



Manonmaniam Sundaranar University

*DIRECTORATE OF DISTANCE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION
TIRUNELVELI - 627 012, TAMILNADU*

B.A ENGLISH (FIFTH SEMESTER)

ENGLISH FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS

(From the Academic Year 2025-2026 onwards)

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LO	Learning Outcome
LO1	To develop students' ability to understand and interpret reading passages.
LO2	To enhance students' skills in expanding proverbs and writing essays.
LO3	To help students identify and correct grammatical errors.
LO4	To familiarize students with homonyms, idioms, phrases, and sentence arrangement.
LO5	To develop students' knowledge of determiners, sentence types, and punctuation.

ENGLISH FOR COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS

Syllabus

UNIT I	-	Reading Comprehension
UNIT II	-	Expansion of Proverbs, Essay Writing
UNIT III	-	Spot the Errors
UNIT IV	-	Homonyms, Idioms and Phrases, Jumbled Sentences
UNIT V	-	Determiners, Kinds of Sentences (Assertive, Imperative, Interrogative and Exclamatory), Punctuation.

Recommended Text Books (Latest Editions)

1. English for Competitive Examinations- R.P.Bhatnagar & Rajal Bhargava
2. Remedial Grammar-F.T.Wood

UNIT I

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is the skill of understanding a written passage by grasping its meaning, ideas, and implications as a whole. It involves not just reading the words on the page but interpreting what the writer intends to communicate, both explicitly and implicitly. In competitive examinations, reading comprehension tests a student's ability to process information quickly, think logically, and respond accurately under time constraints. The passage may deal with literary, social, scientific, philosophical, or general topics, and students are expected to comprehend unfamiliar content without prior knowledge of the subject.

The process of reading comprehension works through close and attentive reading, where the student identifies the central idea, supporting arguments, and overall structure of the passage. Attention is paid to key sentences, transitions between paragraphs, and repeated ideas that signal the author's main concern. Vocabulary plays an important role, as many questions test the meaning of words as used in context rather than their dictionary definitions.

Understanding the tone, attitude, and purpose of the author is also essential, as passages may be critical, analytical, neutral, or persuasive in nature.

Questions in reading comprehension are framed to test multiple skills such as factual understanding, inference, interpretation, vocabulary, and critical thinking. Some questions are direct and based on clearly stated facts, while others require students to infer meanings, identify assumptions, or draw conclusions from the passage. Questions may ask for the main idea, suitable title, meaning of a word or phrase, true or false statements, or the author's viewpoint. Distractor options are carefully designed to appear plausible, making careful reading essential.

To find the correct answers, students must rely strictly on the information given in the passage and avoid personal opinions or external knowledge. Reading the questions first helps in focusing on relevant parts of the passage. Answers should be chosen by matching them with the passage's ideas and tone, eliminating options that are extreme, unrelated, or only partially correct. Through systematic practice, students develop speed, accuracy, and confidence, making reading comprehension a highly scoring component in competitive examinations.

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below:

Education is not merely the process of acquiring academic knowledge but a lifelong journey that shapes an individual's character, values, and understanding of the world. While formal education provides intellectual training and professional skills, true learning extends beyond classrooms and examinations. It encourages critical thinking, ethical awareness, and adaptability in an ever-changing society. In an age dominated by information and technology, education must help individuals distinguish between knowledge and wisdom, enabling them to apply learning responsibly for personal growth and social progress.

Questions

1. How is education described in the passage?
2. What does formal education mainly provide?
3. What qualities does true learning encourage?
4. What distinction should education help individuals make?
5. How should learning be applied, according to the passage?

Answers

1. As a lifelong journey
2. Intellectual training and professional skills
3. Critical thinking, ethical awareness, and adaptability
4. Knowledge and wisdom
5. Responsibly

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below:

Time management is an essential skill that enables individuals to use their time effectively and productively. In academic life, students who plan their activities wisely are better able to balance studies, personal responsibilities, and leisure. Poor time management often leads to stress, missed deadlines, and reduced performance. By setting priorities and maintaining discipline, individuals can achieve goals efficiently and develop a sense of control over their daily lives.

Questions

1. What is time management described as in the passage?
2. Who benefits most from effective time management in academic life?
3. What are the consequences of poor time management?
4. How can individuals achieve goals efficiently?
5. What does effective time management help develop?

Answers

1. An essential skill
2. Students
3. Stress, missed deadlines, and reduced performance
4. By setting priorities and maintaining discipline
5. A sense of control

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below:

In the modern world, education is no longer confined to classrooms or limited to textbooks. It has become a continuous process that extends throughout one's life. The rapid growth of technology and access to information have transformed the way people learn, making self-education an essential skill. Today, individuals are expected not merely to acquire degrees but

to develop the ability to think critically, adapt to change, and update their knowledge regularly.

However, the abundance of information available online has created a new challenge. While access to knowledge has become easier, distinguishing between reliable information and misleading content requires careful judgment. Many learners tend to accept information without questioning its authenticity, which can lead to superficial understanding. True education, therefore, lies not in the quantity of information absorbed but in the quality of comprehension and reflection.

Moreover, education plays a crucial role in shaping moral values and social responsibility. A well-educated person is not only skilled in a particular field but is also aware of ethical principles and civic duties. Education should cultivate empathy, tolerance, and a sense of responsibility toward society. When learning is guided by these values, it contributes not only to personal growth but also to the progress of the nation.

In competitive examinations, reading comprehension passages like this test a candidate's ability to understand ideas, analyze arguments, and interpret meanings accurately within a limited time. Success depends on attentive reading, logical reasoning, and the capacity to differentiate between central ideas and supporting details.

Questions

1. What does the passage suggest about the nature of education in the modern world?
2. According to the passage, what challenge has arisen due to easy access to information?
3. What does the author consider to be “true education”?
4. How does education contribute to society, according to the passage?
5. Why are reading comprehension passages important in competitive examinations?
6. Find a word from the passage that means “**the ability to judge carefully**”.
7. State whether the following statement is **True or False**:
 - Education is useful only for personal success and career advancement.

(Optional) Answers for Reference

1. Education is a lifelong process that goes beyond classrooms and textbooks.
2. Difficulty in distinguishing reliable information from misleading content.
3. Education that emphasizes quality of understanding, critical thinking, and reflection.
4. It shapes moral values, social responsibility, and contributes to national progress.
5. They test comprehension, analysis, and interpretation skills under time constraints.
6. *Judgment*
7. False

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below:

In recent years, the concept of success has undergone significant change. Earlier, success was often measured in terms of wealth, social status, or professional position. Today, however, there is a growing awareness that success cannot be defined by material achievement alone. Many individuals now seek balance between career, personal well-being, and meaningful relationships.

One reason for this shift is the increasing pressure and stress associated with modern lifestyles. Constant competition and unrealistic expectations often lead to mental and physical exhaustion. As a result, people have begun to value peace of mind, emotional stability, and job satisfaction as essential components of a successful life. This change reflects a deeper understanding of human needs beyond financial security.

Another important factor influencing this new definition of success is social responsibility. Individuals are becoming more conscious of their role in society and the impact of their actions on others. Success is now linked with ethical behavior, contribution to community welfare, and respect for environmental sustainability. A person who achieves personal goals while remaining socially responsible is often regarded as truly successful.

In competitive examinations, passages like this assess a student's ability to comprehend abstract ideas, identify shifts in perspective, and interpret the author's viewpoint. Careful reading and thoughtful analysis enable students to select accurate answers and avoid misleading options.

Questions

1. How was success traditionally measured according to the passage?
2. What change has occurred in the modern understanding of success?
3. What problems of modern life are mentioned in the passage?
4. How does social responsibility relate to success?
5. What skills do reading comprehension passages test in competitive examinations?
6. Find a word from the passage that means “**a clear understanding or awareness**”.
7. State whether the following statement is **True or False**:
 - Mental peace and emotional stability are now considered important aspects of success.

(Optional) Answers for Reference

1. In terms of wealth, social status, or professional position.
2. Success is now seen as balance, well-being, and meaningful living.
3. Pressure, stress, competition, and exhaustion.
4. It connects success with ethical behavior and contribution to society.
5. Comprehension, interpretation, and analytical skills.
6. *Awareness*
7. True

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below in one word only:

In the present age, communication has become an essential skill in both personal and professional life. The ability to express ideas clearly and confidently often determines success in interviews, workplaces, and social interactions. Effective communication is not limited to speaking alone; it also involves listening attentively and responding appropriately. Misunderstandings usually arise not because of lack of knowledge, but due to poor communication.

Technology has transformed the way people communicate. Emails, instant messaging, and social media have made communication faster and more convenient. However, excessive dependence on digital communication has reduced face-to-face interaction, affecting interpersonal relationships. Many people find it difficult to convey emotions and intentions accurately through written messages, leading to confusion and misinterpretation.

Despite technological advancements, the importance of clear and meaningful communication remains unchanged. Developing communication skills requires continuous practice, awareness of language, and sensitivity to context. In competitive examinations, reading comprehension passages test how well a student understands ideas, identifies key concepts, and responds precisely to questions.

One-Word Answer Questions

1. Communication is described as an essential _____.
2. The passage states that misunderstandings arise due to poor _____.
3. Name one form of digital communication mentioned in the passage.
4. Excessive use of technology has reduced _____ interaction.
5. The inability to convey emotions leads to _____.
6. Communication skills require continuous _____.
7. Reading comprehension tests a student's _____ ability.

(Optional) Answers for Reference

1. Skill
2. Communication
3. Emails / Messaging / Socialmedia
4. Face-to-face
5. Misinterpretation
6. Practice
7. Comprehension / Understanding

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below in one word only:

In contemporary society, the role of discipline in shaping human character is often underestimated. Discipline is commonly misunderstood as a rigid system of rules imposed from outside, whereas in reality it is an internal quality that guides an individual's actions and decisions. A disciplined person is not merely one who obeys authority, but one who exercises self-control, responsibility, and consistency in daily life. Without discipline, talent remains unorganized and effort becomes ineffective.

In the field of education, discipline forms the foundation of genuine learning. Students who cultivate disciplined study habits are better able to manage time, concentrate on tasks, and overcome distractions. Such discipline does not restrict creativity; rather, it provides a structure within which creativity can flourish. History offers numerous examples of great thinkers, artists, and scientists whose achievements were the result of persistent effort guided by discipline.

Modern life, however, presents serious challenges to the practice of discipline. Instant gratification, excessive entertainment, and constant digital engagement encourage impatience and distraction. As a result, many individuals struggle to maintain focus and perseverance. This weakening of discipline affects not only academic performance but also moral values and social responsibility.

Despite these challenges, discipline remains essential for personal growth and social harmony. It enables individuals to set long-term goals, endure temporary hardships, and act ethically even in difficult circumstances. In competitive examinations, reading comprehension passages like this assess a student's ability to grasp abstract ideas, recognize relationships between concepts, and respond accurately. Mastery of comprehension skills, like discipline itself, requires consistent practice and thoughtful engagement with texts.

One-Word Answer Questions

1. Discipline is described as an internal _____.
2. A disciplined person shows self-control and _____.
3. Discipline provides a structure for _____.
4. Excessive digital engagement leads to _____.
5. The inability to maintain focus weakens _____.
6. Discipline helps individuals achieve long-term _____.
7. Reading comprehension tests the ability to grasp _____.
8. Mastery of comprehension requires consistent _____.

(Optional) Answers for Reference

1. Quality
2. Responsibility
3. Creativity
4. Distraction
5. Discipline
6. Goals
7. Ideas
8. Practice

UNIT II

Expansion of Proverbs

1. All that glitters is not gold

The proverb “*All that glitters is not gold*” warns us against judging things merely by their outward appearance. In life, people are often attracted to what looks bright, attractive, or impressive on the surface, without examining its true worth. However, appearances can be deceptive. Something that seems valuable may turn out to be useless or even harmful, while something plain or simple may possess real quality and depth.

In modern society, this proverb is especially relevant. Advertisements, social media images, and luxurious lifestyles often create false impressions of happiness and success. Many people chase wealth, fame, or glamour, believing them to guarantee fulfillment, only to realize later that these things are temporary and hollow. Similarly, a person who speaks politely or dresses well may not always be honest or kind in character.

This proverb teaches us to be cautious, thoughtful, and discerning. True value lies in inner qualities such as integrity, wisdom, and sincerity rather than external show. Therefore, one should learn to look beyond appearances and judge people and situations based on their true nature and lasting worth.

2. Honesty is the best policy

The proverb “*Honesty is the best policy*” emphasizes the importance of truthfulness in all aspects of life. Honesty builds trust, strengthens relationships, and gives a person peace of mind. Though being honest may sometimes seem difficult or risky, it ultimately leads to respect and long-term success. Dishonesty, on the other hand, may offer temporary benefits but often results in guilt, fear, and loss of credibility.

In personal life, honesty forms the foundation of strong relationships. Trust between friends, family members, and colleagues depends on truthfulness. In professional life, an honest person earns a reputation for reliability and integrity, which is more valuable than short-term gains achieved through deceit. Even when honesty leads to immediate loss or punishment, it preserves one’s character and self-respect.

History and everyday experience show that lies eventually come to light, damaging both reputation and confidence. This proverb teaches that truth may be difficult at times, but it never harms in the long run. Therefore, honesty should be practiced consistently as it leads to moral strength, social trust, and lasting success.

3. Rome was not built in a day

The proverb “*Rome was not built in a day*” teaches us the value of patience, persistence, and sustained effort. Great achievements are not the result of sudden success but of continuous hard work over time. Just as the magnificent city of Rome took many years to build, meaningful accomplishments in life require dedication and perseverance.

In today’s fast-paced world, people often expect instant results and quick success. Students want immediate academic excellence, professionals desire rapid promotions, and individuals seek overnight fame. This mindset leads to frustration and disappointment when results do not appear quickly. The proverb reminds us that mastery, growth, and excellence develop gradually through consistent effort and learning from failures.

This saying is particularly relevant in education. Success in studies cannot be achieved through last-minute preparation but through regular study and discipline. Similarly, personal character and skills are shaped over time. The proverb encourages individuals to remain patient, stay focused on long-term goals, and trust the process of steady progress. True success comes to those who are willing to work persistently and wait patiently.

4. A friend in need is a friend indeed

The proverb “*A friend in need is a friend indeed*” highlights the true meaning of friendship. In ordinary circumstances, many people may claim to be friends, but only those who stand by us during times of difficulty prove their sincerity. True friendship is tested not in moments of joy and success but in periods of hardship, failure, and distress.

In life, challenges such as illness, financial problems, or emotional struggles often reveal the real nature of relationships. Fair-weather friends tend to disappear when difficulties arise, whereas genuine friends offer support, encouragement, and practical help without expecting anything in return. Such friends provide emotional strength and help individuals face problems with confidence.

This proverb teaches us to value loyalty, compassion, and selflessness in relationships. It also reminds us to be dependable friends ourselves, willing to support others in their times of need. True friendship is not based on convenience or benefit but on mutual trust and understanding. Therefore, a friend who remains faithful during adversity deserves lasting respect and gratitude, for such friendship is rare and invaluable.

5. Prevention is better than cure

The proverb "*Prevention is better than cure*" emphasizes the importance of foresight and caution in life. It suggests that taking timely precautions can save individuals from serious problems in the future. Preventing harm is always easier, cheaper, and more effective than dealing with its consequences.

This proverb is commonly applied in matters of health. Maintaining hygiene, following a balanced diet, and adopting a healthy lifestyle can prevent many diseases. Similarly, in daily life, careful planning and responsible behavior help avoid unnecessary difficulties. For example, regular study prevents examination stress, and financial planning prevents debt and instability.

On a broader level, this proverb applies to social and environmental issues. Preventing pollution, conserving natural resources, and promoting ethical practices can protect society from long-term damage. The proverb teaches us to act wisely, think ahead, and take responsibility before problems arise. By valuing prevention over cure, individuals and societies can lead safer, healthier, and more stable lives.

6. Practice makes a man perfect

The proverb "*Practice makes a man perfect*" highlights the role of continuous effort in achieving excellence. Talent alone is not enough to succeed; it must be supported by regular practice and dedication. Skills improve over time through repetition, correction, and perseverance.

In education, students who study regularly and revise consistently perform better than those who rely on last-minute preparation. Similarly, athletes, musicians, and artists achieve mastery only through years of disciplined practice. Initial failures and mistakes are a natural part of learning, but persistent effort leads to improvement and confidence.

This proverb also teaches patience and resilience. Perfection is not achieved instantly but through gradual progress. The willingness to learn from mistakes and continue practicing distinguishes successful individuals from others. In a competitive world, consistent effort is the key to growth and achievement. Therefore, the proverb reminds us that dedication and perseverance are essential for personal and professional success.

7. Slow and steady wins the race

The proverb "*Slow and steady wins the race*" teaches the value of patience, consistency, and perseverance over haste and impulsiveness. It suggests that success is not always achieved by

those who act quickly, but by those who move forward with determination and steady effort. The proverb originates from the famous fable of the tortoise and the hare, where consistent effort triumphs over overconfidence.

In daily life, many people rush through tasks hoping for quick success, often leading to careless mistakes or incomplete work. Students who study regularly, even if slowly, tend to perform better than those who rely on last-minute preparation. Similarly, in professional life, steady progress and dedication lead to sustainable success.

This proverb encourages individuals to remain focused on their goals, avoid unnecessary haste, and trust the power of persistence. True achievement comes from disciplined effort and patience. Therefore, moving forward steadily, without losing confidence or determination, is often the most reliable path to success.

8. Knowledge is power

The proverb "*Knowledge is power*" emphasizes the importance of education and awareness in shaping individual and social progress. Knowledge enables people to understand the world, make informed decisions, and overcome challenges. An informed person is empowered to act wisely, whereas ignorance often leads to vulnerability and dependence.

In modern society, knowledge plays a crucial role in personal and professional success. Education opens doors to opportunities, enhances problem-solving skills, and promotes critical thinking. A knowledgeable individual can adapt to change, resist manipulation, and contribute meaningfully to society. Nations that invest in education and research often achieve greater economic and social development.

This proverb also highlights the moral responsibility that comes with knowledge. Power should be used ethically and constructively. Knowledge without wisdom can be misused, leading to harm rather than progress. Therefore, this proverb teaches that true power lies not just in possessing information but in using knowledge responsibly for the benefit of oneself and others.

9. No pain, no gain

The proverb "*No pain, no gain*" conveys the idea that success and achievement require effort, sacrifice, and perseverance. It suggests that without facing difficulties or challenges, meaningful progress is impossible. Comfort and ease rarely lead to growth, while struggle often strengthens character and determination.

In academic life, students must invest time and effort in studying to achieve good results. Similarly, athletes undergo rigorous training to build strength and endurance. Even in personal development, overcoming fear, failure, and self-doubt requires persistence and resilience. The discomfort experienced during hard work ultimately leads to improvement and success.

This proverb encourages individuals not to be discouraged by hardship. Challenges should be seen as opportunities for learning and growth rather than obstacles. Success achieved without effort lacks value, while success earned through struggle brings confidence and satisfaction. Thus, the proverb teaches that effort and endurance are essential for true achievement.

10. The pen is mightier than the sword

The proverb "*The pen is mightier than the sword*" highlights the power of ideas, words, and intellect over physical force and violence. It suggests that communication, knowledge, and expression can bring about greater and more lasting change than war or aggression.

Throughout history, writers, thinkers, and reformers have influenced society through their ideas and writings. Books, speeches, and laws have transformed nations, ended injustices, and inspired revolutions without bloodshed. In contrast, violence often leads to destruction and temporary solutions.

This proverb emphasizes the importance of education, dialogue, and peaceful persuasion. In a democratic society, change is achieved through discussion, awareness, and reason rather than force. The proverb teaches that intellectual power and moral influence are stronger and more enduring than physical strength. Therefore, the pen symbolizes wisdom, and its influence shapes the future of humanity.

Practice Proverbs for Expansion

1. **A stitch in time saves nine**
2. **Actions speak louder than words**
3. **Where there is a will, there is a way**
4. **All that glitters is not gold**
5. **Honesty is the best policy**
6. **Rome was not built in a day**
7. **A friend in need is a friend indeed**
8. **Prevention is better than cure**
9. **Practice makes a man perfect**

10. **Slow and steady wins the race**
11. **Knowledge is power**
12. **No pain, no gain**
13. **The pen is mightier than the sword**
14. **Birds of a feather flock together**
15. **Too many cooks spoil the broth**
16. **Better late than never**
17. **Necessity is the mother of invention**
18. **Fortune favors the brave**
19. **A picture is worth a thousand words**
20. **Jack of all trades, master of none**

Essay Writing

Introduction to Essay Writing

An essay introduction is the first paragraph of your essay, and it serves three main purposes: **to introduce the topic, to provide context or background, and to state your central idea or thesis.** A strong introduction captures the reader's attention, establishes the tone of the essay, and provides a roadmap for what follows.

In competitive exams, essay introductions should be **concise, relevant, and engaging.** Avoid vague statements or irrelevant information. Typically, an introduction starts with a **general statement about the topic**, followed by **specific points or definitions**, and concludes with a **thesis statement** that presents the main argument or focus of the essay.

Key Features of a Good Introduction:

1. **Clarity:** The reader should immediately understand the topic.
2. **Brevity:** Keep it short but informative (2–4 sentences for exams).
3. **Relevance:** Focus on the topic; avoid going off-track.
4. **Engagement:** Use a quote, fact, or rhetorical question to attract attention (optional).
5. **Thesis Statement:** End the introduction with your main argument or perspective.

Example: Essay Topic – “Importance of Education”

Education is the foundation of individual growth and social progress. It empowers people with knowledge, develops critical thinking, and shapes moral and ethical values. Beyond academic learning, education helps individuals adapt to change, make informed decisions,

and contribute meaningfully to society. Therefore, education is not just a personal asset but a vital tool for building a better and more equitable world.

and writing skills. Different types of essays are required depending on the purpose, topic, and audience. Broadly, essays can be categorized into the following types:

1. Narrative Essay

- **Purpose:** To tell a story or describe events in a logical sequence.
- **Characteristics:**
 - First-person perspective is common.
 - Focuses on personal experiences, events, or incidents.
 - Emphasizes plot, characters, and feelings.
- **Example Topic:** “*A Memorable Journey*”

2. Descriptive Essay

- **Purpose:** To describe a person, place, object, or event vividly.
- **Characteristics:**
 - Uses sensory details (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch).
 - Creates a mental picture for the reader.
 - Often includes adjectives, similes, and metaphors.
- **Example Topic:** “*A Rainy Day in My City*”

3. Expository Essay

- **Purpose:** To explain, inform, or clarify a topic in a logical manner.
- **Characteristics:**
 - Factual and neutral tone.
 - Uses evidence, examples, and explanations.
 - Often includes cause and effect, comparison, or definition.
- **Example Topic:** “*The Impact of Social Media on Youth*”

4. Argumentative (or Persuasive) Essay

- **Purpose:** To convince the reader of a particular viewpoint or opinion.
- **Characteristics:**

- Presents both sides of an issue but supports one side strongly.
- Uses facts, statistics, and reasoning as evidence.
- Includes a clear thesis statement expressing the writer's opinion.
- **Example Topic:** *"Should Plastic Bags Be Banned?"*

5. Analytical Essay

- **Purpose:** To analyze a topic, idea, or work in detail.
- **Characteristics:**
 - Breaks down complex topics into parts.
 - Interprets and evaluates evidence.
 - Commonly used for literature, history, or social studies.
- **Example Topic:** *"The Role of Women in Modern Indian Literature"*

6. Reflective Essay

- **Purpose:** To reflect on personal experiences and their significance.
- **Characteristics:**
 - Focuses on the writer's thoughts, feelings, and learning.
 - Often informal but insightful.
 - Encourages self-analysis.
- **Example Topic:** *"What I Learned During the COVID-19 Lockdown"*

7. Critical Essay

- **Purpose:** To evaluate or critique a text, idea, or phenomenon.
- **Characteristics:**
 - Provides opinions supported by evidence.
 - Emphasizes reasoning and judgment.
 - Often used in academic contexts.
- **Example Topic:** *"A Critical Analysis of the Play 'Macbeth'"*

Tips for Essay Writing in Exams

1. Understand the **type of essay** before starting.
2. Begin with a strong **introduction**.
3. Develop **coherent paragraphs** with clear ideas.
4. Provide **examples, facts, and explanations** where needed.

5. Conclude by **summarizing the main point** or providing a final thought.

How to Write an Essay

Writing an essay is a structured process that involves planning, organizing, and expressing ideas clearly. The following steps can help you write an effective essay:

1. Understand the Topic

- Read the question or topic carefully.
- Identify the **type of essay**: narrative, descriptive, argumentative, etc.
- Highlight **keywords** to know what the examiner expects (e.g., “Discuss,” “Analyze,” “Critically evaluate”).

2. Plan Your Essay

- Jot down **main ideas or points** you want to include.
- Arrange them in **logical order**.
- For argumentative essays, decide your **thesis statement** (your main argument).

3. Structure the Essay

A typical essay has **three main parts**:

A. Introduction

- Introduce the topic in **1–3 sentences**.
- Give a **general idea**, then narrow it down to your main point.
- End with a **thesis statement** (your argument or purpose).

Example:

“Education is the foundation of personal and social development. It empowers individuals with knowledge and skills necessary for life. This essay explores how education contributes to personal growth and societal progress.”

B. Body Paragraphs

- Each paragraph should focus on **one main idea**.
- Start with a **topic sentence**, then explain with **examples, facts, or reasoning**.
- Use **linking words** like *furthermore, moreover, in addition, however*.

Example:

“Firstly, education enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills, enabling

individuals to make informed decisions. For instance, students who engage in research learn to analyze data and draw conclusions effectively.”

C. Conclusion

- Summarize the **main points** in 2–3 sentences.
- Reinforce your **thesis statement** or provide a final thought.
- Avoid introducing **new ideas**.

Example:

“In conclusion, education plays a vital role in shaping individuals and society. Through knowledge and values, it promotes growth, responsibility, and progress, making it essential for a better future.”

4. Language and Style

- Use **formal and clear language**.
- Avoid slang or overly casual expressions.
- Keep sentences **concise and grammatically correct**.
- Use **variety**: mix short and long sentences for readability.
- Use **examples, quotations, or statistics** where relevant.

5. Review and Revise

- Re-read your essay to check for **spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors**.
- Ensure your ideas **flow logically**.
- Remove **repetition** or irrelevant details.
- Make sure your essay **stays within the word limit**.

Quick Tips for Exams

1. Spend **5 minutes planning** before writing.
2. Stick to **3–5 paragraphs** for short essays.
3. Use **linking words** to connect ideas smoothly.
4. Practice **writing introductions and conclusions** in advance.
5. Always **answer the question asked** – do not go off-topic.

Example:

Essay 1: Importance of Education

Introduction:

Education is the cornerstone of personal growth and societal development. It equips individuals with knowledge, skills, and values that are essential for leading a successful life. Beyond acquiring facts, education fosters critical thinking, ethical awareness, and social responsibility.

Body:

Firstly, education develops intellectual abilities and problem-solving skills. Students learn to analyze situations, make informed decisions, and adapt to changing circumstances. Secondly, education instills moral values such as honesty, discipline, and empathy, which guide individuals in their personal and professional life. Thirdly, education plays a vital role in societal progress. An educated population is better equipped to address social challenges, promote equality, and contribute to economic development. Additionally, in the modern world, education enables individuals to use technology effectively, understand global issues, and participate in informed debates.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, education is much more than academic knowledge; it is a lifelong process that shapes character and intellect. A well-educated individual contributes not only to personal success but also to the welfare of society. Therefore, investing in education is crucial for both individual and national progress.

Essay 2: The Role of Technology in Modern Life**Introduction:**

Technology has become an integral part of modern life, influencing the way we communicate, work, and live. From smartphones to artificial intelligence, technological innovations have transformed human society, bringing both opportunities and challenges.

Body:

On one hand, technology has simplified daily life. Communication has become instantaneous, and access to information is easier than ever before. It has improved healthcare, education, transportation, and business efficiency. On the other hand, excessive reliance on technology has drawbacks. Overuse of digital devices can lead to social isolation, reduced physical activity, and mental health issues. Moreover, technology can increase the risk of unemployment due to automation and reduce human interaction in workplaces and communities. Therefore, a balanced approach is necessary. People must use technology wisely, taking advantage of its benefits while minimizing its negative effects.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, technology is a powerful tool that has reshaped the modern world. Responsible and thoughtful use of technology can enhance productivity, knowledge, and connectivity, while reckless use can create social and personal challenges. Striking a balance is the key to maximizing its advantages.

Essay 3: Environmental Protection**Introduction:**

Environmental protection has become one of the most pressing issues of the 21st century. Human activities such as deforestation, pollution, and overconsumption have threatened the natural balance, endangering both wildlife and human life.

Body:

Protecting the environment is essential for sustainable development. Conserving natural resources like water, soil, and forests ensures that future generations can meet their needs. Pollution control, waste management, and renewable energy use are critical measures to safeguard ecosystems. Individuals also play a role through small actions such as reducing plastic use, planting trees, and conserving electricity. Governments and organizations must implement policies and regulations to prevent environmental degradation. Collective awareness and action are vital for addressing global issues such as climate change, global warming, and biodiversity loss.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, environmental protection is the responsibility of every individual and institution. Only through conscious efforts, both personal and collective, can we preserve the planet and ensure a sustainable future. Every action, however small, contributes to the larger goal of ecological balance and well-being.

5-Mark Questions

1. Expand the proverb: "A stitch in time saves nine."
2. Expand the proverb: "Actions speak louder than words."
3. Write a short essay (100 words) on "Importance of Education."
4. Write a short essay on "Environment and Pollution."
5. Expand the proverb: "Honesty is the best policy."

8-Mark Questions

1. Expand the proverb: “Where there is a will, there is a way” with examples.
2. Write a detailed essay (200–250 words) on “Role of Technology in Modern Life.”
3. Discuss the proverb: “Rome was not built in a day” in your own words with examples.
4. Write an essay on “Importance of Reading Habits.”
5. Analyze and expand the proverb: “Necessity is the mother of invention.”

UNIT III

Spot the Errors

Definition:

“Spot the Errors” is a type of exercise in which a sentence contains one or more **grammatical, spelling, or usage errors**, and the task is to **identify and correct them**. This tests **grammar, vocabulary, sentence structure, and attention to detail**.

Tips to Spot Errors

1. **Check Subject-Verb Agreement** – Singular/plural forms should match.
2. **Look at Tense** – Ensure verbs are in the correct tense.
3. **Check Prepositions** – Common errors: *in/on/at, off/for/to*.
4. **Check Articles** – *a, an, the* must be correctly used.
5. **Look for Pronouns** – Correct reference, case, and number.
6. **Check Spelling & Word Form** – Wrong forms or misspellings often appear.
7. **Look for Sentence Structure Errors** – Missing words, extra words, or misplacement.

Examples

Example 1:

He go to school every day.

Error: go → goes

Correct Sentence: He goes to school every day.

Example 2:

She is tallest in the class.

Error: tallest → the tallest

Correct Sentence: She is the tallest in the class.

Example 3:

I look forward to see you.

Error: see → seeing

Correct Sentence: I look forward to seeing you.

Practice Exercises

Spot the errors in the following sentences and correct them:

1. She don't like to play football.
2. I have finished my home work yesterday.
3. He is married with a teacher.
4. They goes to market every Sunday.
5. He is more better than his brother in studies.
6. She gave me advices about my career.
7. The news are shocking.
8. I am agree with your opinion.

9. He runs faster than any boy in his class.
10. They has been waiting for an hour.

Answers

1. don't → doesn't → She doesn't like to play football.
2. yesterday → remove / change tense → I finished my homework yesterday.
3. with → to → He is married to a teacher.
4. goes → go → They go to market every Sunday.
5. more better → better → He is better than his brother in studies.
6. advices → advice → She gave me advice about my career.
7. are → is → The news is shocking.
8. am agree → agree → I agree with your opinion.
9. any → any other → He runs faster than any other boy in his class.
10. has → have → They have been waiting for an hour.

1. She don't like ice cream.

Error: don't

Why: The subject **She** is singular, so the verb must be singular too.

Correction: She **doesn't** like ice cream.

How to find: Look for subject-verb agreement. Singular subject → singular verb (does, is, has).

2. I have finished my homework yesterday.

Error: have finished

Why: Using “have finished” (present perfect) with a **specific past time** “yesterday” is incorrect. Present perfect is for unspecified past actions.

Correction: I **finished** my homework yesterday.

How to find: Check **tense consistency** with time indicators like yesterday, last week, in 2000.

3. He is married with a teacher.

Error: with

Why: The correct preposition after “married” is **to**, not “with.”

Correction: He is married **to** a teacher.

How to find: Review **preposition usage** with verbs/adjectives.

4. They goes to school every morning.

Error: goes

Why: The subject **They** is plural, so the verb must be plural.

Correction: They **go** to school every morning.

How to find: Check **plural/singular subject-verb agreement**.

5. He is more better than his brother.

Error: more better

Why: “Better” is already a comparative adjective. Using “more” is redundant.

Correction: He is **better** than his brother.

How to find: Watch for **redundant comparatives**: more/most + adjectives that already have comparative/superlative forms.

6. She gave me advices about my career.

Error: advices

Why: “Advice” is an **uncountable noun**, so it does not have a plural form.

Correction: She gave me **advice** about my career.

How to find: Identify **countable vs uncountable nouns**.

7. The news are very shocking.

Error: are

Why: “News” is **singular** in English, even though it looks plural.

Correction: The news **is** very shocking.

How to find: Check **singular/plural forms of collective nouns or irregular nouns**.

8. I am agree with your opinion.

Error: am agree

Why: “Agree” is a **verb**, not an adjective. The auxiliary “am” is not needed.

Correction: I **agree** with your opinion.

How to find: Check **verb usage with auxiliary verbs**.

9. He runs faster than any boy in his class.

Error: any

Why: To compare with the rest of a group, we need “any other.”

Correction: He runs faster than **any other** boy in his class.

How to find: Look for **comparisons** and check if words like “other” are missing.

10. They has been waiting for an hour.

Error: has

Why: The subject **They** is plural; use **have** for plural subjects in present perfect tense.

Correction: They **have** been waiting for an hour.

How to find: Check **subject-verb agreement in perfect tenses**.

1. Although he are tired, he continued his work.

Error: are → is

Type of Error: Subject-Verb Agreement

Why: The subject “he” is singular, so the verb in the subordinate clause must be **is**.

Correct Sentence: Although he **is** tired, he continued his work.

How to Find: Identify the subject of the clause (“he”) and check if the verb matches in number.

2. I will attend the meeting if he will invite me.

Error: will invite → invites

Type of Error: Tense in conditional clause

Why: In conditional sentences (if-clauses) referring to future, **use present tense** in the “if” clause, not future.

Correct Sentence: I will attend the meeting **if he invites me**.

How to Find: Check rules of conditional sentences – “if” clauses do not use future tense.

3. She went to the market because she wants to buy some fruits.

Error: wants → wanted

Type of Error: Tense inconsistency

Why: The main clause “She went” is in past tense, so the subordinate clause should also be in past tense.

Correct Sentence: She went to the market **because she wanted to buy some fruits**.

How to Find: Identify the tense of the main clause and adjust the subordinate clause accordingly.

4. While walking in the park he, saw a rare bird.

Error: Misplaced comma

Type of Error: Punctuation

Why: A comma should come **after the introductory subordinate clause**, not in the middle of it.

Correct Sentence: **While walking in the park, he saw a rare bird.**

How to Find: Look for introductory clauses and check comma placement.

5. He did not come to the party although he was invited, because he was sick.

Error: Redundancy / awkward structure

Type of Error: Sentence clarity / sequencing

Why: The sentence has **two subordinating clauses** but the order creates confusion. Better sequencing improves clarity.

Correct Sentence: Because he was sick, he did not come to the party, although he was invited.

How to Find: Identify **main vs subordinate clauses** and rearrange for clarity.

5-Mark Questions

1. Identify the error in: "He go to school every day."
2. Spot the error in: "She don't like ice cream."
3. Correct the sentence: "They was playing football yesterday."
4. Find the error in: "I have seen him yesterday."
5. Spot and correct the error in: "He is better than me in English."

8-Mark Questions

1. Correct the errors in the paragraph containing subject-verb agreement issues.
2. Spot and correct tense errors in a passage.
3. Identify and correct preposition errors in a given set of sentences.
4. Correct articles and determiners in a passage.
5. Edit the paragraph for grammatical accuracy and proper punctuation.

5-Mark Questions

1. Choose the correct homonym in a sentence.
2. Explain the meaning of the idiom: “Break the ice.”
3. Explain the idiom: “Bite the bullet.”
4. Rearrange the jumbled sentence: “book / the / is / table / on.”
5. Identify the correct phrase to complete a sentence.

8-Mark Questions

1. Solve a passage-based exercise on homonyms.
2. Explain five idioms with examples in sentences.
3. Rearrange a paragraph of jumbled sentences to make a meaningful passage.
4. Analyze the use of phrases and idioms in a given passage.
5. Correctly rewrite a set of sentences containing homonym errors.

UNIT IV

Homonyms

Homonyms (*homo* meaning *same* and *nym* meaning *name*) are the words that sound same but will have different meanings. Spelling of the word may or may not be the same. It's essential not to mishandle homonyms, however, because the meaning one wants to convey can change significantly if confused with the word's meaning.

For instance, if your cousin tells you that he found a band, you'll probably want to clarify whether he means that he found a ring or whether he found band of people who play music together. This is because it will be not easy to tell what he means over the phone or in a text message, as the words are both spelled and pronounced the same.

Here are some examples of homonyms.

- **Address** - to deliver a speech / location
- **Arm** – the upper limb of the human body / section of a company
- **Bark** - crust / the sound of dog
- **Band** - a group of instrumentalists playing music / a ring
- **Bright** – clever and witty / radiant
- **Bat** – wooden club used to hit a ball / a night-time flying mammal
- **Current** – ongoing / flow of water stream
- **Circular** - having the form of a circle / an advertisement
- **Express** - something done fast / to explicit feelings or opinions or thoughts
- **Fair** - lawful / of a light hue

- **Kind** - amiable / type
- **Lie** – be in horizontal position / false statement
- **Match** - to contest / a flammable wooden stick
- **Mean** – to bring, cause or produce as a result / greedy
- **Pole** - a native of Poland / a standing piece of metal that holds a flag
- **Pound** - unit of money and weight / to force by battering
- **Ream** - a quantity of paper / to extract the juice from
- **Ring** - a circular band on a finger / a circular course
- **Right** - direction opposite of left / correct
- **Rock** – A stone of any size / metal
- **Rose** - A flower of any such shrub of a red pink white or yellow colour/ simple past tense of rise
- **Spring** - A leap jump or bound / coiled metal
- **Stalk** – a stem or main axis of a plant / to follow someone stealthily
- **Tender** - Delicate / To make or submit a bid
- **Tire** - To reduce or exhaust the strength of / a part of a wheel
- **Well** - Good or satisfactory manner / Hole drilled into the earth to obtain water

Idioms and Phrases

Idioms are made of phrases.

There are hundreds of phrases in the English language. Below are some commonly used phrases.

- **Point-blank:** To say something directly or rudely, without explaining or apologising. *Example:* The company owner told the workers point-blank that their demands could not be met.
- **So-so:** Not very satisfactory. *Example:* My new job is so-so but I cannot afford to give it up.
- **Chit-chat:** Small talk or unimportant conversation. *Example:* The boss asked them to stop their chit-chat and get on with their work.
- **See-saw:** Something that goes up and down. *Example:* The Indian rupee has been see-sawing for the last one year.
- **Black-and-white:** Something which is extremely clear. *Example:* The employees have been told in black-and-white that they have to deliver or quit. **Dos and don'ts:** The rules. *Example:* A good driver always follows the do's and don'ts of driving.
- **Haves and have-nots:** Those who are rich and those who are not. *Example:* In

India, there is a wide gap between the haves and have-nots of the population.

- **Ins and outs:** The details. *Example:* As I don't know the ins and outs of the situation, I can't really comment on it.
- **Pros and cons:** Advantages and disadvantages. *Example:* One must consider all the pros and cons before buying a new car.
- **Tried and tested:** Something which has been well-tested. *Example:*
 - Drinking green tea is a tried and tested way of improving the digestion.
- **Ups and downs:** Very good times and very bad times. *Example:* He has had a lot of ups and downs in his business.
- **Flesh and blood:** One's close family. *Example:* You must help your brother – after all, he's your flesh and blood.
- **By and large:** Generally. *Example:* By and large, people prefer quality products to low prices.
- **Dead and buried:** Something that is not going to happen again.
 - *Example:* Their long dispute is now dead and buried.
- **Wine and dine:** To entertain someone lavishly. *Example:* The Chopras are known for wining and dining their guests.
- **Bread and butter:** The main source of income, or the most important issue. *Example:* Making shoes was the poor shoemaker's bread and butter.
- **Spick and span:** Very clean and tidy. *Example:* Mrs Khanna's house is always spick and span.
- **A bit much:** Something that is excessive or annoying. *Example:* All that violence in today's movies is a bit much.
- **Bad egg:** A person who cannot be trusted. *Example:* Don't hire that man – he is a bad egg.
- **Behind bars:** To be in prison. *Example:* Corrupt people find themselves behind bars one day.

Meaning of Idioms

An idiom is a phrase or an expression whose meanings cannot be inferred from the meaning of the words that make it up. This manner of speaking is very natural to the people who speak that language as their mother tongue, or are native speakers of that language. The use of idioms can be associated with a group which makes them distinct from others or it can be the style of an author or a movement. The meaning of an idiom is difficult to deduce because these phrases will be originally used in other semantic fields and are imported to other semantic field extending the literal meaning. For example, one of the fields that contributed idiomatic phrases to English is different sports games. We talk about investments as

marathon and not a *sprint*. That is long-term and short-term. One can follow a discussion on politics *on the sidelines*. This means that the person who said this is not an active participant in the discussion, but he is watching the discussions. We also talk about *timeouts* that are time periods when people are not allowed to play. Other idiomatic expressions that have its origin in sports are given as follows.

- *Big league* means the most important and biggest group.

For example: The Company after the recent expansion is in the big league.

- *Home run* means something that exactly succeeds in achieving its goal. For example: The Prime Minister's speech in Gujarat was a home run.
- *Knockout* is a word that is used in boxing that means a blow that renders the opponent unconscious. So, it came to mean eliminate or in a more positive note overwhelm with admiration.

For example:

You have to knock out that target.

Her charm knocked out everybody in the room.

- *Floored* is another word that comes from boxing. It means to knock down with force. As an idiom, it has gained the meaning of greatly surprise or silence with a surprise response and so forth.

For example: We were *floored* by his arguments.

On the ropes is another heady expression which mean in difficulties and likely to fail and has its origin in the Boxing sports. For example: The troubled company is *on the ropes*.

Throw in the towel is yet another phrase that comes from boxing vocabulary. It means to give up in the face of defeat of lacking hope; admit defeat. For example: In the face of criticism, the minister has *thrown in the towel*.

Hail Mary which is a salutation to the Virgin Mary, after its association with sports came to mean to describe a desperate play or move with little chance of success. For example: This merger is a *Hail Mary* to the company.

Slam dunk which has its origin in basketball is a move in which the ball is propelled through the basket downward. Over a period of time it became in idiom that means something that is a sure to occur; or a foregone conclusion. For example: Rahul becoming the president of the party was a *slam dunk*.

Score is yet another word that comes from sports. You score a point, the winning score/ shot, settling a score and so forth are idiomatic phrases that come from score.

We cannot wind up our discussion on sports contributing to idioms without talking about cricket.

Sticky wicket is one common idiom that has its origin in cricket. It literally means a pitch that has become wet because of rain and, therefore, on which the ball bounces unpredictably. As in idiom it came to mean an unpredictable situation. For example: The minister's relation with the big industrialist has put him in a *sticky wicket*.

If somebody has enjoyed a positive period of time then *he had a good innings*. To have a good innings is also often used to describe someone who has lived a long life. Similarly,

when we surprise or shock someone we *hit them for a six*. Or when, we are astonished by something, to be left speechless *we are bowled over*. And finally, when we have no idea, to not know how to solve a problem *we are stumped*.

14.4.2 Some Commonly Used Idioms

There are hundreds of idioms in the English language. Below are some commonly used idioms.

- **Add fuel to the fire:** To make a bad situation worse. *Example:* He was already in a bad mood and his wife's nagging added fuel to the fire.
- **Now and then:** Occasionally. *Example:* We manage to go for a movie now and then.
- **On the back burner:** To give an issue low priority. *Example:* The women's reservation bill was put on the back burner by the government.
- **With bated breath:** Very excited. *Example:* We waited with bated breath for the magic show to begin.
- **Beeline for:** To head directly to a place. *Example:* At the Diwali Mela, the children made a beeline for the snacks stalls.
- **Neck and neck:** Very close. *Example:* The two candidates are running neck and neck in the elections.
- **Apple of the eye:** Someone who is cherished above all others. *Example:*
Abhishek is the apple of his father's eye.
- **To cry wolf:** To raise a false alarm. *Example:* We were told that there was a fire in the building, but someone was just crying wolf.
- **From rags to riches:** To go from being very poor to being very wealthy.
Example: The famous actor went from rags to riches in one year.
- **A knee-jerk reaction:** An automatic response. *Example:* Please think carefully about the proposal – don't give a knee-jerk reaction.
- **Over the top:** Very excessive. *Example:* The businessman went over the top in spending money at his daughter's wedding. **Pass the buck:** Avoid responsibility by

giving it to someone else. *Example:* When the workers complained, the manager passed the buck to the supervisor.

- **Go scot-free:** To escape without punishment. *Example:* The people who had started the fake finance company went scot-free.
- **Turn a blind eye:** Refuse to acknowledge something. *Example:* Despite many accidents, the local authorities turned a blind eye to the bad roads.
- **A cut above:** To be superior or better. *Example:* The actress who won the National Award is certainly a cut above the rest.
- **Rain or shine:** No matter what the weather is like. *Example:* Rain or shine, he goes for a walk at the same time every day.
- **Wild goose chase:** A futile or hopeless pursuit. *Example:* The police thought that they would catch the gang leader, but they were on a wild goose chase.
- **Last-ditch effort:** A final effort. *Example:* The team made a last-ditch effort and managed to win the match.
- **Lock horns:** To have a heated argument. *Example:* The two politicians locked horns in Parliament over the issue of corruption.
- **Nip something in the bud:** To end something at an early stage. *Example:*
 - It is said that evil should always be nipped in the bud.
- **Lock horns:** To have a heated argument. *Example:* The two politicians locked horns in Parliament over the issue of corruption.
- **Nip something in the bud:** To end something at an early stage. *Example:*
 - It is said that evil should always be nipped in the bud.
- **To be born with a silver spoon in one's mouth:** To have opportunities that you did not earn but that you have from the influence of your family. *Example:* Bill was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth – he came from a poor family and earned his success through hard work.

- **To be at daggers drawn:** To be angry and ready to fight or argue with each other.
Example: Local residents are at daggers drawn with the council over rubbish collection
- **To be at sea:** To be confused; to be lost and bewildered. *Example:* When it comes to problems on trigonometry, Mustafa is totally at sea.
- **To be in the dark:** Not to have knowledge about something. *Example:* Taha did not go for the party as he was in the dark about it.
- **To be in hot water:** To be in trouble. *Example:* Sushila was in hot water as she had not submitted her practical file to her science teacher.
- **To be on the run:** To try to avoid being caught. *Example:* The dreaded criminal was on the run after he managed to escape from prison. **To be out of the woods:** To emerge safely out of danger. *Example:* It is true that the economy is getting stronger, but we are not out of the woods yet.
- **To be under someone's thumb:** To be completely under someone's control.
Example: The committee is firmly under his thumb and will agree to whatever he asks.
- **To break the ice:** To attempt to become friends with someone. *Example:* It is very difficult to break the ice at formal events.
- **To make a mountain of a molehill:** To make a major issue out of a minor one; to exaggerate the importance of something. *Example:* Lata aggravated the situation by making a mountain out of a molehill.
- **To put a spoke in someone's wheel:** To deliberately hinder someone's plan.
Example: Whenever Jalil embarked on a new venture, someone put a spoke in his wheel and he was not able to proceed.
- **To put two and two together:** To make a correct guess from existing evidence.
Example: When I saw the crumbs on the table, I put two and two together and guessed that Muzna had eaten the cake.
- **To turn a deaf ear:** To ignore someone when they complain or ask for something.
Example: Tanya's mother turned a deaf ear when she pleaded for more ice cream.

- **To turn over a new leaf:** To begin afresh, to reform. *Example:* The teachers at school were pleasantly surprised when Mukesh turned over a new leaf and started taking his studies seriously.
- **To turn the tables (on someone):** To cause a reversal in plans. *Example:* She turned the tables by playing a better game and recently has won most of her matches.
- **To blow one's own trumpet:** To brag about yourself. *Example:* Sushil thinks that he will become popular if he blows his own trumpet.
- **To burn the candles at both ends:** Someone who burns the candle at both ends lives life at a hectic pace, doing things which are likely to affect their health badly. *Example:* She'd been burning the candle at both ends studying for her exams and made herself ill in the process.
- **To curry favour:** To try to make someone like you or support you by doing things to please them. *Example:* The government has promised lower taxes in an attempt to curry favour with the voters.
- **To cut one's coat according to one's cloth:** To plan one's aims and activities in line with one's resources and circumstances. *Example:* We would like a bigger house, but we must cut our coat according to our cloth.
- **To fish in troubled waters:** To involve oneself in a difficult, confused, or dangerous situation, especially with a view to gaining an advantage. *Example:* Frank is fishing in troubled waters by buying more shares of that company. **To hit the nail on the head:** To do exactly the right thing; to do something in the most effective and efficient way. *Example:* Susan hit the nail on the head when she said that most people were expecting a holiday after the working weekend.
- **To kill two birds with one stone:** To solve two problems with one single action. *Example:* Tanushree says that she kills two birds with one stone if she does her own housework because she gets the house clean and she gets some exercise at the same time.

- **To know where the shoe pinches:** To know exactly what the problem is; to know how much someone else is suffering. *Example:* As I've been through this myself, I know where the shoe pinches.
- **To let the cat out of the bag:** To reveal a secret. *Example:* Smita did not want anyone in the office to know that it was her birthday but her colleague let the cat out of the bag.
- **To smell a rat:** To be suspicious. *Example:* Indraneil did not say anything but from his silence that evening, his mother could smell a rat.
- **To wash one's hands off something:** to stop being involved with or responsible for someone or something. *Example:* Veena couldn't wait to wash her hands off the on-going project.
- **To wash your dirty linen in public:** To talk to other people about personal things that you should keep private. *Example:* I was brought up to believe that it was wrong to wash your dirty linen in public.
- **To dig up:** To go to great effort to find someone or something. *Example:* Grandma dug up some toys from the large trunk in the attic.
- **To lay your cards on the table:** To tell someone honestly, what you think or what you plan to do. *Example:* Sohail decided to lay his cards on the table and close the deal for the house.

Jumbled Sentences

Jumbled sentences are sentences in which the words or phrases are arranged in a **wrong or random order**. The task is to **rearrange them to form a meaningful sentence**. This type of question tests **grammar, vocabulary, and logical thinking**.

Tips to Solve Jumbled Sentences:

1. **Identify the subject** – look for nouns or pronouns.
2. **Look for the verb** – find the action related to the subject.
3. **Find modifiers** – adjectives, adverbs, or phrases that describe the subject or action.
4. **Check for connectors** – words like *and, but, because, although* help link ideas.
5. **Make a logical sequence** – the sentence should make sense as a whole.

Examples

Example 1:

Jumbled: quickly / the / ran / dog / park / to

Answer: The dog ran quickly to the park.

Example 2:

Jumbled: book / reading / enjoys / my / sister

Answer: My sister enjoys reading books.

Example 3:

Jumbled: teacher / the / the / students / explained / lesson / to

Answer: The teacher explained the lesson to the students.

Practice Exercises

Rearrange the following jumbled sentences into meaningful sentences:

1. morning / every / goes / she / jogging / for / the
2. festival / Diwali / lights / India / celebrates / in / people
3. a / on / cat / mat / is / the / sleeping
4. careful / be / roads / the / while / crossing / you
5. library / reading / enjoys / the / brother / my / in / books

Answers

1. She goes jogging every morning.
2. People in India celebrate Diwali with lights.
3. A cat is sleeping on the mat.
4. Be careful while crossing the roads.
5. My brother enjoys reading books in the library.

More Exercises

1. cat / the / is / on / mat / the / sleeping
2. school / goes / every / he / morning / to
3. like / mangoes / I / very much
4. is / sun / the / shining / bright
5. reading / book / a / enjoys / sister / my

6. water / the / drinking / boy / is
7. sings / she / beautifully
8. children / the / playground / playing / are / in
9. flowers / garden / the / are / blooming
10. father / car / drives / the / a / to / office
11. dog / brown / a / the / chasing / cat / is
12. raining / is / outside
13. I / very / tired / am
14. mother / dinner / cooking / is
15. morning / every / walks / she / park / in / the
16. India / is / largest / democracy / the / in / the / world
17. teacher / the / explained / students / the / lesson / to
18. festival / Holi / India / people / celebrate / colors / with
19. hard / studies / he / exams / for / the / his
20. movie / watched / I / yesterday / a / interesting
21. birds / singing / are / the / trees / in / the
22. computer / on / working / is / my / smoothly
23. accident / an / occurred / highway / the / on
24. phone / rang / suddenly / my / in / class
25. beautiful / painting / is / hanging / wall / the / on
26. students / library / the / in / studying / are
27. decision / wise / made / he / a / very
28. dog / barking / loud / is / the / very
29. quickly / she / finished / homework / her
30. festival / people / decorated / houses / with / lights
31. flowers / colorful / garden / the / in / are / the
32. birds / nest / the / tree / the / in / built / have
33. homework / completed / his / he / finally
34. train / late / the / arrived
35. city / crowded / very / was / yesterday
36. despite / rain / match / the / played / players / the
37. she / although / tired / completed / her / project / successfully
38. government / launched / a / program / environment / for / to / protect
39. students / participate / actively / in / competition / the / were

40. he / in / city / moving / for / work / is / new
41. book / written / by / this / famous / author / has / the
42. despite / obstacles / they / achieved / goal / their / final
43. children / playground / safe / should / be / the / in / kept
44. news / reported / local / the / accurately / journalist / by / the
45. society / helps / progress / educated / the / people / in
46. although / difficult / situation / faced / calmly / she
47. government / banned / harmful / substances / the / from / market
48. team / worked / hard / success / achieve / to / the
49. movie / audience / audience / critics / appreciated / both / by
50. although / rain / heavily / the / journey / continued / travelers / their

UNIT V

Determiners

A determiner is a noun-modifier that shows the reference of a noun or noun- phrase in the context, rather than attributes expressed by adjectives. This function is usually performed by articles, demonstratives, possessive determiners or quantifiers.

Determiners are independent words that precede the rest of the noun phrase. In other languages, determiners are prefixed or suffixed to the noun, or even change the noun's form. For example, in Swedish bok 'book', when definite, becomes boken 'the book' (suffixed definite articles are common in Scandinavian languages), while in Romanian caiet 'notebook' becomes caietul 'the notebook'.

Some constructions, such as those that use names of school subjects do not use a determiner. This condition is called the 'zero determiner'.

The determiner function is not only carried out by the determiner class of words but can also be filled by words from other entities.

- Basic determiners are words from the determiner class (for example, the girl, those pencils) or determiner phrases (for example, almost all employees, more than two problems)

- Subject determiners are possessive noun phrases (for example, his daughter, the boy's friend)
- Minor determiners are simple noun phrases (for example, what colour curtain, 'this' size shoes) and prepositional phrases (under twenty metres, up to twelve people).

A determiner establishes the reference of a noun or noun-phrase, including quantity, rather than its attributes as expressed by adjectives. Despite this tendency, determiners have a variety of functions in English such as being modifiers in adjective phrases and determiner phrases, and even markers of coordination.

This word class, or part of speech, exists in many languages, including English, though most English dictionaries still classify determiners under other parts of speech. Determiners usually include articles, demonstratives, possessive determiners, quantifiers, and cardinal numbers depending on the language.

Determiners form a closed class of words that number about 50 (not counting the cardinal numerals) and include:

- **Alternative determiners:** another, other, somebody else, different
- **Articles:** a, an, the
- **Cardinal numbers:** zero, one, two, fifty, infinite
- **Degree determiners:** many, much, few, little, couple, several, most
- **Demonstratives:** this, that, these, those, which
- **Disjunctive determiners:** either, neither
- **Distributive determiners:** each, every
- **Elective determiners:** any, either, whichever
- **Equative determiners:** the same
- **Evaluative determiners:** such, that, so
- **Exclamative determiners:** what lovely hair!
- **Existential determiners:** some, any
- **Interrogative and relative determiners:** which, what, whichever, whatever
- **Mutual determiners:** a lot of, many, several, much
- **Negative determiners:** no, neither
- **Personal determiners:** we students, you guys

- **Possessive determiners:** my, mine, their, your
- **Quantifiers:** all, few, many etc.
- **Sufficiency determiners:** enough, sufficient, plenty
- **Uniquitive determiners:** the only
- **Universal determiners:** all, both
- All of these determiners can be grouped under the following categories:
- **Definite determiners:** These determiners refer back to a specific already-established entity (cardinals, demonstratives, equatives, evaluatives, exclamatives, relatives, personals, possessives, unquitives).
- **Indefinite determiners:** These determiners broaden their referent to one not previously mentioned, otherwise newly introduced into discourse (disjunctives, electives, existentials, interrogatives, negatives, universals).

Determiners as different from adjectives

According to traditional English grammar, adjectives were called determiners. There are, however, a number of key differences between determiners and adjectives.

In English, articles, demonstratives, and possessive determiners cannot co- occur in the same phrase, while any number of adjectives are typically allowed.

Example: A huge red Italian hat.

Most determiners cannot occur alone in predicative complement position but most adjectives can.

- Example: The worker is joyful.
- Most determiners are not gradable while adjectives typically are.
- Example: small, smaller, smallest
- Some determiners have corresponding pronouns, while adjectives do not have the same.
- Example: Everybody likes something unique.
- Adjectives can modify singular or plural nouns, while some determiners can only modify one or the other.

Determiners as different from pronouns

Determiners such as *this*, *all*, and *some* can often occur without a noun. In traditional grammar, these are called pronouns. There are, however, a number of key differences between such determiners and pronouns which are as follows:

- Pronouns may occur in tag questions. Determiners cannot.
- Example: This is beautiful, isn't it?
- In phrasal verbs, pronouns must appear between the verb and the particle.
- Determiners may occur after the particle. Example: Break it down
- All pronouns have distinct possessive forms while determiners do not.
- Example: This is hers/mine/theirs

Kinds of Sentences (Assertive, Imperative, Interrogative, and Exclamatory)

i. Statement or Assertive Sentence

An assertive sentence or a statement is a sentence that states a fact.

Rules:

- Remove the quotation marks in the statement
- Use the conjunction 'that'
- Change the reporting verb 'say to' into 'tell'
- Change the reporting verb 'said to' into 'told'

Note:

- He said that (correct)
 - He told me that (correct)
 - He told that (incorrect)
-
1. "I will work hard to top my class" said Steve (Direct)
Steve said he would work hard to top the class. (Indirect)
 2. "You can finish this task" said Mike to Patty (Direct)
Mike told Patty that she could finish that task. (Indirect)
 3. She says, "I am happy to be here this morning" (Direct)
She says that he is happy to be there that morning. (Indirect)

ii. Imperative Sentence

An imperative sentence is a sentence that gives advice instructions or gives an order or a command.

Rules:

- Remove the quotation marks in an Imperative sentence.
- Use 'to' if it is an affirmative sentence. (without don't)
- Use 'not to' if the sentence begins without don't.
- Don't use 'that'
- Omit the word 'please'. Use the word 'request' instead of 'say'.
- If the direct speech contains a request or a command, the reporting verb (say, said) changes to tell, request, order, command etc. in its correct tense.

- 1) "Don't laugh in the class" said the teacher to the girls. (Direct)
The teacher advised the girls not to laugh in the class. (Indirect)
- 2) "Please give me something to drink. I am thirsty" the old lady said to them. (Direct)
The old lady requested them to give her something to drink and said that she was thirsty (Indirect)
- 3) "Be careful" said he to her. (Direct)
He ordered her to be careful. (Indirect)

iii. Interrogative Sentence

An interrogative sentence is a sentence that asks a question

Rules:

- Remove the quotation marks and question mark in the interrogative sentence.
 - Use 'if' or 'whether' if the sentence inside the quotation marks begins with a helping verb (auxiliary verb).
 - Use the given interrogative word (what, when, where, why, who, whom, whose, which, now etc.) if it does not begin with the helping verb.
 - Don't use 'that'.
 - Changing the reporting verb (say, said) into 'ask' or 'enquire' in its correct tense.
 - Omit helping verb like 'do, does, did'. But don't omit them when they are with 'not'.
1. "Won't you help me to carry this package?" said I to my brother. (Direct)
I asked my brother if he would not help me to carry that package. (Indirect)
 2. Manny said to Justin, "Why did you not attend the conference yesterday"? (Direct)
Manny asked Justin why he had not attended the conference the day before. (Indirect)

3. “How often do you go to the movies?” said Cole to Joe. (Direct)

Cole asked Joe how often he went to the movies. (Indirect)

iv. Exclamatory Sentence

An exclamatory sentence is a sentence that expresses strong feelings by making an exclamation.

Rules:

- Change the exclamatory sentence into statement or assertive sentence.
- Remove the quotation marks and exclamatory mark.
- Use the conjunction ‘that’
- Omit the interjections such as Oh, O, Alas, how, what, hurrah.
- Add the word ‘very’ to the adjective or adverb if necessary.
- If the verb is not given, use ‘Be’ form verb (is, was, are, were, am) in its correct tense according to the subject.
- Change the reporting verb (say, said) to ‘exclaim joyfully’
- Use ‘exclamation’ for sad or happy incidents.

1. “O, what a pleasant day it is!” said she. (Direct)

She exclaimed joyfully that that was a very pleasant day. (Indirect)

2. “What a terrible experience!” we all exclaimed. (Direct)

We all exclaimed that it was a very terrible experience. (Indirect)

3. “Alas! I have misplaced my mother’s necklace” said she. (Direct)

She exclaimed sorrowfully that she had misplaced her mother’s necklace. (Indirect)

Punctuation

INTRODUCTION

While spoken language can convey meaning of what is actually being said with the help of tone, pauses, speed and other factors, the written language relies on punctuation marks to convey the actual meaning of the sentence. Punctuation marks are different signs used in a sentence while writing, whose placement impacts the meaning of the sentences. There are many different kinds of punctuations like the apostrophe, full stop, comma, full stop and many more. In this unit, you will learn about the meaning and importance of punctuation marks and the uses of different punctuation marks including use of capital letters.

OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- Explain the meaning and importance of punctuation
- Discuss the use of marks of punctuation
- Describe the use of capital letters in punctuation

MEANING AND IMPORTANCE OF PUNCTUATION

Punctuation refers to the ‘marks, such as full stop, comma, and brackets, used in writing to separate sentences and their elements and to clarify meaning.’

IMPORTANCE

Have you read any piece of writing without punctuation mark? Can you make sense of that piece of writing without punctuation marks? It is almost impossible as punctuation marks decide how we read, where we pause and how long we pause and it also decides the meaning of a piece of work. Without punctuation marks it will not be possible for us to decipher how to read and therefore the meaning or signification of a piece of writing will be lost altogether. Any good writer not only uses proper and to the point language but also makes use of punctuation marks in a proper fashion so as to help the readers in the process of reading. It is to be remembered here that if punctuation marks are used correctly then they can be a guide to the readers; but if they are not used in the right place then it can be a disaster often. Think about the following example—Let us think there is a sentence ‘a woman without her man is nothing’ and we are asked to punctuate. In first case, someone punctuates it as ‘A woman, without her man, is nothing.’ The second person punctuates it as ‘A woman: without her, man is nothing.’ In both the cases, the punctuation is fine; but the meanings of both the sentences are completely different—in fact, opposites—One celebrates women and other shows women to be dependent on men. The above example proves that the meaning of a sentence is not just there in the word but in the way they are being read because of the punctuation marks.

Punctuation marks are important for indicating a pause, separating sentences, clarifying the meaning of the sentence and indicate a part for emphasis.

Marks of Punctuation including Capital Letters and Their Uses

You already know about the punctuation marks and have been using them in your writing from your childhood. For sake of convenience we will take one punctuation mark at a time and then discuss its uses in points form to keep them for ready reckoning.

Full Stop (.): What is called ‘Full stop’ in British English is termed as a ‘Period’ in American English which is symbolized by a (.) and is usually used at the end of a sentence expressing the end of a statement.

- For example: I was playing a new game in my Xbox console (.)
- The sentence is a statement and this at the end of the sentence a full stop is used.
- There are other uses of a full stop.
They are:
- Often in an acronym, full stop is used such as
- Usually when we do Orthographic Abbreviation like Mr. or Mrs., we use the full stop.

Comma (,): Comma is where there is a small pause while speaking a sentence. Some of the uses of comma are:

- When we are giving a list in writing, we usually use comma, such as ‘milk, bread, jam and butter’
- In direct speech, before the dialogue, for example, Meena said, ‘Let’s go for a movie’.
- Often to mark out additional information comma is used, for example, ‘William Wordsworth, a Romantic poet and a poet laureate, was a lover of nature’.

Semicolon (;): Semicolon is used in the following circumstances:

- Separate two related sentences where there is no conjunction (such as ‘and’ or ‘but’), and where using only a comma would be ungrammatical. For example:
- She is a good singer; she has released many music albums.
- Organizes syntax thought where many commas are used. For example:
- We bought stationery items such as pen, pencils, erasers; medicines like Saridon and Rantac.

Colon (:): Colon are used in the following cases:

- To separate statements which are in dramatic opposition, such as ‘Man proposes: God disposes’.

- To start list, such as, Store: (a) Pens, (b) Pencils (c) Notebooks.
- To separate characters forming a dialogue, for example, ‘Ram: How do go to College?’

Quotations (“...”): Quotation marks are used to quote someone or some speech or writing. For example: Jadu said, “I will be in the mall before noon.”

Dashes and brackets/parentheses (—()): Dashes are used in writing to separate a comment (i.e. a parenthetical remark) from the rest of the sentence. For example, ‘One week later — who knows why — she made a decision to join the office.’

The apostrophe (’): Apostrophes are used in genitive forms, contracted forms, abbreviations and plurals of abbreviations, For example, the workers’ complaints, We landed at Delhi Int’l Airport or the CEO’s of the two companies.

Capital letters: Capital letters are used in the following circumstances:

- At the beginning of sentences and quotations
- For names of people, places, works of literature, the days of the week, the months, nationalities, and all the planets except the earth (but not for the sun, the moon or the seasons)

The hyphen (-): Hyphens are used in a number of cases such as:

- Compound nouns, for example, a passer-by (plural passers-by)
- Compound adjectives, for example, a ten-kilometer journey, a two- minute silence
- Coordination compounds, for example, staff-student ratio
- Numerals and fractions, for example, twenty-two, two-thirds
- Prefixes, for example, anti-terrorist, anti-colonial, etc.

The Exclamation Mark (!): Exclamation marks are used when we are too happy or sad about something which is done to suggest and signal emotions such as surprise, anger, interest, fear etc. For example, ‘That’s great!’, ‘Be careful!’, ‘You idiot!’, etc.

The Question mark (?): The question mark indicates a question, such as, ‘Where do you stay?’, ‘What’s your name?’, etc.

The slash (/): The slash (/) is used as a punctuation to indicate a series of alternatives (equivalent to either/or and and/or), in contrast to the use of the hyphen to signal coordination, for example, the actor /actress.

The triple dot (suspension point — dot dot dot) (...): Often while reading research papers and other significant documents you will notice that three dots (...) are used within quotation marks or at the end of sentences.

This is done for two purposes:

- Within quotation marks, it is used to suggest that some words are missing within the quotation. For example, ‘Life is a tale told by an idiot Signifying nothing’.
- The three dots (...) can come at the end of the sentence to suggest that the sentence was incomplete.
- Now that you have learnt about the various punctuation marks that are commonly used in English language to punctuate the writing (both formal and informal) you should practice more and more to understand the ways in which you can use them properly in your writing. Merely theoretical knowledge will not help in making yourself better in this business.

5-Mark Questions

1. Identify the determiners in a given sentence.
2. Classify the sentence: “Please close the door.”
3. Identify the kind of sentence: “What a beautiful day!”
4. Add appropriate punctuation: “where are you going”
5. Correctly punctuate: “lets eat grandma”

8-Mark Questions

1. Write a paragraph using at least five determiners correctly.
2. Identify and classify all sentences in a given paragraph as assertive, imperative, interrogative, or exclamatory.
3. Rewrite a passage with correct punctuation.
4. Analyze the role of determiners in sentence meaning.
5. Correct errors in a passage containing mixed sentence types and punctuation mistakes.