

NDANA

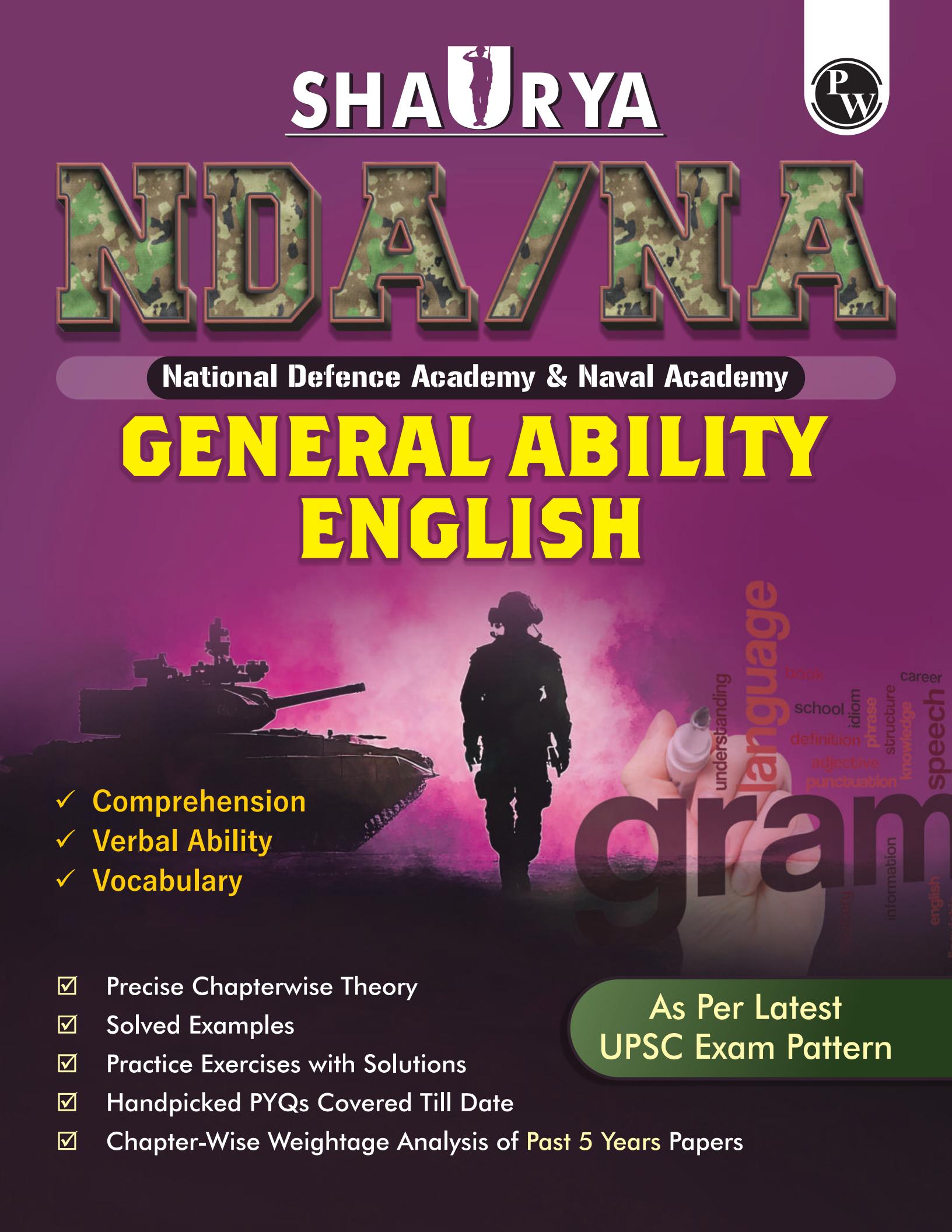
National Defence Academy & Naval Academy

GENERAL ABILITY ENGLISH

- ✓ Comprehension
- ✓ Verbal Ability
- ✓ Vocabulary

- Precise Chapterwise Theory
- Solved Examples
- Practice Exercises with Solutions
- Handpicked PYQs Covered Till Date
- Chapter-Wise Weightage Analysis of Past 5 Years Papers

As Per Latest
UPSC Exam Pattern



language

understanding
book
school
definition
idiom
phrase
structure
adjective
punctuation
knowledge
information
speech
grammar
writing
english

SYLLABUS

The question paper in English will be designed to test the candidate's understanding of English and workman like use of words. The syllabus covers various aspects like : Grammar and usage, vocabulary, comprehension and cohesion in extended text to test the candidate's proficiency in English.

English topics that are asked frequently in the NDA/NA examination:

Grammar

- Word Class
- Tenses
- Narration
- Voice
- Subject-Verb Agreement
- Articles & Determiners

Comprehension

Unseen Passage Cloze Test

Vocabulary

- Synonyms
- Antonyms
- One word substitutions
- Usage of Paired Words

Verbal Ability

- Spotting Errors
- Sentence Completion
- Rearrangement (Ordering of Words/Sentences)
- Selecting Words/Phrases

NDA Past 5 Year Paper Analysis

PART-A: ENGLISH

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CHAPTER

1

Basics of Grammar and Vocabulary

BASICS OF GRAMMAR AND VOCABULARY

Grammar is the set of rules that are to be followed while speaking or writing in a language. Vocabulary means all the words known and used by a person in a particular language.

EIGHT PRINCIPAL PARTS OF SPEECH

1. **NOUN:** It is the name of a person, place, animal or thing (thing includes feeling, emotions or idea).

e.g., The **cat** has sharp **claws**.

The **baby** has small **fingers**.

2. **PRONOUN:** It is a word used to refer to a noun, usually used to avoid repetition.

e.g., When my dog was hungry, **it** barked.

My roommate knew **he/she** forgot **his/her** keys.

3. **VERB:** It is a word that expresses action (play, eat, study, etc.) or state of being (live, die, is, am etc.).

4. **ADJECTIVE:** It is a word used to modify (describe) a noun or pronoun. Adjectives usually answer one of these questions: Which one? What kind of? How many or how much? (e.g., pretty, smart etc.)

5. **ADVERB:** It is a word used to modify a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Adverbs usually answer the questions: When? Where? How? Why? Under what conditions? To what degree? (e.g., slowly, loudly, etc.)

6. **PREPOSITION:** It is a word placed before a noun to form a phrase modifying (describing) another word in the sentence. The preposition indicates the relationship between the noun and the word the phrase modifies. e.g., on, in after, before etc.

7. **CONJUNCTION:** It is a joining word. It may join two or more words, phrases or clauses.

e.g., Raj came from the school **and** slept.

Either pay me **or** leave.

8. **INTERJECTIONS:** A word expressing surprise or emotion.

Oh! Hey! Wow!

e.g., Hooray! we won!

Oh no! He lost!

IMPORTANT TERMS FOR ANALYZING GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX

Syntax in English is the arrangement of words and phrases in a specific order.

1. **HELPING VERBS:** (sometimes called “auxiliaries”) Helping verbs always precede main verbs.

The following words are helping verbs when used with a main verb. Be, Am, Is, Are, Was, Were, Being, Been, Has, Have, Had, Do, Does, Did, Can, Will, Shall, Should, Could, Would, May, Might, Must. e.g., I **am** singing.

The driver **had** fallen asleep.

2. **DIRECT OBJECT:** A word or word group that receives the action of the verb.

e.g., Rohan made pasta.

She threw the ball.

3. **INDIRECT OBJECT:** A noun or pronoun that names to whom or for whom the action is done.

e.g., Fate gives us looks.

He gave her the book = He gave the book (to) her.

4. **MODIFIER:** It is a word, phrase, or clause that describes or qualifies the meaning of a word. Modifiers include adjectives, adverbs, prepositional phrases, participial phrases, some infinitive phrases, and adjective and adverb clauses. Problems arise with dangling modifiers where the agent of the action is not clear.

Error: Opening the window to let out a fly, the car swerved into an oncoming car.

5. **ACTIVE and PASSIVE VOICE:** When a verb is in the active voice, the subject of the sentence performs the action. “The student attended the class.” In the passive voice, the subject receives the action. “The class was attended by the student.”

6. **GERUND:** A verb form ending in -ing and used as a noun, often expresses an activity.

e.g., All that **laughing** made me cry.

Running can be good for you.

7. **PARTICIPLE:** It is a word derived from a verb used as either an adjective or a part of certain tenses. Present Participles end in -ing, Past Participles in -ed.

e.g., **Seeing** the police, the thief ran away (Present Participle).

Dissatisfied with the answer, the student left the class (Past Participle).

8. **SPLIT INFINITIVES:** When a modifier appears between its two parts (to/think) “to carefully think,” an infinitive is said to be split. If the split infinitive is awkward, move the modifier to another position in the sentence.

Error: The jury was instructed to very carefully review the evidence.

9. POSITIVE/COMPARATIVE/SUPERLATIVE: Most adjectives and adverbs have three forms: the positive, the comparative, and the superlative. (Good/better/best; careful/more careful/most careful)

10. CONJUGATION: SUBJECTS JOINED BY AND: Compound subjects joined by "and" are mostly always plural.

e.g., Maria's natural ability and her love for music have led her to a singing career.

11. SUBJECTS JOINED BY OR-NOR: With "or" or "nor," make the verb agree with the part of the subject near the verb.

e.g., If a relative **or** neighbour is abusing a child, call the police.

MORE ON VERBS

There are three moods in English

1. The indicative is used for facts, opinions and questions. (Chicago is in Illinois.)

2. The imperative is used for orders or advice. (Stop talking. Go to class.)

3. The subjunctive is used for wishes, conditions contrary to fact, requests or recommendations. Use the subjunctive mood for wishes and *if clauses* expressing conditions contrary to fact. The subjunctive in such cases is the past form of the verb; in the case of *be*, it is always *were* (not *was*), even if the subject is singular. (If I were in the program, I would sing the song.)

Verb tenses in English and other languages are complex. Tenses to identify:

1. Present Tense:

- Simple Present (Ice melts quickly in summer.)
- Present Progressive (I am studying English from PW books.)
- Present Perfect (She has been a good teacher.)
- Present Perfect Progressive (They have been studying hard.)

2. Present Past:

- Simple Past (He drank coffee.)
- Past Progressive (I was studying Maths yesterday.)
- Past Perfect (She had already left the class.)
- Past Perfect Progressive (They had been eating junk since last year.)

3. Future Tense:

- Simple Future (I will go to Delhi tomorrow.)
- Future Progressive (She will be coming home soon.)
- Future Perfect (He will have eaten pizza.)
- Future Perfect Progressive (She will have been doing her work by 5:00 pm.)

SOLVED EXAMPLES

Direction: Choose the appropriate noun.

1. We use a _____ to boil water over the stove, not a jug.
(a) Tube (b) Kettle
(c) Flask (d) Bottle

Ans. (b) A kettle is a container usually used to boil water.

Direction: Choose the appropriate pronoun.

2. My brother and _____ went to the park.
(a) I (b) Us (c) Me (d) Mine

Ans. (a) The correct personal pronoun is 'I' here.

Direction: Choose the appropriate form of verb.

3. The ship _____ (sink) to the bottom of the sea.
(a) Sank (b) Sink
(c) Sinking (d) Sunken

Ans. (a) The sentence is in Simple Past Tense, so 'sank' is the correct option.

Direction: Choose the appropriate adverb.

4. Kajal is _____ smart.
(a) Extremely (b) Extreme
(c) Extremer (d) More extreme

Ans. (a) The word 'Extremely' is being used as an adverb as it is modifying the action.

Direction: Choose the appropriate adjective.

5. Nokia is a _____ company.
(a) Good (b) Best (c) Better (d) Right

Ans. (a) The correct form of the adjective is 'good' for this sentence.

Direction: Choose the appropriate preposition.

6. He confided _____ me.
(a) About (b) In (c) On (d) Of

Ans. (b) The correct preposition in this sentence is 'in' because with *confide* we use *in*.

Direction: Choose the appropriate conjunction.

7. I like Carolina _____ she is very friendly.
(a) But (b) So (c) Because (d) Or

Ans. (c) The correct conjunction here is *because*, as the second part of the sentence is a reason for the first statement.

Direction: Select the option which best expresses the same sentence in passive/active voice.

8. One should not give unsolicited advice
(a) Unsolicited advice is not to be given.
(b) Unsolicited advice can't be given.
(c) Unsolicited advice may not be given.
(d) Unsolicited advice should not be given.

Ans. (d) Option (d) is the correct passive form of the sentence.

Direction: Choose the appropriate degree of comparision.

9. They say that it's _____ storm in ten years.
(a) By far worse (b) Most worst
(c) The worse (d) The worst

Ans. (d) We need to use superlative degree in this sentence.

Direction: Choose the appropriate form of verb.

10. They _____ to Shimla.
(a) Will go (b) Have gone
(c) Will have gone (d) None of these

Ans. (c) The sentence is in Future Perfect tense.

EXERCISE

Direction: Choose the appropriate option:

1. Look at the exquisite _____ of pearls she is wearing around her neck.
(a) Set (b) Ring (c) Chain (d) String
2. All the kitchen _____ are in that cupboard.
(a) Tools (b) Devices
(c) Utensils (d) Equipment
3. The best way to learn what a book is about is to read the _____ at the back.
(a) Blurb (b) Spine
(c) Preface (d) Foreword
4. Neither Mary nor _____ knew why the store was closed.
(a) I (b) Me (c) Mine (d) My
5. After school, you and _____ must discuss a few things.
(a) I (b) Me (c) Mine (d) My
6. My niece was crying and needed _____ diaper changed.
(a) Their (b) His (c) Her (d) Them
7. She will _____ (get) you a new pair of jeans on your birthday.
(a) Got (b) Gotten (c) Get (d) Getting
8. I have been _____ (try) to bake a perfect cake since morning.
(a) Tries (b) Try (c) Trying (d) Tried
9. Yash _____ (throw) the ball very far and the ball went across the road.
(a) Throw (b) Thrown (c) Throws (d) Threw
10. Do you _____ go to sleep early? Is it insomnia?
(a) Ever (b) Sometime (c) Never (d) Every time
11. I _____ sleep for 12 hours in the weekends, if I have no errand to run.
(a) Never (b) Regularly (c) Sometimes (d) Always
12. It's raining _____ today.
(a) Terribly (b) Terrible
(c) More terrible (d) Most terrible
13. Rajesh is feeling very _____.
(a) Angrier (b) Angry
(c) Angriest (d) None of these
14. The test was _____ than I thought it would be.
(a) Difficult (b) More difficult
(c) Most difficult (d) Difficulties
15. I don't have _____ friends.
(a) Much (b) Many (c) More (d) None of these
16. I am worried _____ the exam.
(a) In (b) About (c) On (d) Of
17. He looks upset, I think he took the criticism _____ heart.
(a) To (b) About (c) In (d) Of
18. I am envious _____ them.
(a) Of (b) About (c) In (d) On

19. He wanted to improve his piano playing _____ he wanted to win the competition.
(a) So (b) But
(c) Because (d) Therefore

20. Tom got good marks _____ he studied hard.
(a) Because (b) But (c) So (d) Then

Direction: A sentence has been given in active/passive voice. Select the one which best expresses the same sentence in passive/active voice.

21. We waste much time on trifles.
(a) Much time was wasted on trifles.
(b) Much time will be wasted on trifles.
(c) Much time is wasted by us on trifles.
(d) Much time is wasted on trifles.
22. You don't need to wind this watch.
(a) This watch need not be wound.
(b) This watch does not wind.
(c) This watch need not be wounded.
(d) This watch need not be winded up.
23. The task would have been completed by that time tomorrow. Someone/Some people.
(a) Will complete the task by that time tomorrow.
(b) Will be completing the task by that time tomorrow.
(c) Would have completed the task by that time tomorrow.
(d) Will have completed the task by that time tomorrow.
24. We have already done the exercise.
(a) Already the exercise has been done by us.
(b) The exercise has already been done by us.
(c) The exercise had been already done by us.
(d) The exercise is already done by us.

Direction: Choose the appropriate degree of comparison:

25. Red apples are usually _____ than green apples.
(a) More sweeter (b) Most sweet
(c) Sweeter (d) Sweetest
26. They have three sons and two daughters. Betty is _____ of their children.
(a) Most young (b) The younger
(c) The youngest (d) Younger
27. I can't hear you. Please speak _____.
(a) louder (b) loudest
(c) more loud (d) the most loud
28. As we didn't have much money, we stayed at _____ hotel that we could find.
(a) A less expensive (b) A more expensive
(c) The least expensive (d) The most expensive

Direction: Choose the appropriate form of verb:

29. The fire _____ the huts before the fire brigade came.
(a) Had burnt (b) Will burn (c) Has burnt (d) Burns

30. I have _____ my work.
 (a) Do (b) Does (c) Will do (d) Done

31. Don't make noise, she _____.
 (a) Sleep (b) Will sleep (c) Is sleeping (d) None

32. Will you go _____ a movie?
 (a) To watch (b) Watched
 (c) To watching (d) None

Direction: Spot the Error

33. (a) The company is not doing well
 (b) Isn't it time
 (c) You sell off your shares in it?
 (d) No error.

34. (a) Having been finished
 (b) his homework, Sonu went
 (c) to play with his friends
 (d) No error

35. (a) Been it a rainy day (b) they had to cancel the plan
 (c) of going to picnic (d) No error

36. (a) If I were the President (b) I would award
 (c) you a title (d) No error

37. (a) It is high time (b) we renovate
 (c) our old house (d) No error

PAST YEAR QUESTIONS

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 1-10): Each of the following sentences in this section has a blank space and four words or group of words given after the sentence. Select the word or group of words you consider most appropriate for the blank space and mark your answer. [2021-I]

1. There was a time when West Germany was a distinct _____.
 (a) policy (b) polity (c) abstract (d) hierarchy
2. I was _____ with the film, I had expected it to be better.
 (a) disappointed (b) disappointing
 (c) annoying (d) prejudiced
3. It was a _____ experience. Everybody was shocked.
 (a) terrified (b) horrified (c) terrifying (d) denouncing
4. Elephants _____ when they perceive danger.
 (a) trumpet (b) frolic (c) whine (d) sing
5. The first film on Tagore was such a success that now they are going to make a _____.
 (a) serial (b) sequence (c) sequel (d) sequential
6. The United Nations had _____ 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health.
 (a) ruled (b) ordered (c) foretold (d) declared
7. My brother is _____ punctual, but he is late today.
 (a) normatively (b) primarily
 (c) normally (d) basically
8. My son is very _____; he trusts everyone.
 (a) fallible (b) gullible (c) sensible (d) credible
9. Mahatma Gandhi was a lover of humanity and a _____ believer in the goodness of human nature.
 (a) staunch (b) powerful (c) cheerful (d) hopeful
10. I wish I _____ her before we met.
 (a) know (b) have known
 (c) knew (d) known

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 11-20): In this section, each of the following sentences has a blank space and is followed by four words. Select the word you consider most appropriate to fill in the blank space and indicate your response on the Answer Sheet accordingly. [2023-II]

11. As the Southwest monsoon _____ through most of July, flash floods caused by the waters of the Narmada hit Jabalpur town.
 (a) lashed (b) flourished (c) occupied (d) dried
12. Given the scale of the challenges that _____ us today, our company proposes more viable plans for sustainability.
 (a) supports (b) conflict (c) confronts (d) convince
13. It is a really tough course, I am just worried that I won't be able to go the _____.
 (a) way (b) distance (c) far (d) route
14. The _____ of the advancement made in agricultural productivity in India has been remarkable.
 (a) extent (b) context (c) distance (d) syntax
15. This essay _____ and examines various systems for water appropriation and agricultural practices adapted by society in the arid conditions of Rajasthan.
 (a) confuses (b) enhances (c) controls (d) explores
16. India has been able to successfully _____ its population through family planning programmes.
 (a) sterilise (b) stabilise (c) stratify (d) establish
17. Adolescence is the _____ wherein a child enters adulthood.
 (a) threshold (b) position (c) condition (d) period
18. The British who ruled India for 200 years were here to _____ India's natural resources.
 (a) spoil (b) implore (c) exploit (d) drill
19. Endangered species have a fifty per cent or greater probability of _____ within five years or two generations whichever is longer.
 (a) distinction (b) extinction
 (c) complication (d) completion
20. The first law of thermodynamics states that whereas energy can be _____ from one form into another, it cannot be created or destroyed.
 (a) reduced (b) induced
 (c) performed (d) transformed

50. Quandary:

- (a) Situation in which you are confused about what to do
- (b) Situation in which two people or group argue
- (c) Situation in which no progress can be made
- (d) Situation in which a relationship becomes friendlier

51. Presumption:

- (a) Prediction based on past experiences
- (b) Judgement made with certainty
- (c) Decision based on facts
- (d) Opinion formed before having all the facts

52. Smug:

- (a) Too confident about one's own achievements
- (b) Too eager to help or obey someone important
- (c) Too emotional or dramatic
- (d) Too eager to bottle up conflicts

DIRECTIONS (Qs. 53-57): In the following items, a pair of words is provided. You are required to select the option that most appropriately describes the meaning of both the words and mark your response on the Answer Sheet accordingly. **[2025-II]**

53. Seldom and Often

- (a) Seldom means hardly ever and often means time and again
- (b) Seldom means time and again and often means hardly ever
- (c) Seldom means never and often means not at all
- (d) Seldom means frequently and often means time and again

54. Overview and Review

- (a) Overview means assessment and review means general idea
- (b) Overview means general idea and review means assessment
- (c) Overview means general analysis and review means go through
- (d) Overview means summary and review means evaluation

55. Overcome and Succeed

- (a) Overcome means triumph over and succeed means to achieve something
- (b) Overcome means achieve some-thing and succeed means to triumph over
- (c) Overcome means to be successful and succeed means to achieve something
- (d) Overcome means winning and succeed means to rise above

56. Embed and Imbue

- (a) Embed means instil and imbue means implant
- (b) Embed means implant and imbue means instil
- (c) Embed means accept and imbue means detest
- (d) Embed means include and imbue means accept

57. Emancipate and Empower

- (a) Emancipate means authorize and empower means liberate
- (b) Emancipate means liberate and empower means authorise
- (c) Emancipate means liberal and empower means authorisation
- (d) Emancipate means freedom and empower means encounter

ANSWER KEY

Exercise

1. (d)	2. (c)	3. (a)	4. (a)	5. (a)	6. (c)	7. (c)	8. (c)	9. (d)	10. (c)
11. (c)	12. (a)	13. (b)	14. (b)	15. (b)	16. (b)	17. (a)	18. (a)	19. (c)	20. (a)
21. (d)	22. (a)	23. (c)	24. (b)	25. (c)	26. (c)	27. (a)	28. (c)	29. (a)	30. (d)
31. (c)	32. (a)	33. (c)	34. (a)	35. (a)	36. (d)	37. (b)			

Past Year Questions

1. (b)	2. (a)	3. (c)	4. (a)	5. (c)	6. (d)	7. (c)	8. (b)	9. (a)	10. (c)
11. (a)	12. (c)	13. (b)	14. (a)	15. (d)	16. (b)	17. (a)	18. (c)	19. (b)	20. (d)
21. (c)	22. (b)	23. (c)	24. (d)	25. (b)	26. (d)	27. (a)	28. (c)	29. (b)	30. (a)
31. (a)	32. (c)	33. (a)	34. (b)	35. (c)	36. (d)	37. (c)	38. (b)	39. (a)	40. (c)
41. (b)	42. (c)	43. (c)	44. (c)	45. (c)	46. (d)	47. (c)	48. (b)	49. (c)	50. (a)
51. (a)	52. (a)	53. (b)	54. (c)	55. (a)	56. (a)	57. (c)			

EXPLANATION



Exercise

1. (d) A pearl necklace is made with string to wear around the neck.
2. (c) Utensils are a part of the kitchen.
3. (a) Blurb means a short summary that is usually preset on the back cover of a book.
4. (a) The correct personal pronoun is 'I'.
5. (a) The correct personal pronoun is 'I'.
6. (c) Niece is female, the possessive adjective 'her' is correct.
7. (c) The correct form of verb in this sentence will be in present tense, 'get'.
8. (c) The sentence is in present perfect continuous tense, so 'trying' is the correct option.
9. (d) The sentence is in simple past tense, so 'threw' is the correct option.
10. (c) 'Never' is an adverb used to deny the occurrence of an action.
11. (c) 'Sometimes' is an adverb used to mention an action happening in a few occurrences.
12. (a) The word here is being used as an adverb as it is modifying the action.
13. (b) The simple form of the adjective should be used.
14. (b) The comparative form of the adjective should be used.
15. (b) The correct form of the adjective is 'many'.
16. (b) With *worried* we use *about*.
17. (a) With *heart* we use *to*.
18. (a) With *envious* we use *of*.
19. (c) The second part of the sentence is a reason for the first statement, we use *because*.
20. (a) The second part of the sentence is a reason for the first statement, we use 'because'.
25. (c) We need to use comparative degree in this sentence.
26. (c) We need to use superlative degree in this sentence.
27. (a) We need to use comparative degree in this sentence.
28. (c) We need to use superlative degree in this sentence.
29. (a) The sentence is in past perfect tense.
30. (d) The sentence is in present perfect tense.
31. (c) The sentence is in past continuous tense.
32. (a) The sentence is in simple future tense.
33. (c) Change sell off to 'Sold'
34. (a) Remove 'been'
35. (a) Replace 'been' with 'being'
36. (d) No error
37. (b) Replace 'renovate' with 'renovated'

Past Year Questions

1. (b) 'Polity' means an organised society; a state as a political entity.
2. (a) 'Disappointed' means failed to fulfill the hopes or expectations of.
3. (c) 'Terrifying' means causing extreme fear and it is the most appropriate word.
4. (a) The loud scream or call that elephants make is called 'trumpet'.
5. (c) 'Sequel' means a published, broadcast or recorded work that continues the story or develops the theme of an earlier one.
6. (d) 'Declared' means formally asserted or announced.
7. (c) 'Normally' means under normal or usual conditions.
8. (b) 'Gullible' means easily persuaded to believe something or easily tricked.
9. (a) 'Staunch' means very loyal, devoted and committed in attitude.
10. (c) 'Knew' is the appropriate word.
11. (a) 'Lashed' means (especially of wind or water) beat forcefully against something.
12. (c) 'Confronts' means (of a problem or difficulty) present itself to someone so that action must be taken.
13. (b) The word 'distance' will fit the blank perfectly which means the length of the space between two points.
14. (a) The sentence is saying that the degree of the advancement made in agricultural productivity in India has been remarkable.
Extent will fit the blank perfectly.
15. (d) The sentence is saying that this essay explores and examines various systems for water appropriation and agricultural practices adapted by society in the arid conditions of Rajasthan.
Explores will fit the blank perfectly.
16. (b) 'Stabilise' is to control or become un-likely to change.
17. (a) The sentence is saying that adolescence is the starting point wherein a child enters adulthood.
Threshold will fit the blank perfectly.
18. (c) The word 'exploit' fits the blank.
19. (b) 'Extinction' means the fact or process of a species of animals or plants becoming extinct/dying.
20. (d) 'Transform' means to make a marked change in the form, nature or appearance of.
21. (c) Principal means head of an educational institution.
Example: I was appointed principal of the new school.