 to 55 are based on the following passage.

When a group of Australians was asked why they believed climate change was not happening, about 36% said it was "common sense", according to a report published last year by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization. This was the most popular reason for their opinion, with only 11% saying their belief that climate change was not happening was based on scientific research.

But what do we mean by an appeal to common sense? Presumably it's an appeal to rationality of some sort that forms the basis of more complex reasoning. The appeal to common sense, however, is usually nothing more than an appeal to thinking that just feels right, but what feels right to one person may not feel right to another. Whether it feels right is usually a reflection of the world view and ideologies we have internalised, and that frames how we interact with new ideas. When new ideas are in accord with what we already believe, they are more readily accepted. When they are not, they, and the arguments that lead to them, are more readily rejected.

We often mistake this automatic compatibility testing of new ideas with existing beliefs as an application of common sense, but, in reality, it is more about judging than thinking. As Nobelist Daniel Kahneman notes in *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, when we arrive at conclusions in this way, the outcomes also feel true, regardless of whether they are. We are not psychologically well equipped to judge our own thinking.

We are also highly susceptible to a range of cognitive biases such as giving preference to the first things that come to mind when making decisions or giving weight to evidence.

One way we can check our internal biases and inconsistencies is through the social verification of knowledge, in which we test our ideas in a rigorous and systematic way to see if they make sense not just to us, but to other people. The outstanding example of this socially shared cognition is science.

That does not mean that individuals are not capable of excellent thinking, nor does it mean no individual is rational. But the extent to which individuals can do this on their own is a function of how well integrated they are with communities of systematic inquiry in the first place. You can't learn to think well by yourself.

In matters of science at least, those who value their common sense over methodological, collaborative investigation imagine themselves to be more free in their thinking, unbound by involvement with the group, but in reality they are tightly bound by their capabilities and perspectives. We are smarter together than we are individually, and perhaps that's just common sense.

51. What does the author intend to show by citing the findings from the report published last year?

- A) People seldom appeal to rationality in their thinking.
- B) It is often the case that truth lies in the hands of a few.
- C) Common sense and science are the two sides of a coin.
- D) Few people know if climate change is really happening.

52. What is the appeal to common sense according to the author?
- A) It is the basis for the internalisation of individuals' ideologies.
 - B) It is a series of conceptions formulated from complex reasoning.
 - C) It is collective wisdom that helps people interact with new ideas.
 - D) It is something subjective based on what one perceives to be right.
53. What does Daniel Kahneman think is the problem of testing new ideas with existing beliefs?
- A) It may lead to incorrect judgment.
 - B) It makes no use of common sense.
 - C) It fails to correct mistakes through serious reasoning.
 - D) It can produce psychologically unacceptable outcomes.
54. What can we do to be less susceptible to cognitive biases?
- A) Give equal weight to evidence of both sides in a conflict.
 - B) Provide convincing examples in developing an argument.
 - C) Establish socially shared cognition via scientific methods.
 - D) Avoid inconsistencies when addressing controversial issues.
55. What message does the author try to convey at the end of the passage?
- A) Multiple perspectives stimulate people's interest in exploring the unknown.
 - B) Individuals can enhance their overall capabilities by interacting with others.
 - C) Individuals should think freely to break from the restrictions of common sense.
 - D) Collaborative efforts can overcome individuals limitations in scientific inquiry.