

Unit 1 | HUMOUR

LESSON

Toasted English | R.K. Narayan

PREPARATORY TASK

1. Have you ever travelled someplace where you did not know the language and had to figure out a way to communicate? What was the experience like? Discuss with your classmates.
2. Do you know the difference between American English and British English? List three words that are written or pronounced differently in American English and British English. Why do you think there are different varieties of English?
3. Can you think of some words or phrases which are used in Indian English, but are not common outside the country? What do you think gave rise to such expressions?

INTRODUCTION

R.K. Narayan (1906–2001) was one of the best first-generation Indian novelists who wrote in English. In addition to novels and collections of short stories, Narayan also published a number of nonfiction books. Narayan's writing is marked by simplicity of language, realistic settings, and relatable characters. Some of his best-known works are *The Guide*, *Swami and Friends*, *Malgudi Days*, and a critically acclaimed translation of the *Ramayana*.

'Toasted English', published about five decades ago, is a humorous essay about how the same language, English, changes depending on whether it is being used in Britain or America. He ponders whether the time has come for a version of English that is exclusively Indian—something that did eventually come true in his lifetime.

READING PASSAGE

In the American restaurants they call for 'toasted English', referring to English muffins which, though being made in America, now retain 'English' as a sort of concession to their origin. The same may be said of the Americans' language too. They too went through a phase of throwing out the British but retaining their language and letting it flourish on American soil: the resultant language is somewhat different from its British counterpart; it may be said to have gone through a process of **toasting**. One noticeable result of this toasting is that much of the **formalism** surrounding the use of English has been abandoned.

muffin: a small, sweet, cup-shaped tea-cake

concession: something granted or allowed, especially in response to some demand

toast: to make brown and crisp by heating; here, the author uses the word humorously to refer to the changes made to the English language

formalism: adherence to prescribed rules of correct behaviour or usage

In America, they have freed the language from the *stifling tyranny* of the Passive Voice. Where we should say *ceremoniously* 'Trespassing Prohibited', their signboards, as I noticed in the parks of Berkeley, merely say 'Newly Planted, Don't Walk'. 'Absolutely No Parking' leaves no room for speculation, and no motorist need spend too much time peering out and studying the notice. In a similar situation our authorities are likely to plant a twenty-line inscription across the landscape to say 'Under Municipal Act so and so this area has been reserved, etc. etc. and any vehicle *stationed* thereon will be deemed to have *contravened* sub-section so and so of the Motor Vehicles Act, etc. etc.' I saw on many American office doors just 'Do Not Enter'. The traffic signs at pedestrian crossings *never mince words*; they just say 'Go' or 'Wait'. In a Hollywood studio I was rather startled to read 'Mark Stevens—Keep Out'. Mark Stevens is a busy television personality who does not like to be disturbed by visitors. *Incidentally*, it left me wondering why, if Mr Stevens did not like interruption, he announced his name at all on the door! But it is one of the minor mysteries that make travel through that country so *engrossing*.

The 'toasting' of English has been achieved through other means also. Americans have evolved certain basic keywords which may be used anywhere, anyhow; words which have universal, multi-purpose use. I may make my point clear if I mention the example of the word 'check' which may safely be labelled the American National Expression. While British usage confines it to its bare dictionary definitions, the American uses it anywhere, this expression being so devised that one may blindly utter it and still find that it is appropriate for the occasion. 'I'll check' means 'I'll find out, investigate, examine, *scrutinise*, verify, or probe'. 'Your check' means your ticket, token or whatever you may have to produce. 'Check room' is where you leave your possessions for a while. 'Check girl' is one who takes care of your coat, umbrella, or anything else you may leave in custody. 'Check in' and 'Check out' (at first I heard it as '*Chuck out*' and felt rather disturbed) refer to one's arrival in a hotel and departure therefrom. And there are *scores* of other *incidental* uses for the world. If you are ever hard up for a noun or a verb you may safely utter the word 'check' and feel confident that it will fit in. '*Fabulous*' is another word that is used in that country freely, without much *premeditation*. Of course everyone knows what fabulous means, but American usage has enlarged its sense. I heard a lady in Wisconsin

stifling: characterised by oppression or forceful prevention

tyranny: a form of government in which the ruler holds absolute power (the word is used humorously here)

ceremoniously: in a very formal or polite manner

trespass: to enter someone's property unlawfully

Berkeley: a city in the United States of America

station: to put in a specified place (used here to refer to parking one's vehicle)

contravene: to go against rules and laws

not mince words: to say something plainly and directly, without worrying about politeness

incidentally: a word that introduces a minor point to be added

engrossing: capable of arousing and holding attention

scrutinise: to examine carefully, or look at in minute detail

chuck out: throw something or someone out

scores: a large number ('one score' is a set of twenty items)

incidental: of minor importance

fabulous: extremely pleasing

premeditation: planning in advance of acting

declare, 'Oh, those cats of mine are fabulous'—meaning that they were *eccentric*. 'Oh, So-and-so, he is fabulous!' may mean anything from a sincere compliment to an *insinuation* that So-and-so displays a mild form of charming *lunacy*.

'OK' or 'okay' is another well-known example. It is the easiest sound that ever *emanated* from the human vocal cords. Everyone knows how *comprehensive* its sense can be. 'Okay' is a self-sufficient word which needs no *suffix* to indicate any special respect for the listener; it can stand by itself without a 'sir' to conclude the sentence. In this respect it is like 'yeah' which seals off a sentence without further *ado*. 'Yes, sir' or 'Yes, darling', is conceivable but 'Yeah sir' or 'Yeah darling' is unthinkable. 'Yeah' is uttered in a short base-of-the-tongue grunt, which almost snaps off any further continuation of a sentence. 'Yes' involves time as the *sibilant* could be prolonged.

The refinements of usage in countries where English has a *bazaar status* are worth a study. On a London bus you will never hear the conductor cry, 'Ticket, Ticket'. He approaches the passenger and says 'Thank you', and on receiving the fare says again, 'Thank you, sir'. I found out that one could calculate the number of passengers in a bus by halving the total number of 'Thank you's' heard. In any Western country if a receptionist asks, 'Can I help you?' it really means, 'Have you any business here, if so state it.' Or it may mean 'Evidently you have wandered off into a wrong place, go away.' A man who wants to pass you always says 'Excuse me', while he may with all justice burst out, 'What do you mean by standing there gaping at the world while you block everybody's passage? Stand aside, man!' When you send your card in, the busy man's secretary appears and whispers in your ear, 'Would you like to wait?' Though the tone is one of consultation, you have really no choice in the matter. The thing to do is not to answer the question but say 'Thanks' and look for a comfortable seat in the waiting room, although you may feel like saying, 'No, I wouldn't like to wait. I have other things to do.'

The time has come for us to consider seriously the question of a Bharat brand of English. As I've said in my essay on 'English in India', so far English has had a comparatively confined existence in our country—chiefly in the halls of learning, justice, or administration. Now the time is ripe for it to come to the dusty street, marketplace, and under the banyan tree. English must adopt the *complexion* of our life and *assimilate* its *idiom*. I am not suggesting here a *mongrelisation* of the language. I am not recommending that we should go back to the days when we heard, particularly in the railways, 'Wer U goin', man?' Bharat English will respect the rule of law and maintain the dignity of grammar, but still have a swadeshi stamp about it unmistakably, like the Madras handloom check shirt or the Tirupati doll. How it can be achieved is a question for practical men to tackle.

eccentric: very obviously unconventional or unusual

insinuation: an indirect (and usually malicious) implication

lunacy: foolish or senseless behaviour

emanate: to proceed or issue out from a source

comprehensive: including all or everything

suffix: something that is added on to the end of something else (usually, to the end of a word)

ado: fuss, unnecessary trouble or excitement

sibilant: a hissing sound; for example, the sound 's'

where English has a bazaar status: where English is the language of the common people

complexion: (here) a point of view or general attitude

assimilate: to become similar to one's environment

idiom: the usage or vocabulary that is characteristic of a specific group of people

mongrelisation: the production of a mixed breed (here, the author is referring to mixing different languages)

READING COMPREHENSION

A. Answer the following questions in about 50 to 100 words each.

1. What is the process of 'toasting' of language, according to R.K. Narayan?
2. Why does the author label the word 'check' as the 'American National Expression'?
3. How are questions used as suggestions in English?
4. What is the author's attitude in this essay? Comment on the tone and style of the essay.

B. Answer the following questions in about 250 to 300 words each.

1. What has happened to English in America through the process of 'toasting'? In your opinion, what has the language gained and what has it lost through such 'toasting'?
2. What does the author mean by saying that there should be a 'Bharat brand of English'? Has English in India developed unique expressions and usages?

VOCABULARY**Word Formation**

Word formation is the process of making new words. A newly invented word (or phrase) is referred to as a '**neologism**'. (The term is also used to refer to action of inventing a new word or phrase.) Over time, some neologisms may disappear from the language (if they are not widely accepted and used), whereas others become popular and enter mainstream usage in the language.

There are many ways of forming new words in a language, and we will examine some of the most important ones in this section. Understanding these processes of word formation will help you build your vocabulary. Most of the examples given below are from the essay you have just read, so that you can see how these words have been derived and how they are used in context.

Derivation (also known as **affixation**) is the process of creating a new word by simply adding a prefix or a suffix to an existing word. (You will learn more about prefixes and suffixes in the next section.) In addition to creating entirely new words, derivation is commonly used to change the grammatical class of a word (from nouns to verbs, or verbs to adjectives, or adjectives to adverbs, or any combination of the same), to create words of opposite meaning (antonyms), and so on.

prefix <i>pre-</i>	+	<i>meditation</i>	=	premeditation (word with new meaning created)
prefix <i>in-</i>	+	<i>justice</i>	=	injustice (antonym created)
<i>formal</i> (adjective)	+	suffix <i>-ism</i>	=	formalism (noun created)
<i>station</i> (verb)	+	suffix <i>-ed</i>	=	stationed (past participle form created)

Back-formation is the opposite of affixation: new words are created by removing a prefix or (more commonly) a suffix from an existing word. Often, the existing, longer word happens to be a noun borrowed from French, Latin or Greek without a corresponding verb in English, and the process of back-formation fills the gap in English vocabulary by creating the verb form.

Back-formation usually relies on applying the model of an existing pair of words in English to, say, a noun that doesn't have a corresponding verb. For example, the English language has had the words *insinuation* (noun) and *insinuate* (verb) since the sixteenth century. Nouns such as *meditation* and *automation* however didn't have corresponding verbs, so the verbs *meditate* and *automate* were

created based on the existing model of *insinuation*–*insinuate*. Other examples of back-formation include *liaise* from *liaison*, *televise* from *television*, *enthuse* from *enthusiasm*, and *loaf* from *loafer*.

In 'Toasted English', R.K. Narayan talks about the differences between American English and British English. People in different geographic regions sometimes end up creating different verbs which mean the same thing, through the various processes of word formation. The British created the verb *burgle* through back-formation by shortening the noun *burglar*, whereas Americans created the verb *burglarise* through derivation by adding the suffix *-ise* to *burglar*. Both *burgle* and *burglarise* mean the same thing—to illegally enter a building in order to steal—and English ended up with two new words through two different processes of word formation.

Compounding creates words by simply joining two existing words. Neologisms created through compounding often start off as hyphenated words, but over time the hyphen gets dropped from the compound word.

<i>key</i>	+	<i>word</i>	=	<i>keyword</i>		<i>well</i>	+	<i>known</i>	=	<i>well-known</i>
<i>market</i>	+	<i>place</i>	=	<i>marketplace</i>		<i>self</i>	+	<i>sufficient</i>	=	<i>self-sufficient</i>

Blending creates words by combining parts of two or more words. These neologisms are referred to as **portmanteau words**. A portmanteau word fuses both the sounds of the original words and the meanings of its components.

<i>breakfast</i>	+	<i>lunch</i>	=	<i>brunch</i>		<i>smoke</i>	+	<i>fog</i>	=	<i>smog</i>
<i>spoon</i>	+	<i>fork</i>	=	<i>spork</i>		<i>binary</i>	+	<i>unit</i>	=	<i>bit</i>

Note that blending is different from compounding: blending combines *parts* of existing words (lion + tiger = liger), whereas compounding combines *whole* words (class + room = classroom).

Clipping creates words by shortening an existing word. The meaning of the original word (or its grammatical class) doesn't change.

<i>advertisement</i> → <i>ad</i>	<i>internet</i> → <i>net</i>	<i>refrigerator</i> → <i>fridge</i>
<i>fabulous</i> → <i>fab</i>	<i>mathematics</i> → <i>maths</i>	<i>spectacles</i> → <i>specs</i>
<i>gymnasium</i> → <i>gym</i>	<i>popular</i> → <i>pop</i>	<i>telephone</i> → <i>phone</i>

Acronyms are words formed by combining the first letters or syllables of a longer phrase; for example, *radar*, which is a shortening of *radio detection and ranging*.

<i>light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation</i> → <i>laser</i>	<i>graphics interchange format</i> → <i>GIF</i>
<i>self-contained underwater breathing apparatus</i> → <i>scuba</i>	<i>personal identification number</i> → <i>PIN</i>

The English language shortens and abbreviates words in many ways, and the term **acronym** is often specifically used for shortenings that can be pronounced as a single whole word (for example, *AIDS* or *UNICEF*) whereas shortenings that are pronounced by spelling out each individual letter are often termed *initialisms* (for example, *ATM* or *HIV*).

In the case of many acronyms, as they enter wide usage, they begin to be written in lower-case letters (instead of upper-case letters) as people increasingly forget what the abbreviations initially stood for. Some years ago, *laser* and *scuba* used to be written in upper-case letters ('LASER', 'SCUBA') but this is rare now. Similarly, the acronyms *gif* and *pin* are nowadays often written in lower-case letters (like any other word) as their use becomes more widespread.

Conversion is the process of creating new words by simply using an existing word of a particular word class in another grammatical class. Perhaps the best example of this is the use of proper nouns as generic common nouns; for example, *Xerox*, *Google* and *Champagne* being converted to *xerox* (meaning, to photocopy), *google* (meaning, to search for information on the internet using a search engine), and *champagne* (white sparkling wine).

Note that the spelling stays the same and the only change in pronunciation (if any at all) is a change in word stress. The noun *e-mail* (meaning, a message sent from one computer user to another) is now commonly used as the verb *e-mail* (meaning, to send an e-mail). The verb *increase* (meaning, to make greater in size or degree) resulted in the creation of the noun *increase* (meaning, a rise in the size or degree of something).

EXERCISES

- A. From Narayan's essay, find two examples of words created through derivation (that have not already been mentioned in this section).
- B. What is the difference between the following processes of word formation? Illustrate your answer with three examples of each word formation process.
- back-formation and clipping
 - compounding and blending
 - clipping and creating acronyms.
- C. Which methods of word formation are illustrated by the following examples?
- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. robot → bot | 4. loan + word = loanword |
| 2. babysitter → babysit | 5. mis- + spell = misspell |
| 3. British + exit = Brexit | 6. access (noun) → access (verb) |
- D. Look up the meanings of each of the portmanteau words given below. Figure out the original words from which each portmanteau was created. Use each portmanteau in sentences of your own.
- | | | |
|-------------|------------|----------------|
| 1. biopic | 4. romcom | 7. infomercial |
| 2. emoticon | 5. hangry | 8. guesstimate |
| 3. malware | 6. frenemy | 9. edutainment |

Prefixes and Suffixes

Learning about prefixes and suffixes will help you expand your vocabulary in two key ways. Firstly, it will help you determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word. Secondly, it will help you create new words. Many of the prefixes and suffixes that are used in English have been derived from Greek and Latin. In this section, we will look at some of the most common ones.

A **prefix** is a word fragment added in front of a word or a word root to produce new words. For example:

prefix **en-** + word **sure** = new word **ensure**

prefix **un-** + word **sure** = new word **unsure**

Prefix	Origin	Meaning	Examples
a-	Latin	not, without	<u>a</u> moral, <u>a</u> political
ant-, anti-	Greek	instead, against	<u>ant</u> isocial, <u>ant</u> acid
auto-	Greek	self	<u>auto</u> graph, <u>auto</u> matic
bi-	Latin	two, double	<u>bi</u> furcate, <u>bi</u> annual
de-, dis-	Latin	not, opposite	<u>de</u> form, <u>dis</u> cover
eco-	Greek	environment, habitat	<u>eco</u> logy, <u>eco</u> system
en-, em-	Latin	cause to	<u>en</u> act, <u>em</u> power
extra-	Latin	outside of, beyond	<u>extra</u> ordinary, <u>extro</u> vert
homo-	Greek	like, similar	<u>homo</u> geneous, <u>homo</u> nym
hyper-	Greek	over, above, beyond	<u>hyper</u> active, <u>hyper</u> bole
il-, im-, in-, ir-	Latin	not	<u>ill</u> iterate, <u>im</u> pure, <u>in</u> sincere, <u>ir</u> relevant
infra-	Latin	below, inferior, after	<u>infra</u> red, <u>infr</u> asonic
inter-	Latin	between	<u>inter</u> national, <u>inter</u> cept
kilo-	Greek	thousand	<u>kilo</u> gram, <u>kilo</u> metre
mal-	Latin	evil, badly	<u>mal</u> nourished, <u>mal</u> evolent
micro-	Greek	small	<u>micro</u> be, <u>micro</u> scope
mis-	Germanic	wrong	<u>mis</u> spell, <u>mis</u> interpret
neo-	Greek	new	<u>neo</u> classical, <u>neo</u> logism
non-	Latin	not	<u>non</u> violent, <u>non</u> conformity
pan-	Greek	all, every	<u>pan</u> demic, <u>pan</u> -Indian
pre-	Latin	before, early, toward	<u>pre</u> cedent, <u>pre</u> position
pseudo-	Greek	false	<u>pseudo</u> nym, <u>pseudo</u> -science
re-	Latin	again	<u>re</u> write, <u>re</u> gain
retro-	Latin	backwards, behind	<u>retro</u> fit, <u>retro</u> grade
semi-	Latin	half, partly	<u>semi</u> circle, <u>semi</u> final
sub-	Latin	under	<u>sub</u> standard, <u>sub</u> way
syn-, sym-	Greek	together, with	<u>sym</u> metric, <u>syn</u> opsis
tri-	Latin	three	<u>tri</u> angle, <u>tri</u> ceps
ultra-	Latin	beyond, extremely	<u>ultra</u> sound, <u>ultra</u> conservative
un-	Germanic	not	<u>un</u> usual, <u>un</u> happy

A **suffix** is a word fragment added at the end of a word or a word root to create new words. For example:

word *sure* + suffix *-ly* = new word *surely*

word *sure* + suffix *-ty* = new word *surety*

Suffix	Origin	Meaning	Examples
-able, -ible	Latin	able to, capable of being	transferable, reversible
-age	Latin	belonging to, related to	postage, marriage
-cracy	Greek	government	aristocracy, democracy
-dom	Old English	place, state of being	kingdom, boredom
-en	Latin	to become, cause to be	darken, weaken
-est	Old English	most	smallest, farthest
-ry	Latin	place for, occupation of	winery, dentistry
-ful	Old English	full of, having	joyful, careful
-fy	Latin	to make, cause to be	clarify, horrify
-gram	Greek	record	telegram, electrocardiogram
-hood	Latin	state, quality	childhood, priesthood
-iac, -ic, -ical	Greek	pertaining to	cardiac, aristocratic, political
-iatry	Greek	healing	podiatry, psychiatry
-ion	Latin	state of something	elation, depression
-ise	Greek	to make, to give	criticise, sanitise
-ish	Latin	of, belonging to	boyish, foolish
-ism	Greek	belief in, practice of	terrorism, feminism
-ist	Latin	person who does	philanthropist, artist
-less	Latin	without, lacking	pitiless, tireless
-like	Latin	characteristic of	childlike, godlike
-logy	Greek	science or study of	biology, geology
-ment	Latin	state of, action of	movement, contentment
-ness	Latin	state of, quality of being	greatness, sadness
-phobia	Greek	fear of	claustrophobia, xenophobia
-scope	Greek	to observe, watch	telescope, microscope
-some	Latin	tending to be	tiresome, lonesome
-ure	Old French	condition of	failure, closure
-ward	Old English	direction	toward, backward
-wise	Old English	direction, manner	clockwise, lengthwise
-y	Old English	characterised by	sticky, bubbly

A word can be made up of multiple prefixes, word roots and suffixes. Examine the examples on the next page carefully. Understanding the different ways in which prefixes and suffixes can be combined with words and word roots will not only help you decipher the meanings of difficult words, but also help you build your own neologisms.

inability	=	in-	+	able	+	-ity
ENGLISH WORD		LATIN PREFIX		ENGLISH WORD		MID ENGLISH SUFFIX
state of being unable to do something		not		able		state of being

neologism	=	neo-	+	logos	+	-ism
ENGLISH WORD		GREEK PREFIX		GREEK ROOT		GREEK SUFFIX
the action of making new words		new		word		doing something

beautifully	=	beauty	+	-ful	+	-y
ENGLISH WORD		ENGLISH WORD		MID ENGLISH SUFFIX		MID ENGLISH SUFFIX
in a beautiful manner		beauty		full of		characterised by

nonconformist	=	non-	+	con-	+	form	+	-ist
ENGLISH WORD		LATIN PREFIX		LATIN PREFIX		LATIN ROOT		LATIN SUFFIX
one who does not conform		not		together with		form, manner		one who does

EXERCISES

E. Fill in the blanks by adding a suitable affix to the words on the right (as instructed). In some cases, the original words may need to be modified to ensure grammatical correctness, etc.

- | | |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. He wants to _____ me on Facebook. | PREFIX + friend |
| 2. She _____ her strength; she lacks confidence. | PREFIX + estimate |
| 3. Our team won the hockey _____. | champion + SUFFIX |
| 4. It is _____ to kill endangered animals. | PREFIX + legal |
| 5. She was given a _____ of sweets. | hand + SUFFIX |
| 6. You need a _____ of hard work and determination to succeed. | combine + SUFFIX |
| 7. Don't be _____. | child + SUFFIX |

F. Make three words each by using the following prefixes. The meanings of these prefixes are provided.

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. contra- (against) | 4. mono- (one) | 7. trans- (through) |
| 2. milli- (thousandth part) | 5. post- (after) | 8. uni- (one) |
| 3. mega- (large) | 6. pro- (in front of) | 9. multi- (many) |

G. Make three words each by using the following suffixes. The meanings of these suffixes are provided.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. -an / -ian (belonging to) | 4. -ant (one who does an action) |
| 2. -ship (condition of, quality) | 5. -ee (one who receives an action) |
| 3. -ous (having, full of) | 6. -ance / -ence (state, quality, process) |

H. Guess the answer from the given clues. Each word is taken from R.K. Narayan's essay 'Toasted English'. Then, complete the rest of the table as shown in the example.

	Clue	Answer	Word/root	Suffix
E.g.	One who drives an automobile	motorist	motor	-ist
1.	One who receive visitors or answers calls			
2.	The act of using			
3.	Something one owns, or the act of owning			

I. Guess the answer from the clues and complete the rest of the table. Each word is taken from 'Toasted English'.

	Clue	Answer	Prefix	Word/root
1.	Having more than one use			
2.	To make larger			
3.	A device with a screen for receiving broadcast signals			

J. Guess the answer from the clues and complete the rest of the table. Each word is taken from 'Toasted English'.

	Clue	Answer	Prefix	Word/root	Suffix
1.	The action of disturbing someone/something				
2.	A part of something already divided				
3.	Too unlikely to be considered a possibility				

Exercises H, I and J will also help you practise one-word substitutes.

K. Identify the prefixes and suffixes in the following words by splitting them as shown in the examples below.

unfortunate = un- + fortune + -ate

autobiography = auto- + bio + graph + -y

- | | | |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| 1. disappear | 4. happiness | 7. unbelievable |
| 2. correction | 5. contentment | 8. informally |
| 3. methodical | 6. visibility | 9. inexhaustible |

Synonyms

Synonyms are words that have the same or nearly the same meaning. For example, *finish* and *complete* are synonyms of each other. Similarly, *calm*, *tranquil* and *peaceful* are synonyms of each other, and are often used in place of one another. It is useful to know the synonyms of a word because you can use them to bring variety to your speech and writing.

Words often have more than one meaning; when we say that two words are synonyms of each other, we mean that they match in *one* of their senses. Thus, the word *fair* is a synonym for the word *just* in *one* of its meanings, but not in its other senses.

The umpire's decision was *fair*.

Jose is the short, *fair* boy in a brown shirt.

Here, *fair*, in the sense of 'morally right' or 'free from favouritism' is a synonym for *just*.

Here, *fair*, in the sense of 'light-coloured skin', is not a synonym for *just*.

Synonyms allow us to refer to objects, actions and feelings in more than one way, which makes what we say or write more interesting to others. For example, note how synonyms are used below to avoid repetition.

I am afraid of the new boss. Are you frightened of him?

The boss is strict, but understanding; you needn't be scared to talk to him.

The sentences below give examples of synonyms that can, most of the time, be freely used in place of one another.

We got printed *cloth* / *fabric* / *material* for the curtains.

Mr Sonalkar is an *able* / a *capable* / a *competent* manager.

The sky was full of **sparkling / shining / glittering** stars.

Nina's boss knows that she is an **industrious / hard-working / diligent** worker.

The bridge **connects / joins / links** the old and new parts of the city.

We have a huge mango tree at the **back / rear** of the house.

However, most often, a number of words that you find on a list of synonyms do not actually have identical meanings and cannot be used interchangeably.

- Firstly, two words may share *one* of their meanings but each of them may have *other* meanings, because of which they cannot always be used in place of each other. For example, **dull** and **boring** can be used interchangeably in 'a **dull / boring** book'; but 'a **dull** day' is not the same as 'a **boring** day'.
- Secondly, many such words may indicate slightly different shades or degrees of meaning (e.g., *grief* and *sadness*); or may be suitable for different situations, such as formal or informal (e.g., *seldom* and *rarely*); or may be commonly used by a particular group of speakers, such as adults and children (e.g., *stomach* and *tummy*); or may indicate emotions, such as approval or disapproval (e.g., *curious* and *inquisitive*). For examples, look at the sets of sentences below. Though the highlighted words are synonyms and have almost the same meaning, they cannot always be used as alternatives.

How **big / large** is your office?

The girl had **big / large** brown eyes.

We dug a **big / large** pit in the field.

but

Don't cry! You're a **big** boy, aren't you?

(not 'a **large** boy')

Maria and her brother had a **big** fight about the bicycle. (not 'a **large** fight')

She's a **clever / a bright / an intelligent** child.

but

What a **clever / bright** idea!

(not 'an **intelligent** idea')

You must therefore be careful with synonyms when writing or speaking. Reading will help you learn to use words that are almost the same in meaning. You can also look up a dictionary or a thesaurus (which gives lists of similar or related words) to see if it is appropriate to use one word in place of another.

EXERCISES

L. Match each word on the left with its most commonly used synonym on the right.

- | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|
| 1. abate | 2. yearly | 3. meticulous | a. useless | b. approach | c. compulsory | | | |
| 4. appear | 5. broad | 6. futile | 7. lucid | d. basic | e. clear | f. lessen | g. seem | h. wide |
| 8. elementary | 9. wreck | 10. mandatory | i. destroy | j. annually | k. stressed | l. careful | | |

M. Complete the sentences using words that mean the same as those in brackets. Note that there may be more than one correct answer.

- She _____ (**rarely**) plays the violin now.
- It was a _____ (**hazardous**) journey, and we were lucky to have escaped unharmed.
- I had to be away from office because of _____ (**pressing**) personal work.
- The bus slowed down at the _____ (**junction**).
- We _____ (**craved**) for a cold drink after the long walk in the heat.
- What a _____ (**pitiless**) man you are!

Antonyms

An **antonym** is a word that means the opposite of another word. Learning antonyms is an important part of building your vocabulary because it will help you avoid using long phrases to express the opposite meaning. For example, compare the two alternative ways in which you can convey the opposite of the word **purposefully** in the sentence 'Rita walked purposefully down the road'.

Rita walked without a clear purpose down the road. Rita walked **purposelessly** down the road.

The antonym of a word...

- may bear no resemblance to it (e.g., **cold** and **hot**)
- may be formed by replacing the first word in a compound with another word (e.g., **part-time** and **full-time**)
- may be formed by adding a prefix in front of it (e.g., **important** and **unimportant**)
- may be formed by replacing a suffix at its end (e.g., **useful** and **useless**)

You will find examples of all these kinds of antonyms in the list below. Practise using them when you speak and write.

acquit	convict	active	inactive, passive
barren	fertile	bend	straighten
clockwise	anticlockwise	do	undo
eager	reluctant	exclude	include
expensive	cheap, inexpensive	follow	lead
honest	dishonest	legal	illegal
lend	borrow	major	minor
possible	impossible	powerful	powerless
reveal	conceal, hide	strict	lenient
success	failure	timely	untimely
undersized	oversized	urban	rural
vacant	occupied	well-mannered	ill-mannered

Note that you cannot always form antonyms by adding letters at the front and the end of words. Some of these beginnings and endings do not always mark opposite meanings—they could be part of an entirely unrelated word. For example:

- **anti-perspirant**: a substance that prevents you from sweating (the word *perspirant* is not used in English)
- **disillusion**: to make someone see that something they thought was good or true is not actually good or true (*illusion* is not used as a verb, so you can *disillusion* someone but not *illusion* them)
- **disown**: to say that you no longer want to be connected with someone or something, especially a member of your family (not the opposite of *own*, which means 'possess')
- **dislocate**: to move a bone out of its normal position in a joint, usually because of an accident (unrelated to *locate*, meaning 'to find the exact position of something' or 'to be situated in a particular place')

- *unearth*: to find something that has been buried in the ground or lost for a long time after a search (*earth* is not used as a verb, so you can *unearth* treasure, but not *earth* it)
- *unfailing*: always there, even in times of difficulty or trouble, as in 'I am grateful for your *unfailing* help' (not the opposite of *failing*, which means 'a fault or weakness')
- *undoubted*: definitely true (*undoubted* is a synonym for *doubtless*, as in 'undoubted talent')

Antonyms, therefore, have to be learnt and used carefully. Reading (and this is true of vocabulary development in general) is the best way to add to the antonyms you know. As this will happen only over a period of time, you can use a dictionary when you want to find an antonym for a word or need to be sure you are using the right one.

EXERCISES

N. In each set, select the word that is the closest antonym of the italicised word on the left. Use a dictionary to look up the meanings of words that you are not familiar with.

1. <i>diffident</i>	confident	difficult	tolerant
2. <i>extempore</i>	careful	extraordinary	well-prepared
3. <i>consent</i>	forbid	resent	permit
4. <i>amicable</i>	negative	surprising	unfriendly
5. <i>ambiguity</i>	clarity	guilt	liveliness
6. <i>subside</i>	initiate	ignore	increase

O. Form antonyms for the words given below by either adding, removing, or modifying prefixes or suffixes.

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|---------------|
| 1. accurate | 3. proper | 5. injustice |
| 2. careless | 4. interior | 6. understand |

P. Fill in the blanks by using the antonym of the italicised word given alongside each sentence. The clue words are taken from R.K. Narayan's essay 'Toasted English'. An example is provided for you to follow. Note that more than one correct answer is possible in most cases.

SENTENCE: Are you _____ right now? CLUE: *busy* ANSWER: free

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. This tool can only be used for this _____ purpose. | <i>universal</i> |
| 2. I found the book very _____. | <i>engrossing</i> |
| 3. The survey was _____ in its scope. | <i>comprehensive</i> |
| 4. His habits and routines are quite _____. | <i>eccentric</i> |
| 5. She is careful to always _____ the rules. | <i>contravene</i> |
| 6. Pay attention! We are discussing issues that are _____. | <i>incidental</i> |

Q. Sometimes, adding, removing, or modifying prefixes or suffixes produces a word that is entirely unrelated to the modified word, instead of producing its antonym. For example: UNEARTH -prefix UN = EARTH (which is not the antonym of UNEARTH; the antonyms of UNEARTH are: BURY, CONCEAL, HIDE, IMPLANT, etc.). Given below are a list of similar words. Look up the meanings of these words and find the correct antonyms for each of these. Note that there will be multiple correct answers.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1. heartless | 4. inflammable |
| 2. underhanded | 5. reckless |
| 3. egoless | 6. disgust (verb or noun) |

GRAMMAR

Common Errors in the Use of Articles

Articles (*a, an, the*) are a set of words that tell us something about the noun (or a noun phrase) attached to them.

- The **definite article** (*the*) indicates that a *specific* noun/noun phrase is being referred to. For example: Sheila read the book. (The specific book that Sheila read is known to both the speaker and the listener.)
- An **indefinite article** (*a* or *an*) identifies the noun/noun phrase being referred to in a general, *non-specific* way. For example: Sheila read a book. (The book that Sheila read is not specifically identified.)

Let us look at some of the most common errors made by non-native users of English with regard to articles. Avoiding these errors in both speech and writing will make your meaning clear and your expression polished. In the examples below, the correct use of an article is marked in blue italics, and the noun/noun phrase relevant to the example is underlined with a dotted line.

Incorrectly using articles without a corresponding noun/noun phrase

Remember to use an article before a singular, countable noun—even when there is an adjective before the noun, or an adverb plus adjective before the noun. An article refers to a noun or a noun phrase, so do not use an article before an adjective without a noun following it.

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|
| ✗ He is a stupid. | ✗ He is the stupid. | ✗ He is a/the very stupid. |
| ✓ He is stupid. | ✓ He is <i>a</i> <u>stupid person</u> . | ✓ He is <i>an</i> <u>extremely stupid person</u> . |

Incorrectly using indefinite articles before vowel sounds

The indefinite article *a* is used when the following noun begins with a consonant sound, and the indefinite article *an* appears when the following noun begins with a vowel sound. Note that we are referring to consonant and vowel *sounds*, and not letters.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ✓ Vinod wants to join <i>a</i> <u>university</u> . | ✓ We are members of <i>a</i> <u>union</u> . |
|--|---|

In the above examples, the indefinite article *a* appears with words beginning with *u* (a letter that usually represents a vowel sound) because in these words the letter is pronounced as the consonant sound /j/.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✓ You are <i>an</i> <u>honest person</u> . | ✓ I have been waiting here for <i>an</i> <u>hour</u> . |
|--|--|

In these examples, the indefinite article *an* is used before words beginning with *h* (a letter that usually represents a consonant sound) because in these words the consonant /h/ is silent and the words begin with a vowel sound.

Not using an indefinite article before nouns that indicate an individual's profession or status

Always use an indefinite article when using a noun to refer to someone's job or status.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ✗ Kalpana is <u>teacher</u> . | ✗ Swami is <u>immigrant</u> . |
| ✓ Kalpana is <i>a</i> <u>teacher</u> . | ✓ Swami is <i>an</i> <u>immigrant</u> . |

Not using the definite article before superlative adjectives

Always use the definite article with adjectives in the superlative degree.

- ✗ Susan is fastest sprinter in the team. ✓ Susan is *the* fastest sprinter in the team.

Using articles where they are not required

There are specific cases in which articles are not used before nouns/noun phrases. We will look at some of the most common instances where errors creep in. Do not use articles...

- before abstract nouns, subjects of study, and the names of most diseases—except when they are made specific by phrases that follow them.
 - ✗ We long for the peace. ✓ We long for peace. ✓ We long for *the* peace of the hills.
 - ✗ I study the economics. ✓ I study economics. ✓ I study *the* economics of sports leagues.
 - ✗ The cancer is incurable. ✓ Cancer is incurable. ✓ *The* cancer that I have is curable.
- before uncountable nouns (i.e., mass nouns), generic plural nouns (i.e., when referring to a general class of things), and meals had at different times of the day—except when these are made specific by a following phrase or clause.
 - ✗ We breathe the air. ✓ We breathe air. ✓ We breathe in *the* air of the sea.
 - ✗ It's made of the gold. ✓ It's made of gold. ✓ It's made of *the* gold from this mine.
 - ✗ The spiders are scary. ✓ Spiders are scary. ✓ *The* spiders in the film were scary.
 - ✗ He's eating the dinner. ✓ He's eating dinner. ✓ *The* dinner you cooked was delicious.
- before names of companies and universities, if the name does not include *of*.
 - ✗ Ranjit took a degree in law from the Delhi University.
 - ✓ Ranjit took a degree in law from Delhi University.
 - ✓ Ranjit took a degree in law from *the* University of Delhi.
 - ✗ I used to work for the Facebook, but now I am with the Infosys.
 - ✓ I used to work for Facebook, but now I am with Infosys.
- before certain nouns like *church*, *college*, *hospital*, when we are referring to them in relation to their primary purpose (prayer, higher education, treatment for illness, etc.) and not as places or buildings.
 - ✗ Her daughter is at the college.
 - ✓ Her daughter is at college. (i.e., for education)
 - ✓ Her daughter cycles to *the* college. (i.e., the building and surrounding campus)
- before the names of continents, most countries, states, cities, and streets.
 - ✗ My office is on the Tukaram Marg. ✓ My office is on Tukaram Marg.

The names of certain countries are exceptions to this rule; for example, *the* United States (*the* US), *the* United Kingdom (*the* UK), *the* Philippines, *the* Czech Republic, *the* Netherlands, *the* Bahamas, *the* Maldives, etc.

 - ✗ She is from the Bhutan, but works in Maldives.
 - ✓ She is from Bhutan, but works in *the* Maldives.
- before the names of individual mountains, islands, and certain lakes—however, note that the definite article should be used before the names of mountain ranges, valleys, deserts, oceans, seas, rivers, groups of lakes, groups of islands, and points on globe.
 - ✗ The Mount Everest is the highest peak in Himalayas.
 - ✓ Mount Everest is the highest peak in *the* Himalayas.
 - ✓ *The* Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Sri Lanka are both close to India.

EXERCISES

A. *Fill in the blanks in the sentences below with A, AN or THE. In case more than one article can be used, use the one you think would be more appropriate than the other(s). If the blank space does not need an article, indicate this with an X.*

1. _____ peacock is in danger of extinction.
2. There is _____ European and _____ Ethiopian among the tourists.
3. _____ Sanaz I know lives in Bhubaneswar.
4. Sumita found _____ wallet on her way home. She took _____ wallet to the police station.
5. We must work to save _____ tigers from becoming extinct. _____ tiger is an important part of the ecosystem.
6. Have you had _____ breakfast?
7. There's no _____ school today. _____ school is being used as _____ polling station.
8. This is a painting of _____ Western Ghats, and that is a photograph of _____ Mahabaleshwar peak.
9. Mary will go to _____ school when she is three.
10. Our library has three copies of _____ *Mahabharata*.

B. *Insert articles wherever necessary.*

1. There is book in my backpack. Book is very heavy.
2. Do you know where I left car keys?
3. I enjoy reading detective novels, especially ones by famous author Arthur Conan Doyle.
4. French drink wine, while Americans drink beer.
5. Group of MBA students from university of Mumbai visited Harvard University in United States.
6. Bible was first book to be printed by Gutenberg in fifteenth century.
7. I am fond of music of Mozart. My grandfather owns antique piano.
8. Cloth is sold by metre. Metre of this fabric cost me moon.
9. Sun is at highest point in sky at noon.
10. After humans, chimpanzee is most intelligent among animals.

C. *Correct the following sentences by using the right articles (or by removing articles where not required).*

1. I am studying for a MA in history.
2. He had spelt the word with a 's' instead of a 'c'.
3. I always use a HB pencil.
4. In the class, the children were having arithmetic lesson.
5. My brother is electrical engineer.
6. The war lasted almost hundred years.
7. I always get headache if I don't wear my glasses.
8. Swiss are very fussy about hygiene.
9. His lawyer produced an important new evidence.
10. We must try harder to stop these people from destroying the nature.

D. *Some of the following sentences may have errors relating to the use of articles. Rewrite the incorrect sentences correctly.*

1. The oranges and lemons are citrus fruits.
2. Asif is going to visit the Oxford University.
3. The government needs to enforce pollution laws. Governments around the world need to cooperate in the fight against the pollution.

4. Have you been to Nilgiri hills?
5. The history is not really Faiza's favourite subject, but she finds the history of Greeks fascinating.
6. You can take Visaka Express to Mumbai.
7. The children have been sent to the bed.
8. English language is full of the confusing rules. English also has many strange idioms.
9. Gold you buy here is of the excellent quality.
10. UK laws don't apply to the UAE except at UK embassy.

Common Errors in the Use of Prepositions

The use of prepositions is an area where non-native speakers of English tend to make a fair number of mistakes. This is because...

- English has many different prepositions (as well as types of prepositions).
- There are few rules that are universally applicable—and many exceptions.
- In many cases, the choice of preposition depends on what comes before or after it.

The three basic types of errors in the use of prepositions are:

- adding a preposition where it is not required

<p>✗ The team discussed <i>about</i> their failure.</p> <p>✗ How much money does he owe <i>to</i> you?</p>	<p>✓ The team discussed their failure.</p> <p>✓ How much money does he owe you?</p>
--	---
- omitting a necessary preposition

<p>✗ I must reply her mail.</p> <p>✗ They compensated him the loss.</p>	<p>✓ I must reply <i>to</i> her mail.</p> <p>✓ They compensated him <i>for</i> the loss.</p>
---	--
- substituting one preposition for another

<p>✗ I congratulated her <i>for</i> her promotion.</p> <p>✗ I was baffled <i>with</i> the instructions.</p>	<p>✓ I congratulated her <i>on</i> her promotion.</p> <p>✓ I was baffled <i>by</i> the instructions.</p>
---	--

Another increasingly common error is incorrectly using the preposition *of* in place of the helping verb *have* after the modal verbs *could*, *should* and *would*. This is because *could have*, *should have*, and *would have* are contracted to *could've*, *should've*, and *would've* in spoken English, which sounds a bit similar to *could of*, etc. But the preposition *of* is not required in such sentences, so be careful to avoid this common error.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ✗ She could <i>of</i> helped. | ✗ He should <i>of</i> come. | ✗ I would <i>of</i> gone. |
| ✓ She could <i>have</i> helped. | ✓ He should <i>have</i> come. | ✓ I would <i>have</i> gone. |
| ✓ She could've helped. | ✓ He should've come. | ✓ I would've gone. |

Avoiding errors in the use of prepositions involves (1) knowing which preposition to use, and (2) pairing the preposition with the right word.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ✗ I'm interested <i>about</i> basketball. | ✓ I'm interested <i>in</i> basketball. |
| ✗ I've been working <i>in</i> home. | ✓ I've been working <i>from</i> home. |
| ✗ I've been working <i>from</i> breakfast. | ✓ I've been working <i>since</i> breakfast. |

In other words, preposition usage is idiomatic. The best way to learn how to use prepositions correctly is by exposing yourself to good models of written and spoken English, by using the language yourself, and being open to correction. The exercises below will help you practise the correct use of prepositions in a variety of situations.

EXERCISES

E. Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with suitable prepositions.

- The guests are coming _____ six o'clock _____ the evening _____ Thursday.
- We will have completed the work _____ tomorrow.
- I lived _____ my parents _____ Bengaluru _____ four years.
- She is _____ leave _____ the end of the week.
- I read your brother's article _____ this journal. It is _____ page 36.
- The house is _____ the park _____ the right _____ the school.
- They go _____ the office _____ train.
- This dog belongs _____ Sheila. She brought it _____ Pune.
- They were talking _____ us _____ their son.
- He got _____ the bus, and walked _____ the theatre.

F. Rewrite the following sentences correctly.

- Annie went in the bedroom to get her shawl.
- He goes to the university by foot.
- The doctor has been practising here since many years.
- They were shocked over the sight of the destruction.
- Are you going for the party?
- Please put the books back in the table.
- He climbed across the wall and ran until the main road.
- The burglar got in by the window besides the door.
- The purse is below the pillow.
- Don't be afraid. You're between friends here.

G. Fill in the blanks with the correct prepositions chosen from those given in brackets alongside each sentence.

- He lives _____ 19 Tower Road. [at, on]
- We will be gone _____ two days. [for, since]
- Tom and his friend will divide the money _____ themselves. [among, between]
- Many foods _____ milk contain calcium. [beside, besides]
- I will arrive _____ six o'clock. [at, in]
- I have known her _____ last year. [for, since]

H. Paying attention to the nouns (in bold) which are usually followed by certain prepositions, fill in the blanks with the correct prepositions chosen from the pairs given in brackets.

- We played a **joke** _____ him. [about, on]
- Who else has **access** _____ the computer files? [of, to]
- Missing the bus is no **excuse** _____ being late. [for, of]
- I have **confidence** _____ his ability. [for, in]
- The report should shed some **light** _____ the situation. [for, on]

6. She has a **reputation** _____ having the ability to deal with any situation. [for, of]
 7. People often make **fun** _____ what they do not understand. [of, to]
 8. We will take a **survey** _____ the participants. [of, on]

READING

Reading and its Importance

Your physical body requires nutrition, exercise and sleep to stay healthy and function properly. Similarly, to keep your mind healthy and functioning, you need to feed it, exercise it, and give it rest. One activity that does all three is **reading**. In this section, let us look at the benefits and importance of reading.

- Reading **develops your language abilities**, which is essential for communication (which, in turn, is essential for thriving in any kind of social group). One cannot consider oneself fluent in a language unless one is able to read effectively in that language. The best way to learn how to use any language—to understand the grammar of the language and to expand one's vocabulary—is not through textbooks but through extensive reading. Textbooks are limited in scope, but well-written books provide multiple models of how to correctly use words in a variety of contexts. Naturally, it follows from this that reading is a crucial component of learning to *write* well also. Instruction manuals on how to write can help you with your writing up to a point. Only when you read a wide variety of good writing will you truly begin to understand how to write well and how to adapt your writing style to the form you have chosen to write in. Therefore, read plenty of well-written books: it is an enjoyable way to imbibe the principles of good communication, both written and oral.
- Reading is also one of the best ways of learning the things that you want to or need to know. More often than not, sadly, it is not possible to learn from direct experience due to limitations of time or resources. Thankfully, there are books and written resources on nearly every subject imaginable, and these can help you **acquire the knowledge you want or need**. Good reading comprehension means that you will be able to teach yourself the things you need later in life.
- Reading **develops your imagination and inspires creativity**. Creativity and imagination are necessary not just for artists but for everyone, because these are problem-solving tools and are applicable to all areas of life.
- Expanding your language abilities, knowledge and imagination improves your reasoning and analytical abilities. Thus, reading also sharpens **critical thinking**.
- The sustained reading of longer texts (essays, novels, etc.) **helps develop focus and the ability to concentrate**. The ability to focus is a superpower in today's world of distraction and short attention spans, and reading is perhaps the most enjoyable way to build this superpower.
- Reading for pleasure **reduces stress and anxiety** by temporarily shifting your attention from a stress-inducing situation. A stress-free mind is better able to resolve the issue that caused the stress in the first place. Read something that you find entertaining and fun to lift your mood.
- Reading is a skill that is **fundamental to functioning in today's society**. Many workplaces (and certainly most well-paying jobs) require you to understand and respond to written texts of various lengths and complexity (from reports to e-mails and memos). Better reading comprehension will reduce the time it takes to understand what is required of you, and help you to communicate

effectively and work efficiently. Reading is just as important, and in certain cases even more so, outside the workplace. In modern society, reading—not merely simple literacy, but the ability to read critically—is almost a survival skill. As adults, you will have to deal with legal documents, agreements, contracts, forms, applications, billing statements, laws that affect you, news, advertisements, instructions, directions, manuals, fine prints, and much more. Deciphering the wide variety of written material one inevitably encounters in daily life begins with good reading comprehension.

- Finally, reading stimulates the brain and therefore helps fight dementia and neurodegenerative diseases. It also improves memory, which tends to fail as one grows older.

The good news is that no matter what your current reading abilities are, you can always improve them at any point. As with most skills, the more you do it, the better you get at it.

Based on the type of text and the reader's purpose, there can be different modes of reading (such as *intensive reading* and *extensive reading*, which you will learn about in Unit 3), as well as different methods of reading comprehension (such as *skimming* and *scanning*, which you will learn about in Unit 2, and the *SQ3R method*, which you will learn in Unit 4). In the next lesson, we will look at a few practical methods that will immediately improve your reading comprehension.

Strategies for Effective Reading

Most of the time, we read to get something from the material we are reading—to figure out an answer to a question, to learn how something works, to know what is required of us, and so on. When it comes to these kinds of purpose-driven reading, the very first step is to understand what we are reading. Reading comprehension is a key skill because you can make use of written material only when you understand what it says. When reading for a purpose, your mind needs to be active. Here are some strategies to help you activate your mind and get more out of the texts that you read.

- Before you begin, ask yourself *why you are reading the text*. Is it to dig out a specific piece of information? To understand the overall meaning of what is being said? To judge the quality of the text or its argument? The purpose of reading will determine whether you need to scan (look for specific information), skim (read quickly to get the gist), or read closely (to understand the text in detail).
- Other useful questions that you can ask yourself before you begin reading are:
 - What will this text most likely be about?
 - What do I know about this topic?
 - How is this text likely to develop the topic?
- Get an **overview of the structure** of the written matter. This will prime your mind to grasp the material faster.
 - Look at the headings and sub-headings.
 - Skim through the first and last paragraphs.
 - Look at highlighted words or points.
 - Read the captions on images, graphs and tables.
- When reading, pay special attention to how the **central idea or main theme** is developed through the course of the text. How does the author begin? How does the author end the text? Do the parts that come in between connect the two in a natural, logical manner?

- Identify (and mark with a pencil) the **areas that require detailed reading**, or the parts which you didn't understand. You can re-visit these sections of the text later.
- Think about **the author's point of view and bias**. (What is the author's purpose in writing the text?)
- After your initial reading, reflect on whether the content was similar to or different from your (pre-reading) idea of what it was going to be.
- **Re-read** the difficult or important lines and paragraphs.

Make a conscious effort to apply these reading strategies to all the essays that you read in this book, as well as to the texts used in the reading comprehension exercises in later units.

WRITING

Sentence Structures

A sentence is a set of words that expresses a complete thought. Based on the function that they perform, sentences can be classified as assertive, interrogative, imperative or exclamatory.

- **Assertive** (also known as **declarative**) sentences are used to make statements.
 - Assertive sentences that make a positive statement (saying, for example, that something is true) are called **affirmative sentences**. For example: *She gave me the book.*
 - Assertive sentences that make a negative statement (saying, for example, that something is not true) are called **negative sentences**. For example: *She did not give me the book.*
- **Interrogative** sentences are used to ask questions and end with a question mark. For example: *Who gave you the book?*
- **Imperative** sentences are used to give orders or instructions, to make a request, or to give advice. For example: *Give me the book.*
- **Exclamatory** sentences are used to express surprise, pain, joy, sorrow, admiration, pity, or other feelings. They end with an exclamation mark. (Note that exclamatory sentences can begin with *how* or *what* like an interrogative sentence, and have the structure of an assertive sentence.) For example: *What a funny book!*

Sentences in English usually follow certain patterns. Although there are quite a few identifiable **sentence patterns in English**, the most common ones are given below.

Assertive sentences

The basic structure of an assertive sentence is: **subject + predicate**. The subject tells you what the sentence is about, while the predicate tells you something about the subject.

She gave me the book = *She* (subject) + *gave me the book* (predicate)

The predicate consists of a **verb** (in the above example: *gave*) and its **complements**, that is, related elements that complete the meaning of predicate (in the above example: the indirect object *me* + the direct object *the book*).

The most common patterns for structuring assertive sentences are:

subject-verb	I cook.
subject-verb-direct object	I cook food.
subject-verb-adjective/noun/adverb	I am hungry. I am a cook. I cook quickly.
subject-verb-indirect object-direct object	I gave him my food.
subject-verb-direct object-preposition-indirect object	I gave my food to him.
subject-verb-direct object-object complement	The food made him happy.

Interrogative sentences

In interrogative sentences, either the main verb or an auxiliary verb is usually placed before the subject of the sentence.

The most common interrogative sentence structures are:

be verb-subject-noun/adjective	Are you a cook? Are you hungry?
aux verb-subject-main verb	Can you cook? Did you eat? Has he eaten?
aux verb-subject-main verb-direct object-(adverb)	Can you cook lunch (quickly)?
wh-word-be verb-subject-(adjective/noun)	Who are you? Why is he hungry?
wh-word-main verb-direct object	Who wants lunch?
wh-word-aux verb-main verb-(direct object)	Who will cook (lunch)?
wh-word-aux verb-subject-main verb-(direct object)	When can you begin (cooking)?

Imperative sentences

Imperative sentences usually leave out the subject of the sentence because it is obvious from the context (the subject is the person or people being addressed). Words such as *please, do, always, never*, etc. (which serve to add emphasis or make the command/request more polite) are usually placed before the verb, though *please* may also be placed at the end of the entire sentence.

The most common imperative sentence structures are:

verb	Start!
verb-complements [adverb, noun, direct object, etc.]	Start now. Start working immediately.
do-verb-(direct object-complements)	Do start (the work as soon as possible).
adverb-verb-(complements)	Please start. Always start before noon.

Exclamatory sentences

Exclamatory sentences tend to follow the patterns of the assertive sentence. (The difference between the two is that exclamatory sentences serve primarily to express an emotion, rather than convey information.) Typical sentence patterns for exclamatory sentences are as follows:

how-adj/adv-subject-verb-(direct object)	How hungry he felt! How quickly he ate (it)!
what-article-adjective-noun	What a brilliant cook!
what-article-adjective-noun-subject-verb	What a lovely meal that was!
interjection-[assertive sentence pattern]	Oh, that was great!

A sentence can be made **negative** by adding suitable negative words in an appropriate place within its structure.

- I can cook. → I **cannot** cook.
 Why is he hungry? → Why is he **not** hungry?
 Please start cooking. → Please **don't** start cooking.

EXERCISES

A. Say whether the following sentences are assertive, interrogative, imperative, or exclamatory.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Is the towel on the bed? | 4. They don't like travelling. |
| 2. Hand me the purse. | 5. Switch on the light. |
| 3. What a clever strategy! | 6. Oh, that I had wings to fly! |

B. Re-write these jumbled sentences in the correct order.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. He old songs loved. | 6. Seven o'clock the rose at moon. |
| 2. Sitting is the grass on a dog. | 7. Ringing a man the doorbell is. |
| 3. The platform is on the train. | 8. Library is the not first the floor on. |
| 4. Water the cold is how! | 9. They a movie last night watched. |
| 5. Where the capital of the country is located? | 10. To college walk I every day. |

C. In each of the following sentences, identify the subject, the main verb, and the direct object if any.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Imran drives a truck. | 4. Kunal asked me a question. |
| 2. She threw the ball at me. | 5. Are you combing your hair? |
| 3. Vijaya drives well. | 6. Fishing is very relaxing. |

Phrases and Clauses in Sentences

In order to create sentences that are well-structured and correctly punctuated, it is useful to know the difference between phrases and clauses, and how both are used in sentences.

A **phrase** is a group of words which acts as a unit of meaning. E.g.: *the bus to college*

A **clause** is a group of words that contains a subject and verb. E.g.: *I missed the bus to college*

A clause will always contain a verb (indicating an action) connected to a subject (the person or thing performing that action). In the above example, the subject is *I* and the verb is *missed*. A phrase is different from a clause in that it lacks a connected subject-verb combination.

There are two types of clauses. An **independent clause** (also called a **main clause**) expresses a complete thought and can function as a sentence on its own. A **dependent clause** (also called a **subordinate clause**) does not express a complete thought, and needs an independent clause to form a sentence. Look at the following example:

I missed the bus to college because I woke up late.

I missed the bus to college is an **independent clause**. It has a subject (*I*) and a verb (*missed*) and can function as a sentence because it expresses a complete thought. (See the definition of a sentence in the previous lesson of this section.) The second group of words—*because I woke up late*—is also a clause: it has a subject (*I*) and a connected verb (*woke up*). But it does not make complete sense in itself (what happened because I woke up late?); it is just a sentence fragment. It is therefore a **dependent clause** which needs the independent clause *I missed the bus to college* to complete the thought and form a full sentence.

Dependent clauses usually begin with words like *after, although, as, as if, as soon as, because, before, even if, even though, if, in order that, in order to, provided that, rather than, since, so that, once, though, unless, until, whatever, when, whenever, where, whereas, whether, which, while, who, etc.*

Let us look at a few more examples in order to better understand phrases, independent clauses and dependent clauses.

- She finished her chemistry homework in the library as quickly as possible.

Examples of phrases in the above sentences include: *her chemistry homework, in the library, as quickly as possible*. Each of these groups of words form meaningful units, but do not contain a connected subject–verb combination. *She finished her chemistry homework* is an independent clause. It has both a subject and a verb, and forms a complete, meaningful sentence by itself. In fact, even the much shorter group of words *she finished* satisfies all of the criteria for an independent clause. There is no dependent clause in this sentence.

- When I returned, she met me at the station.

When I returned is a dependent clause: it has a subject (*I*) and a verb (*returned*), but does not form a complete sentence by itself. This dependent clause requires the independent clause *she met me at the station* to finish the sentence. The group of words *at the station* is a phrase.

- The story of his life inspired me.

The story of his life is a phrase. This entire phrase forms the subject of the independent clause *the story of his life inspired me* (the verb in this clause is *inspired*). There is no dependent clause here.

- I am from Trivandrum, which is the capital of Kerala.

I am from Trivandrum forms an independent clause. The dependent clause *which is the capital of Kerala* does not stand on its own despite having a subject (the pronoun *which*, a reference to *Trivandrum*) and a verb (*is*). The groups of words *from Trivandrum* and *the capital of Kerala* are phrases, since they lack a connected subject–verb combination within them.

- My sister who lives in Hyderabad is a software engineer.

Examples of phrases in the above sentences include: *my sister, in Hyderabad, a software engineer*. The middle of the sentence contains a dependent clause *who lives in Hyderabad*. The subject of this clause is the pronoun *who* (referring to my sister) and the connected verb is *lives*.

EXERCISES

D. Say whether each underlined group of words in the sentences below is a phrase or a clause. If it is a clause, say whether it is an independent or a dependent clause.

1. The hermit lived in a hut made of wood.
2. He saw Nandini, and she waved to him.
3. The politicians do not know what the people want.
4. That my friends will succeed in their attempt, | I have no doubt.
5. Milk is good for health.
6. Their house is on Convent Road, | where we played cricket as children.
7. The reason why he was dismissed is not known.
8. Walking down the road, | I met Sukhbir.
9. The Indian flag was hoisted on the building.
10. Ms Shah is an English teacher | who also teaches classical dance | in her free time.
11. Birds of a feather | flock together.
12. If he apologises to me, | I shall forgive him.

Punctuation

Punctuation is an essential criterion for good writing. In this section, we will revise the five most important punctuation marks: the full stop, the comma, the colon, the semicolon, and the apostrophe.

The **full stop** or the **period** (.) marks the end of a sentence (which is not an exclamation or a question).

- It announces the end of a logical and complete thought.
I went to college this morning. Kolkata is the capital of West Bengal.
- Its other uses include the indication of abbreviations (such as *a.m.* or *etc.*), ellipses (*I... I'm not sure...*) and decimal points in numbers (7.5%).
- A common error involving the use of full stops is the writing of sentence fragments. A complete sentence contains both a subject (what or whom the sentence is about) and a predicate (which tells us something about the subject or expresses an action).
 - ✗ When Shoaib found the cap. He returned it to Vijaya.
 - ✓ When Shoaib found the cap, he returned it to Vijaya.
- When a single word forms the entire sentence—such as in a greeting (*Hello.*) or a command (*Stop.*)—the full stop may be placed after the word.

The **comma** (,) has many applications in English. If used incorrectly, it may change the meaning of a sentence entirely, and cause much confusion.

- Commas are used after each item in a series of three or more words or phrases.
You may choose either apples, bananas, or pears.
She shouted, waved her arms, jumped, and ran away.
Fundamental rights include right to equality, right to freedom, and right to education.
- A comma is necessary when two independent clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction (e.g., *and*, *or*, *but*, *yet*).
Vijaya left her cap on the field, and now it is missing.
- A comma is necessary when a dependent (subordinate) clause precedes an independent (main) clause.
Upon finding her cap missing, Vijaya returned to the field.
- Commas are used to enclose non-restrictive (i.e., non-defining) clauses or non-essential details in a sentence. The commas are placed on either end of such an insertion or clause.
Vijaya, our team captain, has lost her cap.
- Commas are also used before question tags.
Vijaya lost his cap, didn't she?

The **colon** (:) is used to elaborate on an idea that has been stated.

- One way of doing this is by introducing a list.
Vijaya played several sports: hockey, basketball, kho kho, and volleyball.
- The colon also separates two independent clauses where the second clause demonstrates, illustrates or explains the first.
The election results were in: she had lost.

Note that the clause before the colon is always a complete, independent statement in itself.

The **semicolon** (;) has two uses.

- Firstly, it is used to link two or more independent clauses that are connected to each other.

She refused to give up; she had worked too hard.

Each of these clauses could have been a separate sentence, but the semicolon joins them in order to emphasise the relation of one to the other.

- The semicolon is also used to separate items in a list in which each item itself contains commas.

The players who got injured were Sumi, the Loreto striker; Mallika, one of the midfielders for Miranda House; and Vijaya, the goalkeeper and captain of our team.

The **apostrophe** (') has two (very different) functions in English punctuation.

- Its first function is to indicate possession for nouns.

Vijaya's cap the dog's tail three weeks' leave

Note that the apostrophe is not used to indicate possession for personal pronouns.

✗ This cap is your's, not her's.

✗ The dog wagged it's tail.

✓ This cap is yours, not hers.

✓ The dog wagged its tail.

- The second use of the apostrophe is to indicate omissions in contractions.

it's = it is

didn't = did not

they'd = they would

I'm = I am

we've = we have

you're = you are

- Note that the apostrophe is not used to indicate plurals.

✗ the tail's of the dog's

✗ Mind your comma's and semicolon's.

✓ the tails of the dogs

✓ Mind your commas and semicolons.

The only exception to this rule is the plural form of lowercase letters, which are written with an apostrophe to avoid confusion.

✗ Cross your ts and dot your is.

✓ Cross your t's and dot your i's.

The importance of proper punctuation

- A poorly punctuated passage is difficult to read. Missing or improperly used punctuation can mislead the eye of the reader. Look at the following line:

Just before completing the project was cancelled.

The reader is likely to group the words as follows: Just before completing the project was cancelled. Proper punctuation eliminates this potential misstep by guiding the eye of the reader in such a way so as to make the line easier to read: Just before completing, the project was cancelled.

- Punctuation can change the meaning the writer wishes to convey. Take a look at the following examples:

I met Aisha's parents, Arif and Faiza.

I met Aisha's parents, Arif, and Faiza.

In the first sentence, the writer has met two people: Arif and Faiza, who happen to be Aisha's parents.

The second sentence, with different punctuation, implies that the writer met four people: Aisha's parents (unnamed), as well as two other people (Arif and Faiza).

Here is another example of how punctuation can change the meaning of a sentence:

There is one problem; only Paro knows we have no money.

There is one problem only: Paro knows we have no money.

There is one problem only Paro knows: we have no money.

Note that even though the words in the sentence remain unchanged, the meaning changes based on the position of the colon.

Punctuation provides clarity and organisation to a written text. Proper punctuation can also indicate those words or phrases that a writer wishes to stress. A passage which is correctly punctuated signals the fact that the writer is competent, careful, and aware of the niceties of communication—all of which create a good impression in the reader.

EXERCISES

E. *Punctuate the following sentences correctly. Capitalise words where required.*

1. i speak telugu and hindi better than english what about you
2. i need an assistant who can do the following input data write reports and complete tax forms
3. whos there oh its you
4. the ganges is considered a holy river, by the hindus its source is the gangotri glacier in the himalayayas and it empties into the bay of bengal in eastern india
5. i drove my rusty old green ambassador back home as it chugged slowly down the street its engine grunting and wheezing its wheels wobbling all the way i realised it was time to buy a new car
6. he got what he worked for a promotion
7. its a lovely day today isnt it i want to go to the park but im not sure if its open
8. you may be required to bring many things sleeping bags pans utensils and warm clothing
9. id forgotten that hed mentioned that its there
10. sultan was born at gandhi memorial hospital. in hyderabad hes an investment banker he lives in new york but he visits india often his sisters birthday is in january on new years day

Techniques for Writing Precisely

Apart from organising your writing, you also need to ensure that your writing is precise. This means that your writing should convey exactly what you wish to convey. The information provided to the reader should be correct; the meaning should be clear, not vague or ambiguous; the reader should not feel confused. Precision in writing can be achieved in a number of ways. Some of the more important ones are:

- **Be brief:** No one likes reading long, meandering sentences unless it is a literary work. For all official and scientific writing, keep it short and to the point.
- **Be grammatical:** Keeping your sentences short does not mean resorting to ungrammatical constructions. Make sure you structure your sentences correctly. Good grammar ensures clarity of meaning.
- **Use appropriate diction:** Diction is the manner in which something is expressed—the choice and use of words and phrases. Use language that is appropriate to both the situation as well as your reader's level of comprehension. Unless absolutely necessary, do not use specialised technical terminology, unnecessarily complex words, or abbreviations that your reader might not understand. If you do not know the meaning of a word, look it up in a dictionary; if you still do not understand it, do not use it. It is always better to use correct vocabulary than vocabulary that looks impressive but is actually wrong.

- **Clarify your goal:** Define your purpose or central idea(s) as fully as you can. (What are you going to write about? Why are you writing about this?) This will make your writing easier to follow and understand. It also signals to the reader that you know what you are talking about.
- **Choose the right format and style:** A report on a class excursion would be written in a manner that is different from that of a report on a laboratory experiment, which may be different from a report about a survey conducted in the field. Make sure you choose the correct format for your writing, and then follow the structure, conventions and style appropriate to the chosen format.
- **Describe:** When talking about an object or event, describe it vividly. Use words that convey size, shape, texture, colour, smell, taste, weight, material, use, etc. When writing a descriptive essay or subjective piece, you can even describe the feelings the subject evokes in you, or your own reaction to the object/event being described. This gives your writing more immediacy and greater recall.
- **Provide examples/evidence:** Always present examples, evidence or data to support your claims. Backing up your opinions or ideas with proof will make your writing convincing.
- **Edit:** A very basic principle of good writing is to ensure that your writing is free of errors. This means that you need to be careful about using correct spelling, grammar, sentence structures, and appropriate vocabulary in all your writing. Do not simply submit your first draft—always proof-read or check your writing carefully before submitting it.

The tips and techniques given above will help you write more concisely and correctly. Practicing these principles will help you communicate more effectively.

Paragraph Writing

A paragraph is a small set of sentences related to a topic or theme (or a single aspect of a much larger theme) arranged carefully in order to describe, narrate, discuss or present an argument. Your ability to compose a good paragraph will go a long way in determining your success in written communication.

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF A GOOD PARAGRAPH

Topic sentence

A topic sentence is the most important sentence in a paragraph. This tells the reader what the entire paragraph is about. A topic sentence arouses expectations in the reader about the development of the paragraph. A good paragraph satisfies those expectations with relevant, specific, and convincing information.

The topic sentence can be placed at the beginning, somewhere within, or at the end of the paragraph. The first position is most often preferred. This is because topic sentences near the beginning of the paragraph prepare the reader for what is about to be said, and so the reader is likely to follow the argument of the paragraph more easily. Here is an example of a paragraph in which the topic sentence is at the beginning.

Summer vacations are the most wonderful periods in a school-going child's life. The child is free from the tension of daily homework and frequent tests. She has all the time in a day to play with friends, neighbours and the members of her family. She can visit new places and experience exciting new things. Above all, for the most part, she is free from 'adult control', and hence enjoys more freedom than usual.

A paragraph can also have its topic sentence placed at the end, with the supporting details coming first. Here is a paragraph with the topic sentence at the end.

In addition to making viewers lose touch with society, television has had negative effects on viewers' imagination. Before the days of television, people were entertained by exciting radio shows. The listener was required to pay careful attention to the story if all details were to be comprehended. Better yet, while listening to the stories, listeners would form their own images of the action taking place. When the broadcaster would, for example, give descriptions of Martian spaceships invading Earth, every listener would imagine a different spaceship. In contrast, the television version of *War of the Worlds* will not stir the imagination at all, for everyone can see the action taking place—they see the same spaceship with the same features. Each aspect is clearly defined, and therefore no one will imagine anything different from what is seen. Thus, television cannot be considered an effective tool for stimulating the imagination.

Support

A paragraph must contain specific details, examples and facts to support the topic sentence. Study the two paragraphs given above to see how this is done. In the first example, the topic sentence that begins the passage is followed by lines that explain *why* 'summer vacations are the most wonderful periods in a school-going child's life.' Similarly, in the second example, the writer gives specific details to substantiate and support the argument (topic sentence) of the paragraph.

Coherence

Coherence refers to the quality of being logical and consistent, and forming a unified whole. A coherent paragraph is one in which every sentence is (a) relevant to the theme of the paragraph, (b) arranged in a logical manner, and (c) connected to the others in a way that is easy to understand.

Take a close look at the following paragraph.

One of the most common prejudices in our country is the one against dark skin. Advertisements urge us to use fairness creams so that we can be accepted into society. The desire to be accepted by society is a universal human need. Humans, after all, are social animals: we rely on cooperation to survive.

Although each sentence seems to have some slight connection to the preceding one, the paragraph as a whole is not coherent. It is difficult to say what this paragraph is about, because each sentence jumps from one idea to another (from prejudice about skin colour, to the desire to be accepted by others, to humans as social animals), such that the last sentence has no connection to the first. This paragraph consists of a group of grammatically correct sentences. However, it does not make any sense because it is merely a collection of sentences, barely related to one another in meaning, placed one after the other. There is no unity of theme. Contrast the above paragraph to the one below.

One of the most common prejudices in our country is the one against dark skin. The darker your skin colour, the more discrimination you have to face in your daily life. Both men and women are subject to snide comments and unjust behaviour based on the colour of their skin. All because we have been conditioned into believing that light skin is better than dark—a belief that has nothing to do with reason or reality.

Here, there is a meaningful progression of thought. The point of the paragraph is easy to identify because its sentences are logically connected and they form a unified whole.

How can you create coherence?

- Build your paragraph around a single idea (usually expressed in the topic sentence). The supporting sentences should contribute to this central idea, instead of focusing on new ideas.

- Arrange the sentences of the paragraph in some kind of order. This order may be:
 - **Chronological** (according to time), such as when describing events
 - **Spatial** (according to space), such as when describing places or a scene
 - **Logical** (according to a cause-effect relationship), such as when emphasising the interconnection of ideas, events, etc.
- Link the sentences to each other using cohesive devices. This creates a logical progression of thought, making it easy for the reader to follow the argument. The most common cohesive devices are:
 - **Parallel constructions:** In sentences that express two or more matching ideas or items in a series, make sure that the different elements are grammatically parallel.

X Shoaib likes to play hockey and fixing computers.

✓ Shoaib likes playing hockey and fixing computers.

✓ Shoaib likes to play hockey and to fix computers.

- **Pronouns:** These are used to cut out unnecessary repetition of nouns and unwieldy noun phrases, which makes sentences easier to read.

R.K. Narayan was raised by R.K. Narayan's grandmother. R.K. Narayan's grandmother taught R.K. Narayan classical music. → R.K. Narayan was raised by his grandmother. She taught him classical music.

- **Repetition:** The repetition of key words and phrases helps establish a strong connection between sentences (as in the first example below). Repetition is particularly useful when the referents of pronouns are unclear or confusing (as in the second example below).

There is no shame in failure. Failure is something everyone must face. What is important is how we react to failure.

Gita asked Mala for help, even though she knew she was busy. → Gita asked Mala for help, even though she knew Mala was busy.

- **Connectives:** Connectives (also known as **linkers**, **connectors** or **transitional devices**) link words within a sentence, one sentence to another, one idea to another, or one paragraph to another. These words act as signposts, signalling to the reader where they are at present and where they are headed. Let us look at connectives in a little more detail. Connectives help you to do the following:

➤ **Show a time relationship:**

Set your goals **first**. **After that**, execute them; **and then** review your progress.

A painting exhibition was held earlier this month in the old city, **following which**, a seminar was organised on the artist's role in society.

➤ **Show contrast or differences:**

I am not interested in the party. **Nevertheless**, thanks for reminding me about it.

Adil attends classes regularly, **unlike** his brother who is always irregular.

The idea of taking up this area for research is good. **However**, there are many practical difficulties you may have to overcome.

He prefers to read a book **rather than** watch a film. **Although** I like books, I prefer films.

➤ **Indicate causation:**

Since it is raining today, the match may be cancelled.

I was late to work **because of** heavy traffic.

Did you hear about the coach's death? It was **caused by** a heart attack.

➤ *Add information:*

Green Valley School has a strong academic programme. **Moreover**, it has excellent facilities for extra-curricular activities.
She will lead the basketball team this year. **In addition**, she is on the chess team.

➤ *Show conclusion:*

The debate went on for hours. **Finally**, we were able to arrive at a consensus. Many participants have expressed their concerns about the programme. For example, the teaching materials are not properly designed; teachers are not very motivated; and everyone is frustrated. **To sum up**, radical changes need to be made to arrest the dropout rate.

➤ *Provide clarifications or examples:*

Zoya is very knowledgeable about plants. **For instance**, she can identify rare species and give advice on their growth and care.
I have a few things to take care of, **such as** paying bills, cleaning the house, and going to the post office.

➤ *Show comparison:*

The boys must wear dress shirts, formal shoes and blazers. **Similarly**, the strict dress code requires blazers with formal skirts for the girls.
Like Nusrat, her grandmother too is fond of football matches.

➤ *Show effect or result:*

It is scorching today; **that's why** we are not going out.
It is raining hard today; **as a result**, the match will be cancelled.

➤ *Repeat or rephrase information:*

Migration of educated youth to other countries costs the nation dearly. **In other words**, brain drain is a serious problem.
That ground is very slippery. **To repeat**, I warn you not to play there today.

HOW TO WRITE A PARAGRAPH

If you are unsure about how to begin writing a short piece of text, follow these steps.

- Think about the topic on which you have to compose the paragraph.
- Put down five to ten ideas on the topic that come to your mind.
- Go over the points to check if there are some that are irrelevant to the topic. Drop such points if you find any. All the points should deal with the theme of the paragraph. Do not include more than one theme in your paragraph.
- Arrange the points in sequential order, placing the topic sentence at the beginning or at the end of the paragraph. (These positions suit all kinds of themes, and are hence recommended, especially until you master the skill of composing paragraphs.)
- Expand your points into complete sentences.
- Keeping the audience and the purpose of the paragraph in mind, adjust the style of the sentences to suit the context.
- Use cohesive devices to make your paragraph coherent and easy to understand.

- Do not make your paragraphs too long. It is usually easier for a reader to understand what is said when the information is presented in short coherent bits. Keep your paragraphs long enough to explain your topic sentence, but not so long that the reader loses track of the point of the paragraph.
- Read what you have written, checking carefully for mistakes in spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence construction, and word choice. Revise and make corrections where needed.

Remember that the best paragraphs are written in your own words, chosen carefully to express your observations, feelings and opinions. Paragraphs on personal topics can be based on actual experiences or be purely imaginary, whereas paragraphs on general topics call for an awareness of current affairs and the world we live in. When composing a paragraph on a general topic, it is a good idea to first refer to authoritative and reliable sources of information to collect facts.

EXERCISES

F. *Rearrange each group of jumbled sentences below so as to have well-written paragraphs.*

- It contains, of course, the meanings of words.
 - One of the most important reference books that you must possess is a dictionary.
 - It also gives you the pronunciation of the words.
 - You do possess one, perhaps, but I doubt whether you are aware of the different kinds of information it contains.
 - The dictionary can be referred to for the various grammatical forms of words as well.
 - Every college dictionary should provide at least these four kinds of information about words, namely pronunciation, meaning, grammatical patterns and usage.
 - Finally, a good dictionary contains illustrative sentences or phrases, showing how words are actually used.
- They are chemistry, physics, physiology or medicine, literature and peace.
 - It is awarded from funds bequeathed by Alfred Nobel, a Swedish inventor and philanthropist.
 - In 1968, economics was added to the list.
 - Nobel's will designated five areas for which prizes could be awarded.
 - Prizes in these six areas are presented in December every year, in the presence of the King of Sweden, as a fitting tribute to Alfred Nobel.
 - The Nobel Prize is considered one of the most prestigious awards made to people whose work benefits humanity.
 - The funds are administered by the Nobel Foundation in Stockholm.
- The commercial uses of bamboo are astonishing.
 - India produces over 3 million tonnes of bamboo annually, and nearly half of it is turned into paper.
 - Another important use of bamboo is in housing.
 - Concrete reinforced with bamboo can replace even steel in building, for example, suspension bridges.
 - Scientists at the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, are working on the extraction of diesel fuel from the jointed stem of bamboo.
 - With its network of rhizomes and roots, bamboo also plays an important role in the prevention of soil erosion.

G. *Develop the following hints into paragraphs of your own. Write out the complete paragraphs in your exercise book. Give an appropriate title to each paragraph.*

1. enjoy fiction most—novels and short stories—love romances and thrillers—long hours reading—science fiction not interesting—dull—also enjoy travelogues, biographies, real-life adventures—read newspapers, magazines regularly to keep myself informed— to pass time when no new book
2. Where there's a will there's a way—resolution overcomes obstacles—half the battle— all walks of life—determination surest way to success—difficulties disappear—life of Napoleon—body and mind into goals—Alps stood in way of his armies—‘There shall be no Alps’—road was made—heights previously inaccessible—‘Impossible is a word only to be found in the dictionary of fools’—resolution a condition of success—beware of mistaking undisciplined energy for firmness and self-command
3. Internet—transformed society fundamentally—originally US military communication network—1980s—used by academics, government technologists—now, worldwide network—variety of purposes—communication—information—entertainment—used by everyone—reshaped society—altered lifestyle

H. *Expand any one of the following ideas into a passage of about 150–200 words. Remember to follow the steps suggested in this unit for writing coherent paragraphs.*

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. There's no time like the present. | 4. Practice makes perfect. |
| 2. Fortune favours the bold. | 5. The pen is mightier than the sword. |
| 3. Actions speak louder than words. | 6. Don't judge a book by its cover. |

I. *Six short paragraphs are given below. Study the paragraphs carefully and note how their central themes have been developed meaningfully using supporting details and illustrations.*

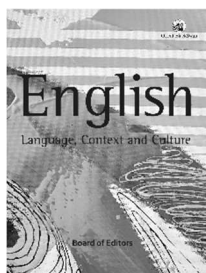
- o *In each paragraph, identify the topic sentence. (These may not necessarily be at the beginning or at the end of the paragraphs.)*
 - o *Use a pencil to underline the cohesive devices that make each paragraph coherent.*
 - o *Provide a suitable title for each passage.*
1. I think that life in college is far more interesting and exciting than it used to be at school. First of all, college students are treated as adults, capable of taking independent decisions about their lives and careers. We are also allowed the freedom to express our personal views on topical issues and on matters that concern us. Another reason why college life is great is that the teachers are more open and accessible, and they interact with the students more freely than our teachers did at school. Further, college students get the opportunity to read widely and to listen to learned academics and well-known personalities from different fields. Additionally, college also offers many extracurricular activities, such as debates and music competitions, for those who would like to participate in them. But above all, college life is fun because it includes picnics and longer trips with classmates and teachers.
 2. All of us are attracted to people who have the qualities we admire. I am especially drawn to persons who are spontaneously warm and concerned about others. It is nice to meet people who are able to respond with affection towards everyone they come in contact with. It is difficult to

feel lonely or depressed when such people are by our side. They can be depended upon in both good and bad times. Such people make wonderful friends indeed.

3. The earth is getting warmer. This is because of the greenhouse effect. The sun's rays penetrate the atmosphere, which absorbs some of its heat and reflects the rest back into space. However, the thick gases produced by human activities trap too much heat and, consequently, the temperature of the earth's atmosphere has been steadily increasing. This increase in temperature will affect all life on the planet. The two main gases responsible for the greenhouse effect are carbon dioxide and methane. Many governments have begun to look at ways of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. Some of the steps taken are large scale planting of trees, taxing industries that produce harmful gases, and promoting alternative sources of energy which will not produce harmful gases.
4. Sports have always had an important place in human society—in prehistoric communities, in ancient civilisations, and in the modern world. It is right that this should be so because sports are a healthy means of fulfilling our inherent desire to compete, to establish new records, and to be recognised. Sports have come to be especially relevant in present times. It is well known that the discipline and physical activity involved keep the people who take up sports strong in mind and body. Our lives today are marked by alarming levels of stress, and participating in and watching sports will help reduce this considerably. Sports also inculcate in people the desirable qualities of team spirit and fair play. Most importantly, sports bring people together. Thus sports form the single, most effective alternative to war by allowing groups of people to compete for supremacy without violence or bloodshed.
5. Superstitions are blind beliefs that are not based on reason or on the laws of science. They are found in different parts of the world and are handed down from one generation to the next. For example, it is believed that the breaking of a mirror or a cat crossing one's path brings bad luck. Similarly, finding a horseshoe is supposed to be a sign of good fortune. Superstitions cannot be proved and we can never be sure if there is any truth in them. However, it is certain that believing fully in them would burden our minds and fill us with either irrational fear or impossible hopes. Both have a disturbing effect and take away our peace of mind. It is best to treat superstitions simply as interesting beliefs, and carry on with faith in oneself and in life.
6. Euthanasia is the act of helping a person who is terminally ill to die painlessly. It is considered as an option only when the patient is either in terrible agony and longs for death, or is in a prolonged comatose state. Euthanasia may be carried out by administering drugs that would lead to a painless death. It could, on the other hand, simply be the result of taking the patient off all life support systems, which some doctors may do more readily than killing the patient with the help of a lethal drug. The act is an offence in most countries and has been made legal only in places like Holland and Belgium. The two sides of the controversy regarding euthanasia involve the conflicting aspects of the right of an individual to die with dignity under a very specific set of circumstances and that of the essential sacredness of life.

English: Language, Context and Culture

ANSWER KEY TO OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS



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Unit 1 Humour

VOCABULARY

Word Formation

- A. Examples of words (from Narayan's essay) created through derivation: continuation, mongrelisation, consultation, enlarge, dusty, American, national, incidental, conceivable, unthinkable, aside, seriously, comparatively, chiefly, unmistakably
- C. 1. clipping
2. back-formation
3. blending
4. compounding
5. derivation (affixation)
6. conversion
- D. 1. biography + picture
2. emotion + icon
3. malicious + software
4. romantic + comedy
5. hungry + angry
6. friend + enemy
7. information + commercial
8. guess + estimate
9. education + entertainment

Prefixes and Suffixes

- E. 1. befriend
2. underestimates
3. championship
4. illegal
5. handful
6. combination
7. childish
- H. 1. receptionist = reception + -ist
2. usage = use + -age
3. possession = possess + -ion
- I. 1. multi-purpose = multi- + purpose
2. enlarge = en- + large
3. television = tele- + vision
- J. 1. interruption = inter- + rupt + -ion [root *rupt* means 'to break']
2. subsection = sub- + sect + -ion [root *sect* means 'to cut']
3. unthinkable = un- + think + -able

English: Language, Context and Culture

ANSWER KEY TO OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS

- K. 1. dis- + appear
2. correct + -ion
3. method + -ical
4. happy + -ness
5. content + -ment
6. visible + -ity
7. un- + believe + -able
8. in- + formal + -ly
9. in- + exhaust + -ible

Synonyms

- L. 1 *f* abate – lessen
2 *j* yearly – annually
3 *l* meticulous – careful
4 *g* appear – seem
5 *h* broad – wide
6 *a* futile – useless
7 *e* lucid – clear
8 *d* elementary – basic
9 *i* wreck – destroy
10 *c* mandatory – compulsory

M. *Note:* For each sentence, there can be more than one correct answer. The words below are merely suitable suggestions.

1. seldom
2. dangerous / perilous
3. urgent
4. crossing / crossroad / intersection
5. longed / wished / thirsted
6. cruel / heartless / merciless / hard-hearted

Antonyms

- N. 1. confident
2. well-prepared
3. forbid
4. unfriendly
5. clarity
6. increase
- O. 1. inaccurate
2. careful
3. improper
4. exterior
5. justice
6. misunderstand
- P. 1. particular / individual / unique
2. boring / dull / tedious / uninteresting
3. narrow / limited
4. typical / average / ordinary / conventional
5. follow / observe / comply with / uphold
6. important / consequential / significant / serious
- Q. 1. compassionate, kind, humane, merciful, caring, sympathetic, gentle, etc.
2. open, public, ethical, fair, aboveboard, honest, moral, trustworthy, etc.
3. proud, arrogant, pompous, vain, egotistic, egoistic, haughty, etc.
4. fireproof, incombustible, nonflammable, fire-resistant, non-ignitable, etc.
5. cautious, careful, prudent, responsible, alert, thoughtful, wary, mindful, etc.
6. *verb:* attract, appeal, please, desire, impress, delight, approve, etc.
noun: liking, admiration, approval, satisfaction, fondness, etc.

GRAMMAR

Common Errors in the Use of Articles

- A. 1. the
2. a, an
3. the
4. a, the
5. X, the
6. X
7. X, the, a
8. the, X
9. X
10. the
- B. 1. There is a book in my backpack. The book is very heavy.
2. Do you know where I left the car keys?
3. I enjoy reading detective novels, especially the ones by the famous author Arthur Conan Doyle.
4. The French drink wine, while Americans drink beer.
5. A group of MBA students from the University of Mumbai visited Harvard University in the United States.
6. The Bible was the first book to be printed by Gutenberg in the fifteenth century.
7. I am fond of the music of Mozart. My grandfather owns an antique piano.
8. Cloth is sold by the metre. A metre of this fabric cost me the moon.
9. The sun is at the highest point in the sky at noon.
10. After humans, the chimpanzee is the most intelligent among animals.
- C. 1. I am studying for an MA in history.
2. He had spelt the word with an 's' instead of a 'c'.
3. I always use an HB pencil.
4. In ~~the~~ class, the children were having an arithmetic lesson.
5. My brother is an electrical engineer.
6. The war lasted almost a hundred years.
7. I always get a headache if I don't wear my glasses.
8. The Swiss are very fussy about hygiene.
9. His lawyer produced ~~an~~ important new evidence.
10. We must try harder to stop these people from destroying ~~the~~ nature.
- D. 1. Oranges and lemons are citrus fruits.
2. Asif is going to visit Oxford University.
3. The government needs to enforce pollution laws. Governments around the world need to cooperate in the fight against pollution.
4. Have you been to the Nilgiri hills?
5. History is not really Faiza's favourite subject, but she finds the history of the Greeks fascinating.
6. You can take the Visaka Express to Mumbai.
7. The children have been sent to bed.
8. The English language is full of confusing rules. English also has many strange idioms.
9. The gold you buy here is of excellent quality.
10. UK laws don't apply to the UAE except at the UK embassy.

Common Errors in the Use of Prepositions

- E. 1. at, in, on
2. by
3. with, in, for
4. on, till
5. in, on
6. beside / behind / near, to, of
7. to, by
8. to, from
9. to, about
10. off, to
- F. 1. Annie went into the bedroom to get her shawl.
2. He goes to the university on foot.
3. The doctor has been practising here for many years.
4. They were shocked at the sight of the destruction.
5. Are you going to the party?
6. Please put the books back on the table.
7. He climbed up the wall and ran to the main road.
8. The burglar got in by the window beside the door.
9. The purse is under the pillow.
10. Don't be afraid. You're among friends here.
- G. 1. at
2. for
3. between
4. besides
5. at
6. since
- H. 1. on
2. to
3. for
4. in
5. on
6. for
7. of
8. of

WRITING

Sentence Structures

- A. 1. interrogative
2. imperative
3. exclamatory
4. assertive
5. imperative
6. exclamatory
- B. 1. He loved old songs.
2. A dog is sitting on the grass.
3. The train is on the platform.
4. How cold the water is!
5. Where is the capital of the country located?
6. The moon rose at seven o'clock.
7. A man is ringing the doorbell.
8. The library is not on the first floor.
9. They watched a movie last night.
10. I walk to college every day.
- C. 1. *subject* = Imran *main verb* = drives *direct object* = a truck
2. *subject* = she *main verb* = threw *direct object* = the ball
3. *subject* = Vijaya *main verb* = drives
4. *subject* = Kunal *main verb* = asked *direct object* = a question
5. *subject* = you *main verb* = (are) combing *direct object* = your hair
6. *subject* = fishing *main verb* = is

Phrases and Clauses in Sentences

- D.
1. made of wood: *phrase*
 2. he saw Nandini: *independent clause*
she waved to him: *independent clause*
 3. what the people want: *dependent clause*
 4. that my friends will succeed in their attempt: *dependent clause*
I have no doubt: *independent clause*
 5. good for health: *phrase*
 6. their house is on Convent Road: *independent clause*
where we played cricket as children: *dependent clause*
 7. why he was dismissed: *dependent clause*
 8. walking down the road: *phrase*
I met Sukhbir: *independent clause*
 9. the Indian flag: *phrase*
on the building: *phrase*
 10. Ms Shah is an English teacher: *independent clause*
who also teaches classical dance: *dependent clause*
in her free time: *phrase*
 11. birds of a feather: *phrase*
 12. if he apologises to me: *dependent clause*
I shall forgive him: *independent clause*

Punctuation

- E.
1. I speak Telugu and Hindi better than English. What about you?
 2. I need an assistant who can do the following: input data, write reports, and complete tax forms.
 3. Who's there? Oh, it's you. [The second sentence may end with an exclamation mark.]
 4. The Ganges is considered a holy river by the Hindus. Its source is the Gangotri Glacier in the Himalayas, and it empties into the Bay of Bengal in eastern India.
 5. I drove my rusty, old, green Ambassador back home. As it chugged slowly down the street, its engine grunting and wheezing, its wheels wobbling all the way, I realised it was time to buy a new car.
 6. He got what he worked for—a promotion. [A colon may be used instead of the dash.]
 7. It's a lovely day today, isn't it? I want to go to the park, but I'm not sure if it's open.
 8. You may be required to bring many things: sleeping bags, pans, utensils, and warm clothing. [The final comma is optional.]
 9. I'd forgotten that he'd mentioned that it's there.
 10. Sultan was born at Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Hyderabad. He's an investment banker. He lives in New York, but he visits India often. His sister's birthday is in January, on New Year's Day.

Paragraph Writing

- F.
1. b, d, a, c, e, g, f
 2. f, b, g, d, a, c, e
 3. a, b, e, f, c, d