

NEW RELEASE

ADVANCED NON-VERBAL REASONING FOR BANK RECRUITMENT TESTS

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- * *Comprising over 1800 questions on Series, Analogy and Classification, with explanatory answers and clues.*
- * *Including all types of questions.*
- * *Including Latest Five-Figure Reasoning.*

14. COMMON ERRORS – HOW TO AVOID THEM ?

ERRORS IN USE OF ARTICLES

ARTICLES

Indefinite (a, an)	Definite (The)
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Use of 'An' :

- Before words beginning with vowel sounds [a, e, i, o, u are called vowels. Others are consonants]
an apple, **an** egg, **an** owl.
- Before words beginning with silent 'h'.
an hour, **an** honourable man, **an** heir, **an** honest man.
- F, H, L, M, N, R, S, X are letters that are not vowels but begin with vowel sound e.g. 'M' has the sound of 'em'. So, 'an' is used before abbreviations beginning with vowels or these letters.
eg. **an** M.L.A., **an** R.A.F., **an** N.C.C. officer, **an** F.I.R., **an** X-ray, **an** H.E. school, **an** S.P., **an** LEA school.

Use of 'A' :

- (i) In the sense of one
e.g. He couldn't speak a word to save himself.
(ii) With 'one' (∵ 'one' begins with sound of 'w')
a one-man show, a one-rupee note.
- Before words beginning with consonant sound e.g. a boy, a box, a dog.
- With vowel letters having consonant value
e.g. a university, a unique article, a euphenism, a unit, a European language.
(all these begin with consonant sound of 'yu')
- With units and rate (per) :
e.g. He earns rupees five hundred a month.
Rice sells ten rupees a kilo.
Give me a metre length of the cloth.
- In exclamatory expressions before singular countable nouns :
What a pretty girl !
How sunny a day !
- When two subjects or articles are thought of as a single unit.
He was ready with a cup and saucer.
A cigarette is made of a paper and tobacco.
- With certain expressions of quantity :
a lot of, a dozen, a great deal of, a couple.

- With a person's name to indicate that the person is perhaps unknown to the person addressed :
A Mr. Roy is at the door.
- With a special meal (to celebrate something or in someone's honour)
I called my friends to a lunch to celebrate my success.
A dinner was arranged to welcome the Principal.
- To make a common noun of a proper noun.
This man is 'a second Newton'.
(This phrase means 'a philosopher as great as Newton')
'A Daniel' came to judgement.
(The phrase means 'a wise man')

Use of 'The'

- When we speak of a particular person or thing already referred to :
I dislike the follow.
The boy near the taps is my brother.
- I. When a singular noun represents a whole class :**
Ex. (i) The mango is considered the king among fruits.
(ii) The ass is used as a beast of burden.
Remark. The nouns 'man' and 'woman' do not take 'the' before them.
Ex. Man is the greatest of God's creations.
- II. With names of :**
(a) gulfs, rivers, oceans, islands and mountains e.g. the Himalayas, the Indian ocean, the Persian Gulf, the Red sea, the Andaman islands, the Brahmaputra river.
- III. Certain books :**
e.g. the Vedas, the Puranas, the Bible, the Ramacharitmanas.
- IV. Musical instruments :**
e.g. the flute, the violin, the tabla, the trumpet.
- V. The inventions :**
Ex. (i) I hate the telephone for its constant ringing.
(ii) The television is a gift of science.
- VI. Parts of body :**
Ex. (i) He was wounded in the leg.
(ii) They hit him on the hands.
- VII. Religious groups :**
the Sikhs, the Hindus, the Parsees.
- VIII. Names enforcing law :**
the Police, the Navy, the Air Force.

IX. Political parties :

The Congress, the Janata Party, the B.J.P.

X. Aeroplanes, ships, trains etc.

The Mahalu (aeroplane), the Vikrant (Ship), the Rajdhani express (train).

XI. Before names of an empire, dynasty or historical event.

e.g. the Gupta dynasty, the Old Stone Age, the First World War, the American Revolution.

XII. Clubs, foundations etc. :

the Lion's Club, the Ford Foundation.

XIII. Before common nouns denoting unique things :

the sun, the sky, the earth, the world, the stars.

XIV. With superlatives :

- Ex. (i) He is the best boy in the class.
(ii) Prizes would be given for the most outstanding performances.

XV. With ordinals :

- Ex. (i) He took the first taxi that came his way.
(ii) He lives in the tenth block.
(iii) Our class is on the second floor.

XVI. Before the comparative degree :

- Ex. (i) The more they get, the more they want.
(ii) He is the cleverer of the two.

XVII. Before an adjective when the noun is understood :

- Ex. (i) The poor would favour him.
(ii) We must not shun the disabled.

ERRORS IN USE OF NOUNS**1. Nouns which are used in singular form :-**

- (i) Scenery, information, furniture, advice, machinery, stationery, news, poetry, business, mischief, fuel, issue, repair, bedding.
The scenery of this place is worth seeing.
He has received no information so far.
- (ii) Physics, Mathematics, Economics, Classics, Ethics, Athletics, innings, gallows.
e.g. Economics is a very interesting subject.
The Indian team defeated the Australian by an innings.
- (iii) Brick, bread, fruit, word (as 'promise')
e.g. Let me buy some fruit.
He is true to his word.
- (iv) Words like dozen, score, hundred, thousand, million when preceded by a numeral.

e.g. He bought ten dozen oranges.
I have four pair of shoes.

- (v) Expressions as a ten-rupee note, a two-hour journey, a four-mile walk, a Five-year plan, a six-man committee etc.

e.g. A ten-rupee note is lying there.

2. Nouns used only in plural form

- (i) Cattle, police, poultry, people, gentry, peasantry, artillery.

e.g. The police have caught the thief.

Cattle are grazing in the field.

- (ii) Scissors, trousers, stockings, spectacles, shorts, alms, remains, riches, goods, measles.

e.g. My scissors are very sharp.

My spectacles are missing.

3. Nouns used both as singular and plural in the same form.

- (i) Deer, sheep, fish, apparatus, wages.

e.g. The wages of sin is death.

The wages of the workers have been raised.

I saw a sheep grazing in the field.

Sheep are sold cheaper than goat.

- (ii) Collective nouns as jury, public, team, audience, committee, government, audience, congregation, orchestra.

e.g. The team are looking quite fit.

The team has not turned up yet.

4. Use of Collective Nouns

crowd of people
mob of angry people
herd of cattle/cows
fleet of ships/cruisers
team of players
pack of wolves
flight of birds
pack of cards
bouquet of flowers
loaf of bread
shoal/school of fish
heap of corn
bundle of sticks
stock of grain
army of soldiers
class of pupils
flock of sheep
bunch of grapes
crew of sailors
herd of lions
swarm of bees
pile of books

garland of beads
hoarde of nomads
gang of thieves
block of flats
library of books
file of papers

5. One of or any of is followed by plural words.

e.g. I want one of the books kept on the table.

Any of these tools may serve the purpose.

6. Plural nouns are used with fractions and decimal over 1.

e.g. It took us one and a half hours.

ERRORS IN USE OF PRONOUNS

Pronouns are words used to replace nouns or noun groups already mentioned.

Nominative / Vocative case (comes before verb)	Accurative/ Objective case (comes after verb)	Possessive case	Reflexive Pronoun
I	Me	My	Myself
We	Us	Our	Ourselves
He	Him	His	Himself
She	Her	Her	Herself
They	Them	Their	Themselves
Who	Whom	Whose	-

1. The pronoun 'One' must be followed by 'One's'.

e.g. One must do one's duty to one's country.

2. When 'one' means 'one in number', the pronoun for it is third person singular pronoun (he, she, it).

One of them has given up one's studies. (x)

One of them has given up his studies. (✓)

3. 'Everyone' or 'Everybody' must be followed by 'his'.

e.g. Everyone should love his country.

4. Each, every, anyone, anybody must be followed by the singular pronoun of their person.

e.g. Anyone can do this if he tries.

5. 'Let' is followed by pronoun in the objective case.

e.g. Let him go.

Let you and me solve this puzzle.

6. 'But' and 'except' are followed by pronoun in the objective case.

e.g. Everyone attended the party except him.

'such as' is followed by pronoun in the subjective case.

e.g. I have no liking for such a man as he.
Verbs like 'enjoy', 'avail', 'pride', 'resign', 'apply', 'acquit', 'assert', 'absent' are followed by reflexive pronouns.

He absented himself from the class.

We enjoyed ourselves at the party.

I availed myself of the opportunity.

She prides herself on her wealth and beauty.

He resigned himself to fate.

8. Reflexive pronouns are never used with verbs 'keep', 'conceal', 'qualify', 'spread', 'rest', 'stay'.

e.g. I stayed away from my class.

He qualified in the test.

She kept away from the show.

9. When first, second and third person singular pronouns (I, you and He) are used together, they are placed in the order : You, he and I.

e.g. You, he and I are neighbours.

In case of plural pronouns, 'we' comes first, then 'you' and then 'they'.

e.g. We, you and they must work together.

But if we have only two persons including first, then first person pronoun is written first.

e.g. I and Sanjeev have done this job.

10. 'Who' denotes subject and 'whom' denotes object.

e.g. Who do you think did the job ?

Whom did you abuse ?

11. 'Whose' is used for persons and 'which' for lifeless objects.

e.g. This is the table which I was talking about.

He married Sunita who is the daughter of Mr. Roy.

12. 'Which' conveys additional information and 'that' explains a certain thing.

I will tell you the first thing which I remember.

I am talking about traffic management that forms a part of his duties.

13. The following expressions usually take 'that' in place of 'who' or 'which'.

Only, Any, It is, All, Superlatives

e.g. He is the only man that can do it.

Any man that listens to you is a fool.

It is the same watch that was stolen by him.

All that glitters is not gold.

This is the best that we can do.

14. 'Each other' is used for two; 'one another' for more than two.

Rahul and Renu love each other.

They help one another.

15. The complement of the verb *to be*, when it is expressed by a pronoun, should be in Nominative case.
e.g. It was *he* who did it.
If I were *he*, I would not go there.
16. When the same person is the subject and object, it is necessary to use reflexive pronouns.
e.g. I cut *me* shaving this morning. (x)
I cut *myself* shaving this morning. (✓)
17. When a pronoun is the object of a verb or preposition it should be in objective case.
e.g. These books are for you and *I*. (x)
These books are for you and *me*. (✓)
Between *him* and *me* there is an understanding.
18. The Relative Pronoun should be placed as near as possible to the antecedent.
e.g. Here is the book *that* you lent me.
I have read *Shakespeare's works* who was a great dramatist. (x)
I have read *the works of Shakespeare* who was a great dramatist.
19. The case of the pronoun following 'than' and 'as' is decided by mentally supplying the verb and completing the sentence.
e.g. She is taller than *I*. (am)
I love you more than *he*. (loves you)
I love more than (I love) *him*.

ERRORS IN USE OF PREPOSITIONS

A **Preposition** is a word used with a noun or pronoun to show its relation to some other word in a sentence.

Prepositions of Time

- At** is used :
 - with a definite point of time—
e.g. I usually get up at 5 o'clock.
She leaves her house every day at 9 a.m.
 - with festivals—
e.g. He will come at Holi.
- In** is used :
 - with the parts of the day, (with **noon**, use **at**), months, seasons and years—
e.g. He takes a walk in the afternoon.
In summer the weather is warm.
 - with the future tense referring to the period in which action may take place—
e.g. You must be careful in future.
- On** is used with days and dates.
e.g. My brother will arrive on Monday.
My birthday is on the first of June.
- By** refers to the latest time at which an action will be over :
e.g. The examination will be over by 5 p.m.
- For** is used with perfect continuous tense showing the duration of action :
I have been here for three years.
- Since** is used with the point of time when action begins and continues :
e.g. He has been ill since last Tuesday.
Since 1980, Shalini has lived in Delhi.
- From** refers to the starting point of action :
e.g. This water came from a spring.
She came from USA.

Prepositions of Position

- At** refers to an exact point :
e.g. The tourist stayed at the Tourist Hotel.
He studied at Oxford.
He is waiting at the door.
- In** refers to larger areas :
e.g. He lives in Bombay.
- Between** is used for two persons or two things :
e.g. Share these sweets between him and me.
It is a secret between you and me.
- Among** is used with more than two persons or things but before the word which starts with a consonant letter :
Divide the sweets among the three boys.
- Amongst** is also used with more than two persons or things but before the word which starts with a vowel letter :
e.g. Divide the sweets amongst us.
- Above** is used for higher than :
e.g. The sun rose above the horizon.
We were flying above the clouds.
- Under** is used for vertically below :
e.g. It is shady under the trees.
- Below** is used for lower than :
e.g. When the sun sets it goes below the horizon.
Your work is below average.
- Over** is used for vertically above :
e.g. There is an aircraft coming over.
The bathroom is over the kitchen.
- Beneath** means a lower position :
e.g. The ground was slippery beneath her.

Prepositions of Direction

- To** is used to express motion from one place to another :
e.g. We walked to the river and back.
- Towards** refers to direction :
e.g. He saw me running towards him.

- She glanced towards the mirror.
- Into** denotes motion towards the inside of something :
e.g. She fell into a ditch.
 - At** refers to aim :
e.g. He aimed at the bird.
 - For** denotes direction :
e.g. I will leave for Pune today.
The Minister left for the U. K.
 - Against** shows pressure :
e.g. She cleaned the edge of her knife against the plate.
He leaned against a tree.
 - Off** refers to separation :
He was wiping sweat off his face.
Kim fell off his chair in a swoon.
 - From** refers to the point of departure :
e.g. The man parted from his friends.
We scrambled from our trucks and ran after them.

Other Uses of Preposition

- About** shows nearness :
e.g. I was about to go to bed when there was a knock at the door.
His father is about to retire.
- Along** stands for in the same line :
e.g. She led them along the corridor.
The current passes along the wire here.
- After** refers to sequence :
e.g. She came after me.
Soon after, Faraday began his researches into electricity.
- Across** means from one side :
e.g. He blew a cloud of smoke across the table.
She ran across the field.
- Before** stands for in front of :
e.g. A thief was brought before the judge.
The garage is before the road.
- Behind** means at the back of :
e.g. She sat down behind the hedge.
The sun went behind a cloud.
- Beyond** means on the farther side of :
e.g. This is beyond his power.
Love is beyond all human control.
- Beside** means by the side of :
I sat down beside my wife.
- Besides** means in addition to :
e.g. He is guilty of five killings and more besides.
Besides being a teacher, he is a skilled craftsman.

WORDS FOLLOWED BY PREPOSITIONS

abound with	abstain from	acquaint with	acquit of
according to	accordance with	adverse to	affiliate to/with
accuse of	accustomed to	afflict with	afraid of
		agree to/on	aim at
		allegation	about
		allude to	alternate with
		alternative to	angry with
		apply to (body)	appreciation of
		apprise of	approximate to
		arraign against	ashamed of
		arrive at/in	associate with
		aspire to/after/at	attribute to
		assure of	
		averse from/to	
		belief in	bereft of
		beset with	beware of
		blink at	boast of
		break off	bungle over
		busy with	
		call on (somebody)	canvass for
		careful of	cause of
		centre on	charge with
		clamour for	clamp on
		coerce into	collide with
		comment on	compatible with
		complain of	comply with
		compliment on	composed of
		concur in	condole with
		conducive to	confer on
		confirmation of	conform to
		congratulate on	conscious of
		contiguity with	converge on
		convict of	co-opt to
		cope with	correspond with
		converge on	convict of
		co-opt to	cope with
		correspond with	cost of
		credit with	criticism of
		cure of	
		debar from	decide on
		deliberate on	delight in
		denude of	depart to
		departure for	depend on/upon
		deprive of	derive from
		derogate from	derogatory to
		desist from	despair of
		detrimental to	devoid of
		difficulty in	diffident of
		disabuse of	disagree with
		disgusted with	dispose of
		dissociate from	divest of

divide into
effort in (—ing)
embroil in
employ in
encroach on
enlarge on
essential to
extend to
focus on
fraught with
full of
grapple with
gratitude for
hanker after
identical with
incur on
indifferent to
infatuate with
infest with
insensible to
interest in
intoxicate with
intrude on
invest with (power)
investigation of
jealous of
jump at
knock at
lay siege to
live on (income)
lure into
meddle with
oblivious of
opinion on
pay a call on
persist in
plead for
prefer to
present with
priority to
prohibit from
provide with
reconcile to
remonstrate with
replete with
research on
responsibility of (—ing)
sail for
satisfied with
sick of
sparing of

dressed in
election to
emphasis on
enamoured of
endow with
engage in
expostulate with
fed up with
forbid to
fritter in
give to
good at
guilty of
impose on
indict for
indulge in
infect with
information on
insist on
intimate to
intrigue with
in (bank)
involve in
jeer at
just to
lash at
leave for
long for
married to
operate on
overcome with
persevere in
plan for
pleased with
preference for
prevent from
probe into
proud of
recoil from
remand to
repent of
reply to
resolve on/to
satiating with
sentence to
side with
square with

stickler for
subsist on
succeed in
superior to
sure of
susceptible to
sympathise with
tamper with
testify to
throw at
tire of
trample on
try to (do)
vie with
wait for (or await)
wide of

stricture on
subversive of
sue for
supply with
surprised at
suspect of
sympathy for
thank for
tinker at
trace to
translate into
unequal to (the task)
vote for (a candidate)
ways of
wish for

SOME SPECIAL CASES

absolve from (blame) / of (sin)
admit to (hospital, place, class)
appear for (examination) / at
begin on (not from Sunday)
blow down (the roof) / off (steam) / over (pass off)
buy in (market, store) / at (shop)
come / go by (bus, train)
come into (conflict with)
compare with (one man height with another's) / to (one man's height to a building)
consist of (to denote the substance) / in (define the subject)
deal with (somebody) / in (goods)
die of (disease) / from (other causes)
differ from (to be different from) / with (to disagree)
due to (used after a noun, not after a verb)
entrust to (somebody a job)
entrust (somebody) with a job
fill with (enthusiasm) / in (a form)
fire at (when not hit) / on (when injured to killed)
glad of (the news) / at (having arrived safe)
hostility to / in hand (being attended to) / on hand (in possession of)
ingratiate (oneself) with
inquire into (matter) / of (person) / about, often (thing)
invest with (power) / in (bank)
key of (the door) / to (a problem)
level (charge) against

look at (consider evidence) / to (somebody for aid)
meeting (called) for (Sunday)
motive in (doing) / for (an act)
neglect of (duty) / in (doing a thing)
nominated to (board)
noted for (good things)
owing to (used after a verb, not after a noun)
part from (people) / with (things)
preventive for priority
put out (light) / off (trip)
shoot at (when injured) / in (leg, head)
take up (job) / to (a hobby)
taste of (sensation) / for (liking)
tear off (remove) / up (to pieces)
vest with (The P.M. is vested with power to...) / in (Powers are vested in the P.M. to...)

ERRORS IN USE OF CONJUNCTIONS

1. **Scarcely or hardly** is followed by **when**.
e.g. Scarcely had I entered the room when I heard a shriek.
Hardly had I slept when the telephone rang.
2. **Though** is followed by **yet**.
e.g. Though he worked hard yet he failed.
3. **No sooner** is followed by **than**.
e.g. No sooner did we reach there than it began to rain.
4. **Not only** is followed by **but also**.
e.g. Not only did he help her, but also dropped her home safely.
5. **Lest** is negative and so should not be followed by **not**; it is followed by **should**.
e.g. Work hard lest you should fail.
If **would** or **may** is used in place of **should**, then **else** should be used in place of **lest**.
e.g. Give him water, else he may die.
Leave on time, else you would miss the train.
6. **Both** is complemented by **and**, not by **as well as**.
e.g. Both Amit and Satish are good at Science.
7. **So.....as** is used in negative sentences, whereas **as.....as** is used in affirmative sentences.
e.g. He is not so tall as his brother.
He is as tall as his brother.
8. **Other** is followed by **than**.
e.g. He has no other claim than his wealth.
9. The word **reason** is not followed by **because**, but by **that**.
e.g. The reason why he didn't go was that his mother was ill.
10. **because** denotes reason.
in order that denotes purpose.
e.g. He went to the doctor because he was ill.
He went to Delhi in order that he might see Mr. Roy.
11. Words such as **regard**, **describe**, **define**, **treat**, **mention**, **depict**, **portray** are followed by **as**.
e.g. I regard her as my sister.
He was treated as a slave.
12. **As** and **since** are also used to express reason.
e.g. As he was not there, I spoke to his brother.
Since he did not come to the party, his gift was sent to him.
13. **Neither** is followed by **nor** and both are followed by same auxiliary verb.
e.g. Neither Ravi nor Raju was seen.
Neither did I read nor did I write.
14. **Either** is followed by **or**.
e.g. Either you are or he is to blame.
15. **Unless**, **until**, **if not**, **so that** should not be followed by **not**.
e.g. Wait here until I come.
Do not go unless I return.
16. **If** is used in conditional sense;
Whether is used in uncertainty.
e.g. If he does not return the books, he will not be awarded the certificate.
I don't know whether he was present.
17. To express **time before** use **until** or **till** and to express **how long** use **as long as**.
e.g. He continued to be lazy, until he was ten years old.
Work as long as you live.
18. **Such** is followed by **as**.
e.g. We talked about such subjects as the weather.
Such is followed by **that** if we emphasize degree of something by mentioning the result.
e.g. The extent of the disaster was such that not a single man could survive.
19. **Like** is followed by pronoun; **as** is followed by a clause.
e.g. He runs like me.
He runs as I do.

ERRORS IN SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

1. Singular subject must have singular verb.
e.g. He writes. I write.
2. Plural subject must have plural verb.
e.g. They write. We write.

3. Two subjects joined by **and** will always take a plural verb :
e.g. The doctor and nurse work together.
The doctor and nurses work together.
The doctors and nurse work together.
4. Two singular subjects joined by **or** or **nor** will take a singular verb :
e.g. A doctor or a nurse is working in the hospital.
5. A singular subject and a plural subject joined by **or** or **nor** will take a singular or plural verb depending on which subject is nearer the verb :
e.g. Neither Deepak nor his friends are joining the tour.
Neither his friends nor Deepak is joining the tour.
6. If the subject is singular and the predicate is plural, the verb must agree with its subject and not its predicate :
e.g. Physical conditioning and mental attitude are winning combination.
The winning combination is physical conditioning and mental attitude.
7. Indefinite pronouns such as *someone, somebody, each, nobody, anyone, anybody, one, no one, everyone, everybody, either, neither* etc. always take a singular verb :
e.g. Each of my friends calls me once a month.
8. Indefinite pronouns which indicate more than one (*several, few, both, many*) always take plural verbs :
e.g. Both of the books require careful reading.
Several of the fielders regularly run four or five kilometers a day.
9. Collective nouns (*fleet, army, committee, crowd*) are singular when the group works together as a unit and hence take singular verbs :
e.g. The jury has reached its verdict.
The team runs in a smooth way.
10. Collective nouns are plural when the members of the group are acting individually and hence take plural verbs :
e.g. The jury have argued for five hours.
The team are putting on their uniforms.
11. Some words (such as *news, measles, mumps* etc.) end in **-s** but represent a single thing. These words need singular verbs :
e.g. The 7 o'clock news is about to begin.
Measles sometimes has rather serious side effects.
12. Some words (such as *scissors, trousers, spectacles, shorts* etc.) end in **-s** and

- seem to represent a single thing, but they are two parts to that single thing. These words take plural verbs :
e.g. The scissors are on the table.
His trousers are very costly.
13. Words (such as *politics, ethics, athletics* etc.) that end in **-ics** are usually singular and hence take singular verbs :
e.g. Mathematics is his favourite subject.
Politics is itself a dirty game.
But these words are singular when they refer to a study, science or practice. If these words have modifiers with them, they become plural and hence take plural verbs :
e.g. His politics are somewhat divided.
The mathematics of the tax-return are flawless.
The school's athletics are all for both boys and girls.
14. Title of the books need singular verbs :
e.g. *Great Expectations* is a good book.
Tom Jones is a book of Fielding.
15. Some nouns in the plural form represent an amount, a fraction, or an element of time. These nouns are considered singular and hence take singular verbs :
e.g. Sixty minutes is enough to finish this work.
Three-fourths of the land is barren.
16. If two subjects are joined together by **as well as** the verb will act according to the first subject :
e.g. Students as well as the teacher are playing.
He as well as his brothers is sitting there.
I as well as he am going out of station for a week.
17. The subject **Many a ...** is always followed by the singular verb :
e.g. Many a man was drowned in the sea.
18. If two subjects are joined together by **with** the verb will act according to the subject :
e.g. The Principal together with his students was seeing the final match.
The students together with the Principal were seeing the final match.
19. If the subject is **The number of ...** use a singular verb :
e.g. The number of books is very small.
The number of boys in this team is ten.
20. If the subject begins with **A number of ... (= many)**, use a plural verb :
e.g. A number of books are missing.
21. If two subjects express one idea, use a singular verb :

e.g. Bread and butter is wholesome food.
Soup and salad is too light a lunch.

22. When adjectives such as **much, less, little** and **more** are used as nouns, they must have a singular verb :
e.g. A little of good habits makes our life happy.
Less than a million of rupees is required.

ERRORS IN THE USE OF TENSES

The changed forms of a verb that indicate time of the action are called **tenses** of the verb.

1. When the verb in the Principal Clause is in the Past tense, the verbs of the Subordinate Clauses should be in the Past tense :
e.g. He said that he had finished his work.
I was informed that her mother was ill.
2. But a Past tense in the Principal Clause may or may not be followed by the Past tense in the sub-ordinate clause if the latter expresses universal or habitual truth :
e.g. The teacher said that the earth revolves round the sun.
My brother told me that smoking is injurious to health.
3. Any tense may be used in the sub-ordinate clause if it gives a comparison by using the word **than** :
e.g. He respected you more than he respects his uncle.
The teacher liked Anil better than he liked me.
4. Any tense can be used when the sub-ordinate clause is in a quotation :
e.g. She said, "He will go to Madras tomorrow."
I said, "I am going to Delhi today."
5. The Present Perfect Tense (subject + has/have + V₃) cannot be used when an expression of Past time (yesterday, last night, ago etc.) is used :
e.g. We wrote to you yesterday about his mother.
I finished my letter last night.
6. In conditional sentences the subordinate clause, beginning with **if**, is generally in Present or Past tense but not in future tense :
e.g. If I go to Delhi, I shall see the Red Fort.
If he had worked hard, he would have passed.
7. With the phrases **as if** and **as though**, Past tense and plural form of the verb should be used

e.g. He behaves as if he were a millionaire.

8. Past Perfect tense (subject + had + V₃) is used when a sentence refers to two past actions and one of them occurs earlier than the other :
e.g. When my uncle came to India I had passed M.A.
9. Words like **usually, generally, often, whenever** etc. are used in Present Indefinite tense :
I usually go to play cricket.
I often laugh at him.
10. If the action began in the past and is still continuing in the present, use Present Perfect tense (Subject + has/have + been V₁ + ing) :
e.g. I have been reading in this class for two months.
11. Do not use the Future or the Present tense after such expressions as **suppose that, it is high time, it is time, as if** etc. :
e.g. It is high time that you went home.
It is time that we played football.

GERUND & INFINITIVE

USE OF GERUND (V₁ + ing)

1. When an action is being considered in general sense, gerund is used as subject :
e.g. Swimming is his favourite pastime.
Walking is a good exercise.
2. Gerund is used as subject in short prohibitions :
e.g. Smoking is prohibited.
3. Verbs such as *help, stop, detest, avoid, finish, dread, mind, prevent, dislike, risk, deny, recollect, no good, no use, resent, delay, postpone, defer, enjoy, forgive, pardon, excuse, suggest* etc. are followed by the gerund :
e.g. It is no use saying.
It is no good repenting.
I avoid calling out loudly.
4. A gerund is placed after a preposition :
e.g. She is tired of walking.
He is fond of riding.
But the prepositions **except** and **but** are followed by an infinitive.
5. A gerund, showing physical activity, is put after **come** or **go** :
e.g. He is to go shooting.
Come fishing with us.
6. Nouns, followed by a gerund, are put in the possessive case.
e.g. He hates his brother's drinking everyday.
She dislikes her child's playing all the time.

7. If there is a sense of dislike, hesitation, risk etc. in a sentence, use gerund :
e.g. I dislike reading cheap novels.
She hesitates singing in the company of her friends.
8. Adjective before gerund are put in the possessive case :
e.g. I do not mind your going away.
What is the good of his trying to do that?
9. **With a view to** is always followed by a gerund and not an adjective.
e.g. We go to school with a view to studying.

INFINITIVE (To + V₁)—

- Verbs such as learn, remember, promise, swear, consent, neglect, refuse, purpose, try, endeavour, attempt, fail, care, hope, decide, hesitate, prepare, determine, undertake, manage, arrange, seem, forget, agree, regret etc. are followed by infinitive :
e.g. We endeavour to invite such persons.
We promise to do this work soon.
- Verbs such as order, tell, invite, oblige, allow, permit, compel, teach, instruct, advise, tempt, encourage, urge, request, show, remind, forbid, warn etc. are followed by object and infinitive :
e.g. The teacher instructed the students to go.
She told me to come there.
- Verbs or expressions like—will, can, do, must, may, let are followed by infinitive without to :
e.g. Let him do this work.
Let it be done.
- Expressions like would rather, would sooner, rather than, sooner than, had better are followed by infinitive without to :
e.g. You had better tell him.
I would do rather than suffer.
- See can be used with infinitive or without it :
e.g. Go to see him.
Go and see him.
- The infinitive is used after adjectives like delight, angry, glad, astonished, surprised, horrified, disappointed etc. :
e.g. I was astonished to find him.
I was horrified to see the scene.
- The verb know is never directly followed by the infinitive. It is followed by a conjunction and then the infinitive :
Do you know to play the harmonium? (×)
Do you know how to play the harmonium? (✓)

8. **...had better** is always followed by the infinitive without to :
You had better to stop taking the medicine which has harmful side-effects. (×)
You had better stop taking the medicine which has harmful side-effects. (✓)
9. Infinitive is not used with **to** after verbs of perception like to see, to hear, to feel, to watch etc. :
e.g. I saw him cross the street.
She heard her come downstairs.
10. Avoid using split-infinitive :
He planned to not go on a vacation this year. (×)
He planned not to go on a vacation this year. (✓)

AUXILIARY VERBS

These are helping verbs.

- May** implies permission, doubt or possibility :
e.g. It may rain tonight.
May I use your pen?
- Might** is the past form of **may** but it does not necessarily represent past time. Often it implies more doubt than **may** :
e.g. If the clouds are salted, the rains might come.
- Can** is used to express ability :
e.g. He can do this work.
- Could** is the past form of **can** but it does not necessarily represent past time. Often it implies a more uncertain condition than **can**.
e.g. She could refuse, but she never does.
- Should** is the past form of **shall**. It is used in sub-ordinate clauses after **in** case and sometimes after **if** :
e.g. I shall get some money in case brother comes.
If you should see Raj, give him my regards.
It is also used in past sentences with **so that** and **in order that** :
e.g. He turned the stereo down very low so that he should not disturb him.
Should can also be used in sub-ordinate clauses when we are expressing the idea that something must be done or is important. The fact is that this happens after verbs like command, order, request, insist, suggest, advise etc. & after adjectives like important, vital, essential, necessary, eager, anxious, concerned etc.
e.g. She insisted that the contract should be read aloud.
I am anxious that nobody should be hurt.

- Should** is also used in sub-ordinate clauses in sentences where we express personal reactions to events. We express our reactions with words like—amazing, interesting, shocked, sorry, normal, natural, it's a shame etc.
e.g. I am sorry you should think I did it on purpose,
I was shocked that she should not have invited Mr. Kapoor.
6. **Must** is followed by the infinitive without to :
e.g. I must get up at five tomorrow.
Must is used to give strong advice or orders :
e.g. I really must stop drinking.
You must be here by 8 o'clock.
Must is used to say that we are sure about something :
e.g. I am in love—that must be nice.
Must is used after a past reporting verb.
e.g. I felt there must be something wrong.
7. **Should** and **Ought** have similar meanings, but **ought** is followed by **to**. **Ought** to has a more objective force and is used when we are talking about laws, duties and regulations :
e.g. We ought to see her tomorrow.
Should and **ought** to can also be used to talk about strong probability :
e.g. He has bought thirty pints of whisky—that ought to be enough.
To talk about things which did not happen, although they were supposed to, we use **should** and **ought** to with the perfect infinitive :
e.g. The taxi should have arrived at 8.30.
8. **Do** is used to make question and negative forms of ordinary verbs :
e.g. Do you know Rajat?
I don't like trout.
Do is used in question-tags and short answers :
e.g. You know painting, do you?
Does he know I am here? —Yes, he does.
Do is used before an imperative to make the request more persuasive :
e.g. Do accompany us.
Do is not used in questions which have **who**, **what** or **which** as their subject :
e.g. Who said that?
What happened?
Which one's that?
But if **who**, **what** or **which** is the object of the sentence, **do** is used :

e.g. Who did you see?

Which department do you want?

Do is also used with an **—ing** form when we want to talk of activity that takes a certain time or that is repeated. In this case we find determiners like—the, my, some, much, etc. :
I usually do most of my washing on Sundays.

Can you do the shopping for her?

ERRORS IN USE OF ADJECTIVES

Word qualifying a noun or pronoun is called an **adjective**.

- The adjectives ending in **—ior** (prior, junior, senior, superior, inferior, posterior) take 'to' and not 'than' after them.
e.g. He is senior to me.
This book is superior to that book.
- Some adjectives like unique, ideal, perfect, extreme, complete, universal, infinite, perpetual, chief, entire, round, impossible are not compared.
e.g. It is the most unique book. (×)
It is a unique book. (✓)
- Comparative degree is used in comparing two things or persons.
e.g. It is *the better* of the two books.
Superlative degree is used in comparing more than two things or persons.
e.g. He is *the best* of the three boys.
- Double comparatives and double superlatives must not be used.
He is *more wiser* than his brother. (×)
He is *wiser* than his brother. (✓)
- When we compare two qualities in the same person or thing, the comparative ending **—er** is not used.
You are *wiser* than old. (×)
You are *more wise* than old. (✓)
- When two adjectives in superlative or comparative degree are used together, the one formed by adding 'more' or 'most' must follow the other adjective.
He is *more intelligent* and *wiser* than his brother. (×)
He is *wiser* and *more intelligent* than his brother. (✓)
- When two adjectives with differing degrees of comparison are used they should be complete in themselves.
He is as wise, if not wiser than his brother. (×)
He is as wise as, if not wiser than his brother. (✓)
- When two changes happen together, comparative degree is used in both.

e.g. *The higher you go, the cooler you feel.*

9. When comparative degree is used in superlative sense, it is followed by 'any other'.
Kapil is better than *any* bowler. (×)
Kapil is better than *any other* bowler. (✓)
10. Compound adjective formed by adding 'worth' is placed after the noun it qualifies.
This is a *worth seeing* sight. (×)
This is a sight *worth seeing*. (✓)
11. When two or more comparatives are joined by 'and', they must be in the same degree.
e.g. Russel was one of the *wisest* and *most learned* men of the world.
12. When there are two objects of comparison, then to avoid repetition of noun, 'that' is used for singular noun and 'those' for plural noun.
e.g. The climate of Ranchi is better than *Gaya*. (×)
The climate of Ranchi is better than that of *Gaya*. (✓)
13. If comparison is made by using 'other', 'than' is used instead of 'but'.
e.g. He turned out to be no other than my old friend.
14. **Likely, certain and sure** are followed by 'to'.
e.g. He is likely to win.
We are sure to need help.

Confused Adjectives :

1. **Beautiful** is used for woman ; **handsome** for man.
e.g. He is a handsome youth.
She is a beautiful girl.
2. **Less** refers to quantity, **fewer** denotes number.
e.g. He takes no less than a litre of milk.
They have fewer books than I have.
3. **Last** is the final one ; **Latest** is last upto the present.
e.g. Z is the last letter of the alphabet.
This is the latest edition of the book.
4. **Each** is used for one of two or more things ; **every** is used for more than two things, taken as a group.
e.g. Each of the two boys was wrong.
He read every book I gave him.
5. **Older** refers to persons or things.
e.g. This tree is older than that.
Elder refers to persons only.
e.g. He is my elder brother.
6. **Little** means 'not much'.
A little means 'at least some'.
e.g. He slept little.
He slept a little.
7. **Farther** means 'more distant'.

Further means 'additional'

e.g. Bombay is farther than Delhi.
I shall get further information.

8. **Latter** means the second of two things.
Keats and Byron are romantic poets, but I prefer the latter.
Later refers to time.
She came to school later than I.

ERRORS IN USE OF ADVERBS :

Adverbs are words that add information about the verb.

Adverbs of manner, place and time are usually placed after the verb or object.

e.g. He was running *slowly*.

Reena does her work *carefully*.

I met him *yesterday*.

They followed Rachna *everywhere*.

2. Adverbs of frequency (e.g. never, often, usually, always, rarely, etc.) and other adverbs (like already, almost, just, quite, nearly, hardly) are normally put between subject and verb. If there is more than one word in the verb, they are put after first word.
e.g. He *often* goes to Delhi.
I *quite* agree with you.
But if verb is 'am', 'is' and 'are', adverb is placed after the verb.
e.g. I am *never* late for school.
3. The adverb **enough** is placed after the adjective.
e.g. She is *cunning enough* to tackle him.
4. 'Ever' is sometimes incorrectly used for 'never'.
He seldom or *ever* tells a lie. (×)
He seldom or *never* tells a lie. (✓)
5. Adverb 'not' shouldn't be used with words having negative meaning.
The teacher forbade me not to go. (×)
The teacher forbade me to go. (✓)
6. The word 'only' should be placed immediately before the word it modifies.
e.g. Hari answered *only* two questions.
7. An adverb should not be used before an infinitive.
He quickly did the job. (×)
He did the job quickly. (✓)
8. The auxiliaries *have to* and *used to* come after the adverb.
He often *used to* go to cinema.

Some More Tips of Usage :

1. Avoid the use of **lots**, **a lot** and **a whole lot** in the sense of **much** or **a great deal**.
He expects to earn a lot of money on his sale of farm products. (×)

He expects to earn a great deal of money on his sale of farm products. (✓)

2. **Plenty** is a noun and is always followed by of:
e.g. He has plenty of room in his old house.
3. **Due** to always modifies a noun and not a verb. Hence, no sentence should begin with **due to**, it must be used only after some form of the verb **to be**:
e.g. His death was due to natural causes.
4. **Alright** is incorrect, use **all right**:
I think it is quite alright if you stay. (×)
I think it is quite all right if you stay. (✓)
5. If the gender is not determined, use the pronoun of the masculine gender:
If anybody has got the book let her return it. (×)
If anybody has got the book let him return it. (✓)
6. When two nouns are closely connected, apostrophe 's' will be written after second only:
Ravi's and Shikha's mother is ill. (×)
Ravi and Shikha's mother is ill. (✓)
7. **Both** and **as well as** cannot be used together in the same sentence because both convey the same sense:
Both Pinki as well as Pooja are beautiful. (×)
Both Pinki and Pooja are beautiful. (✓)
8. **Supposing** and **if** cannot be used together in the same sentence:
Supposing if he fails, what will he do? (×)
If he fails, what will he do? (✓)
9. **Endure** suggests **suffering**, usually in silence and **tolerate**, means to allow it with some degree of approval:
e.g. He endured the pain without complaint.
He will not tolerate laziness.
10. Avoid the use of **had** with **ought**:
You had not ought to do it. (×)
You ought not do it. (✓)
11. **As** is used when one compares things or persons of equal or about equal size or quality, so is used when one compares things or persons which are unequal:
e.g. He weighs as much as his father.
He does not weigh so much as his father.
12. Avoid using the double comparative and double superlative:
The weather is more hotter than it was yesterday. (×)
The weather is hotter than it was yesterday. (✓)

This pen is the most costliest in this store. (×)
This pen is the costliest in this store. (✓)

13. **Cent per cent** and **word by word** are wrong uses. The real terms are **hundred percent** and **word for word**.
14. When two comparatives are used in a sentence for proportion, **the** is used before both of them:
e.g. The higher we go, the cooler it is.
15. **Do the needful** is incorrect, write **do what is necessary**.
16. Never say **family members**, say **members of the family**:
e.g. His family members have gone to Bombay. (×)
The members of his family have gone to Bombay. (✓)
17. **Else** is always followed by **but** and never by **than**:
It is nothing else but your pride which makes you say such a thing.
18. **All of** is used in conversation, not in standard written English:
She gave all of her antiques to the museum. (×)
She gave all her antiques to the museum. (✓)
19. **Talking terms** is wrong, use **speaking terms**:
He is not on talking terms with his brother. (×)
He is not on speaking terms with his brother. (✓)
20. Verbs like **resemble**, **recommend**, **comprise**, **order**, **accompany**, **reach**, **join**, **shirk**, **attack**, **emphasise**, **discuss**, **fear**, **succeed**, **resist**, **request**, **assist**, **benefit**, **afford** etc. are not followed by any preposition when used in the active voice.
He emphasised on the need for discipline. (×)
He emphasised the need for discipline. (✓)
She will accompany with you to Madras. (×)
She will accompany you to Madras. (✓)
21. The phrase **type of**, **sort of** and **kind of** do not follow **a** or **an**:
What kind of a friend are you? ((×)
What kind of friend are you? (✓)
22. A full hour number follows **o'clock**, but in fraction it does not follow:
He left this place by 10.40 o'clock. (×)
He left this place by 10.40. (✓)
23. **Yet** means up to the present time something that has not happened:
His brothers are not married even yet.

I hope the end is not yet.

Still means that a situation, state, or action which began at an earlier time has continued right up to the present :

I still do not understand.

24. **And** joins two clauses of the same nature, **but** joins two antithetical clauses of quite opposite meaning :

e.g. It was lovely and warm outside.

It was a long walk but it was worth it.

25. **Hardly** refers to degree, while **scarcely** refers to quantity :

e.g. I hardly see how I can finish this work.

I have scarcely enough money for my own needs.

26. Words like **divide** and **share** are followed by **between** when we use several singular nouns :

e.g. I divided my time between teaching, writing and delivering lecture.

I shared his property between his wife, his son and his daughter.

27. In relative sentences **any** is usually followed by **that**, not by **which** or **who** :
e.g. Borrow any book that interests you.

28. **Since** is used as an adverb, as a preposition and also as a conjunction :
I met Raj last Tuesday but have not seen him since. (Adverb)

Ajay has eaten nothing since yesterday. (Preposition)

What have you done since we last met ? (Conjunction)

15. Spotting Errors

PRACTICE SET 1

Directions : In each of the following questions, find out which part of the sentence has an error. If there is no mistake, the answer is 'No error'.

1. The road (a) / to famous monument (b) / passes through a forest (c) / No error (d) (Stenographer's Exam, 1995)
2. Our Housing Society comprises of (a) / six blocks and (b) / thirty three flats in an (c) / area of about thousand sq. metres. (d) / No error (e)
3. Now that she is living in her own flat, (a) / she cleans the windows, (b) / twice a week in the summer and once a week in the winter. (c) / No error (d) (C.D.S. 1993)
4. With little imagination and enterprise, (a) / the tournament could have been transformed (b) / into a major attraction (c) / No error (d)
5. These display (a) / the (b) / remarkable variety. (c) / No error (d) (N.D.A. 1992)
6. If you have faith in Almighty (a) / everything will turn out (b) / to be all right. (c) / No error (d)
7. According to the Bible (a) / it is meek and humble (b) / who shall inherit the earth. (c) / No error (d) (C.B.I. 1995)
8. I am not wealthy, (a) / so I cannot afford (b) / to buy a expensive car. (c) / No error (d)
9. Sunita opened a almirah (a) / full of books (b) / and took one of them (c) / for reading. (d) / No error (e) (B.S.R.B. 1992)
10. Most people would have (a) / attended the union meeting (b) / if they had (c) / had longer notice of it. (d) / No error (e)
11. My father is (a) / in bad mood (b) / today. (c) / No error (d) (Stenographers' Exam, 1994)
12. The need to set up (a) / a good library in the locality (b) / has been in the minds of people (c) / for some time now (d) / No error (e)
13. On my request (a) / Lalit introduced me (b) / to his friend (c) / who is singer and a scientist. (d) / No error (e) (S.B.I.P.O. 1991)
14. This town isn't very well known (a) / and there isn't much to see, (b) / so a few tourists come here. (c) / No error (d) (M.B.A. 1993)
15. He took to (a) / reading Times (b) / for better knowledge (c) / of the facts. (d) / No error (e)
16. The accelerating pace of life in our metropolitan city (a) / has had the tremendous effect (b) / on the culture and life-style of the people. (c) / No error (d) (I. Tax, 1992)
17. Both the civilians (a) / and army men (b) / joined the First World War. (c) / No error (d)
18. The school is (a) / within hundred yards (b) / from my house. (c) / No error (d)
19. The majority of the (a) / computer professionals recommends (b) / that effective measures (c) / should be taken against software piracy. (d) / No error (e) (Bank P.O. 1994)
20. He obtained good marks (a) / not only in English essay (b) / but also in arithmetic which was (c) / full of complicated calculations. (d) / No error (e)
21. The famous Dr. Chandra (a) / is only dentist (b) / in our village. (c) / No error (d) (Stenographers' Exam, 1995)
22. This candidate lacks (a) / an experience (b) / otherwise he is well qualified. (c) / No error (d)
23. A person I met (a) / in the theatre (b) / was the playwright himself. (c) / No error (d) (U.D.C. 1994)
24. The war of Mahabharata (a) / is the full length illustration (b) / of a righteous war. (c) / No error (d)
25. The interviewer asked me (a) / if I knew that (b) / Kalidas was the greater (c) / than any other poet. (d) / No error (e)
26. The reason we have not been able to pay income tax (a) / is due to fact (b) / that we did not receive pay on time. (c) / No error (d) (S.S.C. 1993)
27. Even now when I see the spot (a) / I am reminded of an unique incident (b) / that took place several yeras ago. (c) / No error (d)
28. As soon as the teacher entered, (a) / everyone fell (b) / in a silence. (c) / No error (d)
29. As he had taken only a few sips (a) / there was still little water (b) / left in the glass. (c) / No error (d) (Central Excise, 1994)
30. As I was to reach (a) / early I left in aeroplane (b) / instead of (c) / going by train. (d) / No error (e)