



## Topic 1: Vocabulary Demystified

Vocabulary, in simple terms, means ‘words’. Your vocabulary is the words you know and can use. The richer and more copious your vocabulary and the greater your awareness of fine distinctions and nuances of meanings of words, the more fertile your thoughts are likely to be. Also, the more extensive your vocabulary, the better are your chances of success. Here, we present some strategies and tools that would help you improve your vocabulary in English at a faster rate.

### Root words

We acquire knowledge through words as they are always associated with knowledge. Thus acquiring ideas and knowledge from a word is important to learn to use that word effectively and eventually imprinting that word in our active vocabulary. To do this, understanding its etymology is highly desirable. Etymology is the study of the origin of words. Learning one root word helps in guessing the meaning of more than ten words on an average. A ‘root’, as its name suggests, is a word or word-part from which other words grow, usually through the addition of prefixes and suffixes.

Consider, for instance, the word ‘Vocabulary’ itself. The root of the word is ‘voc’, a Latin root that means ‘word’ or ‘call’. This root also appears in the following words.

*Advocate (to speak to)*

*Convocation (a calling together for a meeting or ceremony)*

*Evocation (to call a memory)*

*Vocalize (to speak)*

*Provocative (in a manner calling forth to action), etc.*

Take ‘path’, a Greek word that means ‘feel’. From this emerged the following words.

*Empathy (feeling as if one were in the other person's place)*

*Sympathy (a feeling for another person)*

*Apathy (lack of feelings, indifference)*

*Pathetic (arousing feelings of pity) etc.,*

Take 'graph', a Greek word meaning 'writing'. From this word emerged all the following words in English.

*Autograph (the writing of one's own name)*

*Biography (a book written about a person's life)*

*Calligraphy (art of beautiful writing)*

*Bibliography (the written list of all the books used in a report or a book)*

*Seismograph (a device that writes down the movements of the earth) etc.,*

Sometimes the origin of words could be traced to people also. For instance, the word 'martinet' means a person who demands strict compliance to rules and norms. This word usage is derived from the name of Col. Jean Martinet, a drill master of the French army during the reign of Louis XIV.

### Prefixes and suffixes

After figuring out the root word, it remains for you to analyze the prefixes and/or suffixes which inflect the root word. Consider the word 'incorrigible'. The prefix 'in' means 'not'. The root word here is 'corriger' which means correct. The suffix -ible is often used to mean "capable of being", etc. Thus, it can be reasoned that the word means "something which cannot be corrected".

We give below some common prefixes and suffixes along with their meanings and some examples for each. But, as always, these too have their own exceptions. For example, the word 'intelligent' doesn't mean 'not telligent', nor does the word 'crucible' means capable of being 'cruc'! Thus, nothing substitutes extensive reading and learning meanings from a dictionary.

PREFIXES	MEANINGS	EXAMPLES
A-	Not, without	Atheist, Asymmetric
Anti-	Against	Antibiotic, Anti-depressant

Ante-	Previous, that which comes before	Anterior, Ante-meridian (A.M.), Antecedent
Auto-	Self	Automobile, Autograph, Autobiography
Be-	State of being	Bemoaned, Bespectacled
Bene-	Good	Benevolent, Benefit
Bi-	Occurring twice, two of (something)	Bi-weekly, Biannual, Bilateral
By-	Subordinate, substitute, lesser in degree / position	By-product, Bystander
Circum-	Around	Circumnavigate, Circumscribe, Circumcircle
Co-	Together	Cooperate, Correlate, Co-founder
De-	Remove, reverse	Debug, Dehumidify, Detoxify
Demos	People	Democracy, Demography
Di-	Twice, double	Dissect, Dicotyledon
Dis- (dys-)	Don't	Disagree, Dishonor, Dysfunctional
E-, en-, em-	Make it so	Estrange, Ennoble, Empower
Ex-	Former	Ex-minister, Ex-principal
Geo-	Earth, soil	Geography, Geology
Homo-	Same	Homosapien, Homogenous
Hydro-	Water	Hydrate, Hydrophobia
Ig-, il-, im-, in-, ir-	Not	Ignoble, Illogical, Impatient, Incapable, Irreligious

## FACE

Inter-	Between	Inter-collegiate, International
Intra-	Within	Intra-personal
Iso-	Equal	Isosceles, Isomer
Mal-	Bad, undesirable	Malevolent , Malnutrition
Mis-	Wrongly	Mistake, Misuse, Misinform
Non-	Not	Nonsense, Nonchalant
Pan-	Across	Pan-India
Poly-	Many	Polynomial, Polygamous, Polyester
Post-	After	Post-meridian (P.M.), Post-graduate
Pre-	Before	Precede, Pre-processor, Pre-talk
Psych-	Of the mind	Psychology, Psychiatrist
Semi-	Half	Semi-circle, Semi-perimeter
Trans-	Across	Trans-continental, Transport
Tri-	Three	Triangle, Trisect, Trilateral
Uni-	One	Unit, Unique
Un-	Not	Unnatural, Unwarranted

SUFFIXES	MEANINGS	EXAMPLES
-able, -ble, -ible	Able to be, capable of being	Capable, Erasable, Usable, Culpable, Destructible, Constructible
-ac,- ic	Relating to, pertaining to	Maniac, Cardiac, Idiotic, Polyphonic
-ade	An end product	Lemonade, Blockade
-age	Action / process	Blockage, Encourage
-aholic	One who is addicted to	Workaholic, Shopaholic, Alcoholic
-al	Relating to	Natural, Theatrical, Numerical, Verbal

-an	Relating / belonging to	Indian, Urban
-ance, -ence	Quality of	Reluctance, Ambience
-ant/ -ent	Person / thing, who/ which does something	Servant, Applicant, Migrant, Competent
-ar	Relating to, a person who does (something)	Modular, Beggar
-arian	Person who does / practices (something)	Vegetarian, Disciplinarian
-ary	Relating to	Literary, Secondary
-ate	State of being, person	Prostrate, Obstinate, Calculate
-ation	Action / process	Dictation, Relation, Frustration
-ative	Tending to be	Relative, Conservative, Talkative
-cide	Act of killing	Homicide, Pesticide
-city	Quality of	Capacity, Audacity, Curiosity, Atrocity, Veracity
-dom	State of being, feelings	Kingdom, Boredom, Freedom
-ee	Receiver or performer (as appropriate)	Devotee, Attendee, Employee
-en	Make it so	Lighten, Darken
-ful	Full of	Colourful, Wonderful
-ify	Make it so	Simplify, Amplify, Exemplify
-ise	Make it so, become	Materialize, Verbalise, Visualize, Civilize

-ism	State of being	Alcoholism, Mysticism
-less	Lack of	Shapeless, Formless, Brainless
-ly, -ily	In that way	Slowly, Luckily
-ment	Condition, state of being	Argument, Merriment
-ness	State of being	Emptiness, Happiness
-ship	Position held, state of being	Fellowship, Lordship, Friendship
-tude	State of	Altitude, Beatitude

### Form mnemonics to remember words

A mnemonic is a device such as a pattern, idea, or association that assists in remembering something. Take the word ‘egregious’ which means extremely bad. The mnemonic to remember this word and meaning can be, ‘Egg reach us’. Imagine we have made a mistake so bad that people are throwing eggs at us and a rotten ‘egg reach us’. Take the word ‘petulant’ which means ‘easily irritated or annoyed’. You can have this mnemonic ‘Pet u lent’, i.e. the pet you have lent to your neighbour is irritating or annoying. Remember this mnemonic and you will never forget the word and its meaning.

Another effective way of using mnemonics to remember words is to associate every new word learnt to different people whom you meet regularly. For example, you can associate the word ‘indolent’ to someone you know to be lazy.

These new words need not necessarily be limited to adjectives. For example, you can associate the noun ‘daredevil’ to a person you know who is recklessly bold.

Association of verbs can also be done in this manner. For example, the verb ‘censure’ can be associated to a person you know who regularly blames others.

The association need not always be rational. For example, the word ‘exile’ which means ‘expulsion from one’s native land’ could be associated

to a person you know who is regularly sent out of class for misbehaviour! In fact, such associations help better in retention of the new words. You may recall the words that you have associated with a person every time you meet him/her, which would ensure that you don't forget the words. Additionally, words can be remembered by associating them to certain images that you come across.



## Drill 1

### Exercise 1

Form three words for each root word given below:

Root words	Meaning	Words
ambi	both, on both sides	
bene	good	
phil	love for	
amphi	both	
circum	around, about	

### Exercise 2

Combine the prefixes with suitable root words to form words with the definitions given in parentheses:

1. ig- + root = \_\_\_\_\_ (not respectable)
2. il- + root = \_\_\_\_\_ (not able to read)
3. in- + root = \_\_\_\_\_ (not precise)
4. co- + root = \_\_\_\_\_ (be live together)
5. sym- + root = \_\_\_\_\_ (balanced on both sides by measurement)



## Topic 2: Synonyms and Antonyms

### Synonyms

The term ‘synonyms’ refers to different words that have identical or similar meanings. That is, these words may be used interchangeably. For example, the words ‘staid’ and ‘dull’ are synonymous. So are the words ‘error’ and ‘flaw’.

You can use etymology to solve questions on synonyms. Consider the following examples.

1. Malicious

- a. Benign      b. Goodwill      c. Spiteful      d. Favorable

The root word ‘mal’ means ‘bad’. The root word ‘bene’ means ‘good’. Hence, options *a* and *b* are eliminated. Also the word ‘favourable’ has a positive connotation. So option *d* is eliminated. Hence, the answer is ‘spiteful’ option *c*. as you can see, even if you don’t know the meaning of the word ‘spiteful’ you are able to end up with the right answer using etymology.

2. Nullify

- a. Simplify      b. Amplify      c. Invalidate      d. Mistify

The root word ‘null’ means ‘void’ or “worthless”. The suffix ‘ify’ is often used in the sense “to make”. Thus, “nullify” means “make something void”. The word “valid” means “suitable”, “acceptable”, “defendable” etc. The suffix “ate” is also used in the sense of “to make” and “in” is used to mean “not” (something). Thus the answer is option *c* ‘invalidate’..

### Tips to solve questions on synonyms:

1. Use root words, prefixes or suffixes to guess all possible meanings of the stem word before you look at the options.
2. Consider all possible meanings of each of the answer options.
3. Look for a match between the meanings of the stem word and those

of the given choices. Do not jump to any conclusion before you analyse all the given options.

4. In case of a tie, look at the parts of speech of the stem word and go for the answer option which is the same part of speech as that of stem word.

**Note:** Most of the tips above are also applicable for Antonyms.

## Antonyms

A word is said to be the antonym of another if it gives its opposite meaning. A good vocabulary always helps you in tackling questions that require you to find antonyms easily. Extensive reading of original magazines, novels, newspapers, legal journals and articles would help you a lot in this regard.

### Think of antonyms before looking at the answer options

e.g., Industrious

- a. Stupid
- b. Harsh
- c. Indolent
- d. Complex

The stem word ‘industrious’ means ‘hardworking’. Thus, we have to look for a word that means something along the lines of ‘lazy’. Now, coming to answer choices, we see that ‘stupid’, ‘harsh’ and ‘complex’ have nothing to do with being ‘lazy’. Thus, the only option left out is ‘indolent’ which should be the answer.

**Note:** The part of speech of the stem word and its antonym are most often the same.

### Watch out for common wrong answer types

Eliminating answer choices that you know are wrong will increase your chances of arriving at the right answer. Sometimes, the questions are framed such that you feel more than one answer is correct. But then, you can be sure that at least one of them is not the answer you are seeking because questions are (to be) necessarily created to have only one correct answer. The form of speech of the word in the question should help you here.

Typical wrong answer types on antonyms are:

- **Words that have no clear opposites**

Words such as birthright and priority can't be antonyms for any stem word!

- **Opposite answers**

These answers mean exactly the opposite of the word you're looking for. In other words, they are synonyms, rather than antonyms, for the stem word.

e.g., Immaculate

- a. masticate      b. calculate      c. intricate      d. erroneous

Begin by noting that the stem word ‘immaculate’ is an adjective and it means ‘absolutely faultless’. Thus, you will have to find an adjective that talks of something having to do with a lot of mistakes. We can eliminate options *a* and *b* because they are verbs. While ‘intricate’ and ‘erroneous’ are both adjectives, ‘intricate’ does not seem to be a perfect fit as compared to ‘erroneous’ because the latter seems to relate to the word ‘error’. So, the correct answer is option *d*. [The word ‘erroneous’ means ‘mistaken’, ‘flawed’, etc.]



## Drill 2

### Exercise 1

Choose the word from the options that is closest in meaning to the given word:

1. Misdemeanour
  - a. Misery
  - b. Offense
  - c. Idolatry
  - d. Mystery
2. Entanglement
  - a. Spark
  - b. Closure
  - c. Knot
  - d. Procrastination
3. Blasphemy
  - a. Profanity
  - b. Blandishment
  - c. Reverence
  - d. Squalid
4. Complacent
  - a. Clear
  - b. Satisfied
  - c. Intractable
  - d. Truant
5. Flabbergasted
  - a. Assaulted
  - b. Impaled
  - c. Astounded
  - d. Pleased
6. Maverick
  - a. Orthodox
  - b. Non-conformist
  - c. Hardened
  - d. Stentorian
7. Infuriate
  - a. Exacerbate
  - b. Fury
  - c. Penetrate
  - d. Pacify

## **FACE**

8. Inculcate  
a. Liberate                              b. Instill  
c. Refer                                    d. Inert
9. Console  
a. Cabinet                                b. Enlighten  
c. Stupefy                                d. Conceal
10. Perfunctory  
a. Fulsome                                b. Superficial  
c. Excellent                                d. Mortuary

### **Exercise 2**

**Choose the word from the options that is farthest in meaning to the given word.**

1. Deference  
a. Disobedience                            b. Similarity  
c. Accordance                                d. Consensus
2. Impertinent  
a. Impudent                                b. Respectful  
c. Meretricious                            d. Scrutinizing
3. Abstemious  
a. Greedy                                    b. Temperate  
c. Haughtiness                              d. Helm
4. Trite  
a. Pasquinade                              b. Exceptional  
c. Tare                                        d. Vellicate
5. Alienate  
a. Associate                                b. Earthling  
c. Falsify                                    d. Truncate

6. Edible
- a. Unabashed
  - b. Unassailable
  - c. Unbefitting
  - d. Unpalatable
7. Browbeat
- a. Threaten
  - b. Tyrannize
  - c. Extol
  - d. Censure
8. Clemency
- a. Mercilessness
  - b. Unhygienic
  - c. Refusal
  - d. Satanic
9. Altercation
- a. Combat
  - b. Persistence
  - c. Singular
  - d. Concord
10. Testimony
- a. Affidavit
  - b. Ratification
  - c. Denial
  - d. Substantiation



## Topic 3: Word Analogy

The word “analogy” refers to a comparison between two entities to show a sort of similarity between them. Thus, Word Analogy is actually relationship between a pair of words, and given that you have logic and an adequate vocabulary, you can solve the questions based on word analogy with remarkable ease.

### Patterns of questions on word analogy

**Questions on word analogy are of two types. Here we will discuss the two types.**

#### Type – 1 (Finding the analogous pair)

In this, a pair of words separated by a colon is given in the question. The two words, called the lead pair (or, the stem pair), are followed by four or five answer choices, each consisting of two words that are also separated by colons. From the answer options given, you are asked to find the pair of words that possesses a relationship similar (or, at least closest) to the one possessed by the pair given in the question.

e.g., LITRE : VOLUME ::

- |                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| a. bottle : can              | b. song : radio  |
| c. thermometer : temperature | d. gram : weight |

Here, the words *litre* and *volume* form the lead pair.

#### Type -2 (Finding the word that makes the analogous pair)

In this, the lead pair will be followed by a word and a blank. Your task is to fill in the blank from the given options so that the second pair of words share the same relation as does the first pair.

e.g., STORE: SHOP :: \_\_\_\_\_ : eat

- a. cinema
- b. bank
- c. restaurant
- d. queue

To tackle questions on Word Analogy, you are advised to adopt the following strategy:

- As a first step, you have to establish a relationship between the lead pair of words. Express the relationship (or bridge) in words. This relation, at its best, will be clear and strong. In the first example above, the bond may be expressed as *Litre* is a measure of *Volume*.
- From the given options, look for a pair of words which has a relationship closest to the one established in step 1. Thus, in the given example the best answer would be option *d*, because, the relation can be expressed as *Gram* is a measure of *Weight*.

While the pairs of words can be related in numerous ways, you will find below some common relationships that you might come across in placement tests.

S. No.	TYPE OF ANALOGY	EXAMPLE
1	Cause and effect	rain : flood :: hard work : success
2	Degree of intensity	warm : hot :: cool : cold
3	Part to whole	island: archipelago :: poem: anthology
4	Action : doer	postponement : procrastinator :: classification : taxonomist
5	Synonym	mean : average :: old : aged
6	Antonym	rich : poor :: long : short
7	General association	flowers : vase :: books : library

**Tips that will come in handy:**

- **Begin by building a bridge:**

Find the analogous pair for the following:

HANGAR : AIRCRAFT ::

- Orchestra : Music
- Yard : Engine
- Hand : Fingers
- Farm : Trees

**Bridge:** A hangar is a building where aircrafts are parked (or housed) as well as serviced. Now consider the answer options:

- An orchestra plays music. It is not a place where music is parked (housed) or serviced. So the option can be eliminated.
- Yard is a place where engines are housed and serviced. This option seems to be the answer.
- It is known that you can find fingers on a hand. However, the hand is not a place where fingers are housed or serviced. So the option can be eliminated.
- Farm is not a place where trees are housed or serviced. So this option too can be eliminated.

So from the above explanation, it is evident that *b* is the option that shows the strongest similarity and hence, it is the answer.

- **Adjust the bridge, if necessary:**

It might happen that two options seem very close and you are unable to choose the correct answer. In such cases, you will have to take a closer look at the bridge. This statement is better understood through the following example.

TYRE : RUBBER ::

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| a. fork : steel  | b. tree : wood  |
| c. potter : clay | d. candle : wax |

The bridge that we can form with the lead pair is that the first object ‘tyre’ is made of the second object ‘rubber’. From this bridge we can eliminate option *b* because wood is primarily obtained from trees and this does not happen in the case of the lead pair. Option *c* also can be eliminated as it is known that ‘potter’ is not made of ‘clay’. That leaves us with two options which follow the same bridge. In order to find the answer, we will have to adjust the bridge. The bridge can be adjusted as ‘The first object is made of the second object but the second object is not consumed like fuel while using the first object’. With this adjustment in the bridge, we can eliminate option *d* as when a candle is used; the wax gets consumed like fuel. The right analogy is option *a*, fork : steel.

Note: The opposite strategy also works equally well. That is, there are times when you probably need to expand your bridge (i.e., make it more general).

- **If stuck, build bridges between the pairs of words in the answer options and try to work backwards to the question.**
- **Watch out for common ‘wrong’ answer types:**

When solving questions on word analogy, one very interesting time-saving strategy is to eliminate ‘obvious’ wrong answers.

Here are some of the typical wrong answer choices that might appear:

- **Unrelated words**

A pair of words with no discernible relationship between them can straightaway be eliminated as a wrong option. For example, it is very clear that among the following pairs of words, the unrelated word pair is “River

— Office”.

- a. Night : Day
- b. Book : Lesson
- c. River : Office
- d. Writing : Pencil

- **Same subject trap**

It is often seen that the words in the answer choices are related to each other in the context in which they are used when compared to the **lead pair**, but essentially not the same **relationship**. Consider the following example:

KIWIS : NEW ZEALAND

- |                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| a. Peacock : India     | b. Dodo : Mauritius        |
| c. Aussies : Australia | d. Jungle Fowl : Sri Lanka |

Here, options *a*, *b* and *d* are related to the given lead pair in that peacock, dodo and jungle fowl are the national birds of India, Mauritius and Sri Lanka respectively, and hence they all belong to the same subject. But here, the answer is option *c* because Kiwis is the nick-name given to people of New Zealand and Aussies, the nick-name given to people of Australia.

If the lead pair in the above example has got KIWI instead of KIWIS, then the bridge should be formed as “the first word is the national bird of the second word” as Kiwi is the national bird of New Zealand. In that case your answer options vary.

- **Opposite bridge**

At times, you will find two options that seem to share exactly the same relation as the one shown by the lead pair. But on looking at the relations more closely you will note that the bridge that you had built for the lead pair would work only if the order of the words in one of the two close answer options were reversed. Hence, it is to be kept in mind that the order of words in which they appear is very important for an option be right.

PEN : WRITING

- a. Paper : talk
- b. Fan : rotating
- c. Illuminating : torch
- d. Brush : painting

As you have learnt earlier, the first step is to construct a clearly-defined bridge. Let this bridge be “*you use a pen for writing*”.

Now, options *a* and *b* can be eliminated because they don’t follow the same bridge. At this point options *c* and *d* seem to be very close because they have the same relation as the lead pair. But on careful observation you will note that the order in which the words are given in option *c* is reversed as compared to the lead pair and so it can be eliminated. Thus, the correct answer is option *d*.

**Drill 3****Exercise 1**

**Construct a bridge between each of the following pair of words:**

1. shoes, feet
2. arrows, quiver
3. brittle, glass
4. bag, carry
5. straight, crooked

**Exercise 2**

**For each of these pairs of words, form an analogous pair on your own showing the same relationship:**

1. spectacles : eyes ::
2. heat : evaporate::
3. goldsmith : jewellery ::
4. shout : scream ::
5. river : bank ::

**Exercise 3**

**Can you give the reason why these pairs of words are not analogous?**

1. river : bridge and staircase : terrace
2. pen : ink and blood : bank
3. stethoscope : doctor and tablets : pharmacist
4. illicit : illegal and implicit : open
5. anger : grimace and envy : green



## Topic 4: Miscellaneous Vocabulary

### Idioms

The term ‘idiom’ refers to a group of words in a particular order whose meaning is very different from the meanings of the individual words. So, by simply knowing the literal meanings of the words in the idiomatic expression we cannot find the actual meaning of the expression.

e.g., Consider the idiom “Let one’s hair down”.



It has got nothing to do with undoing the tuft of one’s hair. The idiom actually means ‘to be relaxed’.

Idioms are different from slangs in that idioms are formed using standard words, whereas, the term ‘slang’ refers to words or expressions used by and known within a closed community or group, and so, will not be considered as a standard usage in the language.

Since English is a highly idiomatic language, it is essential that one learns the meanings of commonly used idioms as well as how, when and where to use them.

#### IMPORTANT NOTE

There is no single resource from where you can learn all the idioms in one shot. Also, it is a cumbersome process to simply try and memorize meanings of idioms. Idioms will be a part of your active language only if you repeatedly use them in your day-to-day written and spoken language.

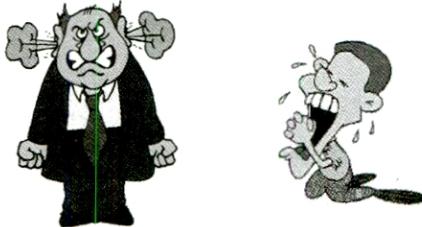
e.g., “Sam is a **man to ride the river with** and worthy of respect.”

Even if you didn’t know the idiom “a man to ride the river with”, the

## FACE

presence of the phrase “worthy of respect” should tell you that this idiom is used as a compliment to say something nice about ‘Sam’. The idiom actually means “someone who can be counted on during tough times”.

e.g., “Don’t **get your back up** about what Joe said - he was just kidding.”



This idiom means “to get angry” or “feel hurt”. We owe the origin of this expression to the world of animals. Horses (in fact, many other animals) will arch their back up when they get angry and this idiom was coined based on that.

## Phrasal Verbs

A phrase which is constructed with a verb along with a preposition or an adverb is called a phrasal verb. Hence, we can say that a phrasal verb takes the form “verb + preposition/adverb”. Though a phrasal verb consists of two or more words, the entire combination is considered as one grammatical unit. A phrasal verb is also called a “compound verb”. The meaning of the phrasal verb cannot be guessed from the meanings of the individual words.

e.g., ‘Give up’ – means to ‘surrender’ or ‘accept defeat’. Notice that the word ‘give’ means to offer and ‘up’ would mean something ‘above’ or ‘high’.

### Phrasal verbs using ‘Get’

#### Some phrasal verbs that begin with ‘get’ with their respective meanings:

While it is impossible to deal with all the phrasal verbs in this handout, we could help you start off with some common phrasal verbs. The base verb is in the leftmost column. The middle row is the preposition which transforms

the main verb to a phrasal verb and the last column has the meaning of the phrasal verb. Again, the key to using phrasal verbs fluently lies in reading a lot of works written in proper English.



About	To move from place to place
Across	To be communicated or understood
Ahead	To make progress
Along	To gel well with
Away	Escape
Back	Return
Behind	Fail to make any progress
On	Continue

Blow	Off	Release pressure, let off
	Out	Extinguish
	Up	Inflate, enlarge
Bring	Up	Raise
	Down	Kill
	In	To submit to a court
	Out	Expose, introduce
	After	Naming someone after someone else
Call	In	Telephone a radio/ TV show with a comment or question
	For	Require, demand
	On	Visit a person at his / her place
	Off	Cancel
	In	Relent
Give	Out	Distribute
	Away	Make a gift off
	Up	Surrender, accept defeat
	Back	Return
	Out	Ideate
Come	Across	Find accidentally
	Forward	Volunteer
	From	Originate from
	To	Result in, conclude with

Hang	Back /off	Be averse
	In	Continue
	On	Wait for a short interval of time during a telephone call
	Up	End a telephone conversation
Break	Down	Feel upset, start crying, stop functioning, decompose chemically
	Up	Partition, segregation
	Into	Enter forcefully
Turn	In	Submit
	Out	Oust, come to an end
	Up	Be present
	Down	Refuse, decline
Look	Up	Refer
	After	Take care of
	Into	Enquire into, investigate
	To	To rely on somebody for help
	For	Search for, expect
Take	After	Resemble in appearance
	Back	(Kind of) apologize
	On	Play against (in a game / competition)
	Over	Assume responsibility/ control

### Commonly Confused Words

The English language is not a phonetic one, ie., we do not say a word the same way it is spelled. While there are only 26 letters in the alphabet, with five letters, namely, *a, e, i, o* and *u* being ‘vowels’ and the rest ‘consonants’, there are as many as 45 different phonemes in English. The way a vowel is individually pronounced is often quite different from how it is pronounced in the context of a word. Also, there are some words which are pronounced in the same way but spelt differently and have different meanings. Such pairs of words are called ‘homophones’. Examples: tail – tale, which – witch,

whether – weather, etc. Additionally, there are some letters present in the written form of the word, but not pronounced (They are said to be silent.).

As mentioned earlier, there are words in English that are commonly mistaken to be some other word because they seem to be pretty similar. Such words are usually categorized as follows:

### 1. Heteronym

They are words that have the same spelling, but different pronunciations and different meanings for each pronunciation..

e.g., wind, live

### 2. Homophone

They are words that have the same pronunciation, but different meanings and spellings.

e.g., to, two, too

### 3. Homonym

They are words that have the same spelling and pronunciation, but different meanings.

e.g., pole, left

Sometimes in placement exams you will be asked questions wherein you will have to choose between the confusing words based on the given context.

e.g., He gathered some (**wood**, **would**) for a fire, but it was too damp to light.

**Drill 4****Exercise 1**

Figure out what idiom the pictures signify:

a. It's very easy!



b. Let's do this together!



c. Exams soon!



d. Fantastic!

**Exercise 2**

Figure out the meanings of the idioms used in these sentences:

1. I would suggest you don't invite him to the party. He is such a *wet blanket*.

2. My principal has no patience to listen to our explanations. He feels we *beat about the bush*.
  
  
  
3. If you don't like this television program, better leave the room quietly. Don't behave like a *dog in the manger*.
  
  
  
4. Our teacher asked us to admit our ignorance. He doesn't approve when we *whistle in the dark*.
  
  
  
5. Sachin Tendulkar's century was like a '*silver lining*' in India's innings against the Lankans.
  
  
  
6. The king wanted a war, but the minister advised him to *bury the hatchet*.
  
  
  
7. When she came to know that Sherlock Holmes had taken up her case, she saw *a light at the end of the tunnel*.
  
  
  
8. The task is going to be very difficult to complete. I wonder who is going to *bell the cat*?

## FACE

9. He is such an amiable chap. I don't think he would ever *cross swords* with anyone.
  
10. She doesn't know how to proceed from where she is. She is caught between *the devil and the deep sea*.

### Exercise 3

**Fill in the blanks with the right preposition to create an appropriate phrasal verb for making the sentence meaningful:**

1. I wouldn't take his word for what he says. He always blows \_\_\_\_\_ things.
  
2. Cricketer V.V.S. Laxman has said that pressure always brings \_\_\_\_\_ the best in him.
  
3. The whole thing comes \_\_\_\_\_ what I had foreseen.
  
4. My friend was very excited because he was calling \_\_\_\_\_ his favourite movie star next week.
  
5. My parents had given me a great childhood. Now that they are too old to fend for themselves, it is time to give \_\_\_\_\_ what I earned.
  
6. The policeman reported that a burglar had broken \_\_\_\_\_ the household last evening.
  
7. The customer service executive promised to resolve the problem on the

spot and requested me to hang \_\_\_\_\_.

8. The teacher expected us to turn \_\_\_\_\_ the assignment the following weekend.
9. The honourable minister has agreed to preside over the function and give \_\_\_\_\_ the prizes.
10. England takes \_\_\_\_\_ America in the semi-final tomorrow.

#### Exercise 4

**Find the different meanings of the following heteronyms:**

(Also learn the correct pronunciation)

1. Wound  
a. b.
2. Lead  
a. b.
3. Tear  
a. b.
4. Conduct  
a. b.
5. Resume  
a. b.

**Exercise 5**

Fill in the blanks using the correct homonyms from the list given below:

refuse, invalid, close, desert, dove

1. The soldier decided to \_\_\_\_\_ the post in the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. When shot at, the \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ down the cliff.
3. The insurance was \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The garbage bin was so full that it had to \_\_\_\_\_ more \_\_\_\_\_.
5. They were too \_\_\_\_\_ to the door to \_\_\_\_\_ it.

**Exercise 6**

Choose the correct homophone from the options that means the following:

1. Not moving or fixed in one place
  - a. Stationery
  - b. Stationary
2. Illegal
  - a. Elicit
  - b. Illicit
3. A fight or contest between two people
  - a. Duel
  - b. Dual
4. Separate and distinct
  - a. Discreet
  - b. Discrete
5. A group of musical notes
  - a. Chord
  - b. Cord