



SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY, KOLHAPUR

**CENTRE FOR DISTANCE
AND ONLINE EDUCATION**

**B. A. Part II : English
Semester III (DSC - Minor)
English for Competitive Examination III**

**Semester IV (DSC - Minor)
English for Competitive Examination IV**

(In accordance with National Education Policy 2020)
(Academic Year 2025-26 onwards)

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Preface

English for Competitive Examinations is one of the resources containing the topics that cover different aspects of competitive examinations like MPSC, UPSC, etc. The book is based on the NEP recommendations regarding a shift from theoretical education to practical, skill-based, and employment-oriented education. This book is introduced to Minor English students of B.A. II (Semester III and Semester IV) at undergraduate level of Shivaji University, Kolhapur.

Each semester contains four chapters. Semester III covers passage-based comprehension, word usage, letter writing and essay writing. Semester IV deals with public speaking, interview skills, group discussion, and email writing. The book covers spoken and written aspects of English.

Each chapter presents subject matter in simple and clear manner, and provides ample number of exercises to test the knowledge acquired by the students.

We hope that the readers will enjoy the book and face the competitive examinations with clarity of thought and confidence. We wish them very promising future, ahead !

● Editors ●

Prof. (Dr.) Arvind Tukaram Jadhav
Yashwantrao Chavan College of Science,
Karad, Dist. Satara

Dr. Prakash Ganpat Kumbhar
M. H. Shinde Mahavidyalaya, Tisangi,
Tal. Gaganbavada, Dist. Kolhapur

Writing Team

Author's Name	Unit Number	
	Sem. III	Sem. IV
Dr. Somnath Panade Shri. Raosaheb Ramrao Patil College, Savalaj Tal- Tasgaon Dist-Sangli	1	-
Dr. Manoj Gujar Prof. Sambhajirao Kadam College, Deur Tal: Koregaon, Dist: Satara	2	-
Dr. Prakash Kumbhar M.H. Shinde Arts and Commerce College, Tisangi Tal- Gaganbavada, Dist- Kolhapur	3	-
Dr. Arvind Jadhav Yashwantrao Chavan College of Science, Karad Tal-Karad, Dist- Satara	4	-
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Dr. Pramod Patil Vishwasrao Naik Arts, Commerce and Baba Naik Science Mahavidyalaya, Shirala Tal - Shirala, Dist- Sangli	-	2
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Dr. B. S. Lokade Savitribai Phule Mahila Mahavidyalaya, Satara	-	4

● **Editors** ●

Prof. (Dr.) Arvind Tukaram Jadhav
Yashwantrao Chavan College of Science,
Karad, Dist. Satara

Dr. Prakash Ganpat Kumbhar
M. H. Shinde Mahavidyalaya, Tisangi,
Tal. Gaganbavada, Dist. Kolhapur

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Each Unit begins with the section objectives -

Objectives are directive and indicative of :

1. what has been presented in the unit and
2. what is expected from you
3. what you are expected to know pertaining to the specific unit, once you have completed working on the unit.

The self-check exercises with possible answers will help you understand the unit in the right perspective. Go through the possible answers only after you write your answers. These exercises are not to be submitted to us for evaluation. They have been provided to you as study tools to keep you on the right track as you study the unit.

Dear Students,

The SLM is simply a supporting material for the study of this paper. It is also advised to see the new syllabus 2025-26 and study the reference books & other related material for the detailed study of the paper.

Module I

Paragraph and Passage Based Comprehension

1.0 Objectives: -

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- ◆ **Develop comprehension skills**
 - ◆ **Enhance analytical thinking**
 - ◆ **Strengthen vocabulary and contextual understanding**
 - ◆ **Improve accuracy in answering MCQs**
 - ◆ **Prepare for competitive and academic examinations**
-

1.1 Introduction:

Competitive examinations in India are an important way to select candidates for various government and public sector jobs. These exams test the knowledge, reasoning ability, and problem-solving skills of aspirants. They are known for their tough competition, as thousands of candidates appear for a limited number of posts. These exams require hard work, regular study and proper planning. For many people, success in competitive exams brings not only job security and respect but also the opportunity to serve the nation through different roles in administration, banking and other services.

Comprehension of a passage is one of the components of the evaluation in competitive examinations. It is an important part of the evaluation as it checks how well a candidate can understand, analyze, and interpret written text. In exams like UPSC, MPSC, SSC, IBPS and other exams comprehension questions test reading ability, vocabulary, and logical thinking. Candidates are asked to read a short passage carefully and then answer questions based on it. This section is useful because it does not depend only on memorization, but on clear understanding and quick thinking. Good comprehension skills help students manage time better and score higher in exams, making it an essential part of preparation.

1.2 Weightage given to Comprehension in Competitive Examination:**In UPSC Examination:**

The CSAT paper (Civil Services Aptitude Test) is the General Studies Paper-II of the UPSC Civil Services Preliminary Examination. It has 80 questions for 200 marks. Out of these, about 25 to 30 questions are based on comprehension or

English reading passages. This means nearly one-third of the paper is from comprehension, which makes it very important for candidates. In the UPSC Civil Services Mains Examination, comprehension also plays an important role. The exam includes two compulsory qualifying language papers. Paper A is based on a regional language chosen from the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, while Paper B is the English language paper. Each carry 300 marks. Both papers include a comprehension passage followed by questions that test the candidate's ability to understand, interpret, and express ideas clearly. While these papers are only qualifying in nature, scoring at least 25% in each is essential for the evaluation of the other mains papers.

In MPSC Examination:

In the MPSC (Maharashtra Public Service Commission) Prelims CSAT Paper-II, passage comprehension is an important part. It is tested in both English and Marathi. It usually comes under the 'Comprehension and Language Skills' section. This section normally carries about 15–20% of the total marks, which means around 30–40 marks. There are generally 15–20 questions on comprehension.

In IBPS Examination:

In the **IBPS examinations**, English comprehension is an important part of the **English Language section**. In **Prelims**, the English section usually has **30 questions for 30 marks**, out of which **5–10 questions** are based on comprehension passages. In **Mains**, comprehension is given more weightage, often **10–15 questions** in the English section (worth about **15–20 marks**). So, overall, English comprehension carries around **15–25% weightage** within the English Language paper.

The **number of questions asked on a single passage** varies depending on the exam and the total marks allotted to the English or language section. Typically:

- ◆ **UPSC CSAT Paper-II (Prelims):** Usually 2–4 questions per passage.
- ◆ **MPSC CSAT Paper-II (Prelims):** Around 2–5 questions per passage.
- ◆ **IBPS Exams (Prelims & Mains):** 4–6 questions per passage in Prelims; 5–8 in Mains.

The **typical length** for comprehension passages is **250–350 words, about 15–25 lines**, with **3–5 MCQs**. The questions usually test **main idea, inference, vocabulary, tone, and factual details**.

Hence, comprehension is a significant part of competitive exams across UPSC, MPSC, IBPS and other such examinations. It carries substantial weightage in both prelims and mains, testing candidates' ability to read, understand and interpret information accurately. Success in these exams requires focused practice in comprehension, as it can contribute notably to overall scores and, in some cases, is essential for qualifying the papers.

Let us see the difference between Paragraph and passage.

1.3 Difference between Paragraph and Passage:

What is paragraph?

A paragraph is a short piece of writing that talks about one main idea. It is made up of connected sentences that explain or support that idea. Usually, it begins with a topic sentence and then gives details or examples.

Specimen of a Paragraph:

“I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, though not of that country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull. He got a good estate by merchandise, and leaving off his trade, lived afterwards at York, from whence he had married my mother, whose relations were named Robinson, a very good family in that country, and from whom I was called Robinson Kreutznaer; but, by the usual corruption of words in England, we are now called—nay, we call ourselves and write our name—Crusoe; and so my companions always called me.” (Original excerpt from Chapter 1, ‘Start in Life’ of *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe)

The above paragraph focuses on a single idea. It introduces **the protagonist Robinson Crusoe** clearly, giving his name, birth year and birthplace. It **provides background and context**, explaining his family origins and social status. It also **flows logically**, moving from his father’s background to his mother’s family, then to the evolution of his name.

What is a passage?

A passage is a bigger part of a text. It may have one paragraph or several paragraphs together. A passage often explains an idea in more detail or presents many related ideas. In exams, passages are given for comprehension, where students read and then answer questions to show their understanding.

Specimen of a Passage:

I hold degrees in Arts and Law from the University of the Witwatersrand and have practiced law in Johannesburg. I was arrested in 1962 and sentenced to five years for leaving the country without a passport and inciting workers to strike. While serving this sentence, I faced further charges of sabotage and related offenses, leading to the current trial. I have never been a member of the Communist Party, only of the African National Congress (ANC), which has always sought to achieve its objectives through peaceful means. However, repeated government refusal to engage in dialogue left us no choice but to

adopt more direct methods. I have been involved in organizing protests, strikes, and other forms of resistance against apartheid, and have been arrested multiple times for these activities. To respond to violent suppression by the state, the ANC formed uMkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing, to carry out acts of sabotage against government installations. These acts were planned carefully, aimed at drawing attention to injustice without causing loss of life. I do not deny these charges, but they were undertaken as a sober response to years of oppression. Throughout my life, I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all people live in harmony with equal opportunities. It is an ideal I hope to see realized, and one for which, if necessary, I am prepared to die. (Abridged version of Nelson Mandela's Speech 'I am prepared to die')

As a passage, it has more paragraphs. It provides a focused description of Nelson Mandela's character, highlighting his courage, moral integrity, and commitment to justice and equality. The ideas flow logically, moving from his personal bravery and principles to his leadership qualities, empathy, and vision for a fair society. Overall, it is concise, informative, and allows readers to reflect on Mandela's values and leadership, making it highly suitable as an exam passage.

1.4 What is comprehension of a passage or paragraph?

Comprehension of a passage or paragraph means the ability to read a text carefully and understand its meaning. It is not only about reading the words, but also about grasping the main idea, important details and the writer's message. Comprehension checks whether the reader can explain the content in their own words, make inferences, and answer questions based on the text. In exams, comprehension exercises are given in the form of a passage followed by questions. These questions may ask about the central idea, supporting details, the meaning of words or phrases, or the hidden meaning of the text. In other words, there are some factual, inferential and vocabulary questions. Thus, comprehension tests both language skills and critical thinking.

1.5 Two Types of Comprehension:

1. Literal Comprehension:

In this comprehension, the focus is on **explicit information** stated in the text. It answers the questions like who, what, when, where. In other words, it centres on the facts in the passage.

2. Interpretative or Critical Comprehension:

It requires the reader to **analyze, infer, and interpret** the information, ideas, or emotions presented. Instead of simply recalling facts, the reader is expected to **read between the lines** and understand the deeper meaning, relationships, or implications.

1.6 Guidelines for Comprehension:

1. Preview the questions before you read the passage.
2. Go through the passage to grasp the main idea and supporting details.
3. Pay attention to keywords, main ideas and author's tone.
4. Determine whether the passage informs, persuades, describes or narrates.
5. Note important facts, ideas and keywords.
6. Learn the meaning of difficult words from the context.
7. Observe how the passage is organized, including introduction, arguments, evidence, and conclusion.
8. Separate objective statements from personal viewpoints.
9. Read between the lines to understand implied ideas, tone, or emotions.
10. Put the main ideas in your own words.
11. Refer to the passage and support your answers with evidence.
12. Re-read difficult parts to ensure clarity and consistency.

1.7 Common Topics in Reading Comprehension in Competitive Examinations:

In competitive exams, passages (for comprehension, analysis, or MCQs) usually cover a broad spectrum of topics—because the idea is not only to test English comprehension but also your awareness of important issues. Here's a categorized list of the most common themes:

1. Polity & Governance

- ◆ Features of the Indian Constitution
- ◆ Fundamental Rights & Duties, Directive Principles
- ◆ Parliament, Judiciary, Federalism
- ◆ Electoral reforms, role of Election Commission
- ◆ Decentralization & Panchayati Raj

2. History & Culture

- ◆ Freedom Struggle (1857 Revolt, Gandhian movements, etc.)
- ◆ Social Reform Movements (Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Phule, Ambedkar)
- ◆ Indian Renaissance & Nationalism
- ◆ Art, architecture, and cultural heritage

3. Economy & Development

- ◆ Planning, NITI Aayog, Economic reforms
- ◆ Poverty, unemployment, inequality
- ◆ Agriculture, industry, services sector
- ◆ Banking, taxation, fiscal & monetary policy
- ◆ Globalization & trade

4. Environment & Geography

- ◆ Climate change, global warming
- ◆ Biodiversity, conservation efforts
- ◆ Pollution & sustainable development
- ◆ Natural disasters & disaster management
- ◆ Water resources & renewable energy

5. Science, Technology & Ethics

- ◆ Space research, ISRO missions
- ◆ Biotechnology, health & vaccines
- ◆ Artificial intelligence, digital economy
- ◆ Ethical dilemmas in technology
- ◆ Cyber security, privacy issues

6. Society & Current Affairs

- ◆ Gender issues, women empowerment
- ◆ Caste, social justice, affirmative action
- ◆ Urbanization, migration, demographic challenges
- ◆ Education, health, welfare schemes
- ◆ Global issues: UN, international relations, wars & peace

In short, Polity, History, Economy, Environment, Science-Tech, Society, and Current Affairs dominate both UPSC and MPSC comprehension passages.

1.8 Skills required for better Comprehension of a passage:-

To understand a passage effectively, a reader requires several important skills.

1. **Vocabulary Knowledge:** The first of these is a strong knowledge of vocabulary, which helps in recognizing the meaning of words, idioms, and even figurative expressions.

2. **Grammar and Syntax Awareness:** Awareness of grammar and sentence structure enables the reader to see how ideas are connected and how punctuation or modifiers can change meaning.
3. **Reading Fluency:** Reading fluently, at a steady pace and with the right expression, is equally necessary, as it reduces the effort of decoding words and allows the mind to focus on understanding.
4. **Inference and Interpretation:** Another vital skill is the ability to draw inferences and interpret meanings that are not directly stated. Often, the main idea of a passage is hidden beneath details, examples, or descriptions and the reader must be able to separate central themes from supporting points.
5. **Critical thinking and Analysis:** is also essential, since it encourages the reader to judge arguments, recognize bias, and compare different perspectives. Recognizing how a text is organized, whether by cause and effect, problem and solution, or simple chronology, further guides comprehension.
6. **Identifying Purpose and Tone:** A reader should be able to detect the purpose of the passage—whether it is written to inform, to persuade, or simply to entertain—and also sense the tone, which might be serious, humorous, or even sarcastic. Good readers monitor their own understanding as they go, using strategies such as rereading, underlining, or asking themselves questions when the meaning is unclear.
7. **Context:** Finally, prior knowledge and an awareness of the wider context, including historical or cultural background, add depth to comprehension.

Altogether, these skills enable readers not just to understand words on a page, but to grasp ideas, think critically and truly engage with the text.

1.9 Specimen of Passages on Different Topics:

Now let us see some passages and their comprehension. Here is a literary passage and MCQs based on it.

Passage 1

I was born a slave on a plantation in Franklin County, Virginia. I do not know the exact date of my birth, though I suspect it was around 1858 or 1859. The place was near a cross-roads post-office called Hale's Ford. My earliest memories are of the cabin in which my family lived—a small, windowless structure with a dirt floor and no bed, only a pile of rags. Life was harsh and uncertain. We never knew what the next day would bring, and we were entirely subject to the will of others. My mother, though a slave, was a woman of great strength and dignity. She did all she could to provide for us, often working long hours and

sacrificing her own comfort. I remember her rising early to prepare food and staying up late to mend clothes. Her devotion left a lasting impression on me. There was no regular schooling for slaves. I had never seen a book until one day I saw a young colored boy walking down the road reading. That moment changed my life. I was filled with a longing to learn, to understand the mysterious symbols on the page. I resolved then and there that I would learn to read. After emancipation, my family moved to West Virginia in search of better opportunities. Life was still difficult, but we were free. I worked in salt furnaces and coal mines, often beginning my day before sunrise. Despite the exhaustion, I never gave up my dream of education. I would carry books with me to work and study during breaks. I learned to read by candlelight, often with aching muscles and tired eyes. The desire to improve myself burned stronger than any hardship. Eventually, I heard of the Hampton Institute—a school for colored youth. I walked hundreds of miles to reach it, determined to gain admission. That journey marked the beginning of a new chapter in my life. I had no money, but I had hope. I offered to clean rooms to pay for my tuition. The school accepted me, and I began my formal education. From that moment, I knew that learning was the key to freedom—not just from slavery, but from ignorance and limitation. (Original excerpt from *Up From Slavery* Chapter I: “A Slave Among Slaves” by Booker T. Washington)

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What does Washington say about the conditions of his birth and early life?

- A. He was born in a hospital with proper records.
- B. He lived in a comfortable cabin with basic amenities.
- C. He was born into slavery and lived in harsh conditions.
- D. He had access to education from an early age.

Answer: C

Explanation: Washington describes being born into slavery and living in a windowless, floorless cabin.

2. What role did Washington’s mother play in his early life?

- A. She discouraged his desire to learn.
- B. She was indifferent to his struggles.
- C. She worked tirelessly and inspired him.
- D. She sent him to school regularly.

Answer: C

Explanation: Washington admired her strength and sacrifice.

3. What event sparked Washington's desire to learn?

- A. Hearing a sermon about education
- B. Seeing a boy reading a book
- C. Receiving a book from his mother
- D. Attending a secret school for slaves

Answer: B

Explanation: The sight of a boy reading ignited his passion for literacy.

4. How did Washington pursue education after emancipation?

- A. He enrolled in a local school immediately.
- B. He gave up on learning due to work demands.
- C. He studied during breaks and walked to Hampton Institute.
- D. He was taught by private tutors.

Answer: C

Explanation: He studied while working and made a long journey to Hampton Institute.

5. What does Washington believe education represents?

- A. A way to earn money
- B. A path to political power
- C. A tool for escaping ignorance and limitation
- D. A privilege for the elite

Answer: C

Explanation: He sees education as the key to true freedom and self-improvement.

The types of questions asked in the multiple-choice format based on the passage from *Up from Slavery* include factual recall, which checks your memory of specific details like where Washington was born or what inspired him to learn. Character analysis questions explore the traits and motivations of individuals, such as his mother's influence or Washington's determination. Cause and effect questions examine how one event leads to another, like how seeing a boy reading led Washington to pursue education. Theme and message questions focus on the central ideas of the passage, such as the role of education in achieving freedom. Inference questions

require you to read between the lines and draw conclusions based on context, like understanding Washington's attitude toward hardship. These types help assess both surface-level comprehension and deeper critical thinking.

Passage No. 2

Gender inequality remains a major challenge in India, especially in traditional societies where women face coercive control and limited autonomy. Deep-rooted biases often dictate how women should behave, prioritize marriage over careers, and abandon work after marriage. These expectations restrict women's choices and reinforce dependency. One of the starkest manifestations of this inequality is the gender digital divide. According to the Mobile Gender Gap 2021 Report, only 15% of Indian women have internet access. In contrast, 41% of men own smartphones, while only 25% of women do. This gap limits women's ability to benefit from digital opportunities, education, and employment. The divide is not just technological—it reflects broader social exclusion. Economic empowerment is hindered when women lack digital tools. Bridging this gap requires multi-stakeholder efforts. Government policies must promote digital inclusion and equal access to education. NGOs and social enterprises play a key role in empowering vulnerable women. Awareness campaigns can challenge stereotypes and shift societal perceptions. Offline biases must be addressed alongside online access. Gender equality in the digital realm is essential for inclusive growth. Without it, half the population remains sidelined from progress. The digital divide is both a symptom and a cause of inequality. Empowering women digitally means empowering them socially and economically. Technology must be a tool of liberation, not limitation. The future of India depends on equal access—for everyone. (Taken and paraphrased from '**Gender Inequality and the Digital Divide in India**' published in *The Times of India* on **July 2, 2023**.)

Multiple Choice Questions:

1: What percentage of Indian women has access to the internet according to the Mobile Gender Gap 2021 Report?

Options:

- A. 41%
- B. 25%
- C. 15%
- D. 50%

Answer: C. 15%

Explanation: The article highlights that only 15% of Indian women have internet access, underscoring the severity of the gender digital divide in India.

2: What does the gender digital divide imply about broader societal issues?

Options:

- A. It is purely a technical problem
- B. It reflects deeper social exclusion and inequality
- C. It only affects urban women
- D. It is caused by lack of interest in technology

Answer: B. It reflects deeper social exclusion and inequality

Explanation: The digital divide is not just about access to devices—it mirrors systemic gender biases that limit women’s autonomy, education, and economic participation.

3: What does “coercive control” most likely mean in the context of gender inequality?

Options:

- A. Encouraging independence
- B. Forcing decisions and limiting freedom
- C. Providing financial support
- D. Promoting education

Answer: B. Forcing decisions and limiting freedom

Explanation: “Coercive control” refers to the subtle or overt ways in which women’s choices are restricted—such as being pressured to leave jobs or avoid digital platforms.

4: What is one proposed solution to bridge the gender digital divide?

Options:

- A. Restricting internet use for men
- B. Promoting digital inclusion through policy
- C. Eliminating smartphones
- D. Encouraging women to avoid technology

Answer: B. Promoting digital inclusion through policy

Explanation: The article calls for multi-stakeholder efforts, including government policies that promote equal access to digital tools and education for women.

5: Why is digital empowerment considered essential for gender equality?

Options:

- A. It helps women become more dependent
- B. It isolates women from society
- C. It enables access to education, jobs, and social participation
- D. It reduces the need for government support

Answer: C. It enables access to education, jobs, and social participation

Explanation: Digital access empowers women by connecting them to opportunities, resources, and networks that foster independence and equality.

The set of MCQs prepared for this passage is well-balanced and covers different dimensions of comprehension. **The first question tests factual recall**, asking the reader to remember a specific statistic (15% of Indian women with internet access). Such questions ensure close reading and attention to detail. **The second is an inference-based question**, requiring readers to connect the digital divide with wider issues of social exclusion. This tests critical interpretation rather than memory. The third checks **vocabulary in context**, focusing on the phrase “coercive control.” Instead of asking for a dictionary meaning, it makes students interpret meaning based on usage in the passage. **The fourth is an application question**, as it asks the reader to identify a practical solution suggested in the text. This ensures understanding of the problem-solving aspect. **Finally, the fifth evaluates the main idea and significance**, testing whether readers grasp why digital empowerment is central to gender equality.

Together, these questions touch all the essential comprehension skills: **factual recall, inference, vocabulary, application, and thematic understanding**. This makes the MCQs not only exam-oriented but also effective in developing deeper reading skills.

Here are some more passages and MCQs based on them for study.

Passage 3:

Climate change has become one of the most pressing issues of our time, affecting every region of the world in some way or the other. It refers to the long-term alteration of temperature and weather patterns, largely caused by human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial growth. These activities release greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide and methane, which trap heat in the Earth’s atmosphere. This phenomenon, known as the greenhouse effect, is natural in moderation but dangerous when intensified by human interference. One of the most visible signs of climate

change is the rise in global temperatures. Over the past century, the Earth's average temperature has increased at a pace faster than any natural cycle recorded in history. This warming leads to the melting of glaciers, rising sea levels, and disruptions in rainfall patterns. Regions that once experienced predictable seasons now face unexpected droughts, floods, or cyclones. Farmers, who depend on stable climate conditions for crops, are among the worst affected communities. Climate change does not merely threaten nature; it also endangers human health, economy, and security. Heatwaves have become more frequent, causing deaths and health issues. Water scarcity has emerged in regions once considered water-rich, creating conflicts over resources. Diseases are spreading to areas where they were previously unknown, due to changing temperatures that allow harmful organisms to survive. Despite the seriousness of the problem, many solutions lie within human control. Transitioning to renewable sources of energy like solar and wind power can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. Planting more trees, reducing waste, and conserving water are steps individuals can take in their daily lives. Governments too have a crucial role, by implementing strict policies, encouraging eco-friendly industries, and cooperating internationally. The Paris Agreement of 2015, for example, was a major global step, where nations pledged to limit temperature rise below two degrees Celsius. However, these promises require consistent action and accountability. Unless we act swiftly, the impact of climate change will not only worsen but will become irreversible. The future of the planet depends on collective responsibility, where each person, community, and nation contributes toward healing the Earth.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is the primary cause of modern climate change?

- A) Natural weather cycles
- B) Human activities releasing greenhouse gases
- C) Volcanic eruptions
- D) Movement of tectonic plates

Answer: B

Explanation: While natural factors affect climate, the current crisis is mainly due to human activities like burning fossil fuels and deforestation.

2. Which of the following is a direct consequence of global warming?

- A) Decrease in greenhouse gases
- B) Stabilization of seasons
- C) Melting of glaciers
- D) Strengthening of ozone layer

Answer: C

Explanation: Rising global temperatures cause glaciers and polar ice caps to melt, leading to higher sea levels.

3. The Paris Agreement of 2015 aimed to:

- A) Stop the use of fossil fuels immediately
- B) Reduce global temperatures to pre-industrial levels
- C) Limit temperature rise below 2°C compared to pre-industrial times
- D) Ban all carbon emissions

Answer: C

Explanation: The Paris Agreement set the target of keeping global warming well below 2°C, ideally 1.5°C.

4. Which community is most affected by unpredictable rainfall caused by climate change?

- A) Politicians
- B) Farmers
- C) Teachers
- D) Engineers

Answer: B

Explanation: Farmers rely on stable climate conditions for crops, so irregular rainfall directly impacts agriculture.

5. What is one effective solution to reduce climate change at the individual level?

- A) Burning more coal for energy
- B) Cutting more trees
- C) Using renewable energy and conserving resources
- D) Increasing industrial activity

Answer: C

Explanation: Small steps like saving water, reducing waste, and shifting to renewable energy sources help mitigate climate change.

Passage No. 4

The Revolt of 1857 was the first major challenge to British rule in India. It began at Meerut when Indian soldiers refused to use cartridges greased with cow and pig fat, which deeply hurt religious sentiments. The uprising soon spread to Delhi, Kanpur, Lucknow, and Jhansi. Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal emperor, was declared the symbolic leader, while figures like Rani Lakshmibai, Tantia Tope, Nana Saheb, and Kunwar Singh provided active leadership. The causes of the revolt were many. The Doctrine of Lapse and annexations angered rulers; artisans and peasants suffered under heavy taxation and loss of traditional industries; and religious fears of forced conversions grew. Even progressive reforms such as widow remarriage were viewed with suspicion. Despite heroic resistance, the revolt failed. It was largely limited to northern and central India, lacked coordination, and many rulers such as the Scindias and Nizam supported the British. Superior military strength also gave the British an advantage. The revolt's impact was immense. The East India Company was abolished, and power was transferred to the British Crown through the Government of India Act, 1858. Annexations stopped, Indian princes were promised protection, and the army was reorganized. Though it failed, the revolt sowed seeds of nationalism, inspiring future leaders and movements in India's struggle for independence.

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. The immediate cause of the Revolt of 1857 was:
 - a) Doctrine of Lapse
 - b) Annexation of Awadh
 - c) Use of greased cartridges
 - d) High taxation

Answer: c) Use of greased cartridges

Explanation: Religious sentiments of Hindu and Muslim soldiers were hurt by greased cartridges.

2. Who was declared the symbolic leader of the revolt?
 - a) Rani Lakshmibai
 - b) Nana Saheb
 - c) Bahadur Shah Zafar
 - d) Tantia Tope

Answer: c) Bahadur Shah Zafar

Explanation: The Mughal emperor gave legitimacy to the rebellion.

3. Which ruler supported the British during the revolt?

- a) Rani Lakshmibai
- b) Kunwar Singh
- c) Scindias of Gwalior
- d) Nana Saheb

Answer: c) Scindias of Gwalior

Explanation: Many princely states remained loyal to the British.

4. Which Act transferred power from the East India Company to the Crown?

- a) Charter Act, 1833
- b) Government of India Act, 1858
- c) Indian Councils Act, 1861
- d) Morley-Minto Reforms, 1909

Answer: b) Government of India Act, 1858

Explanation: This marked the end of Company rule.

5. The Revolt of 1857 was confined mainly to:

- a) South India
- b) East India
- c) North and Central India
- d) Western India

Answer: c) North and Central India

Explanation: The revolt was not pan-Indian in nature.

Passage No. 5

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has emerged as one of the leading space agencies in the world, known for achieving ambitious missions at relatively low cost. Since its founding in 1969 under Dr. Vikram Sarabhai's vision, ISRO has aimed to use space technology for national development, particularly in communication, weather forecasting, and resource management. One of its landmark achievements was the launch of the *Aryabhata* satellite in 1975, followed by the establishment of the Indian National Satellite

(INSAT) system and the Indian Remote Sensing (IRS) satellites. These contributed to telecommunication, television broadcasting, agriculture, and disaster management. India's space journey reached new heights with interplanetary missions. The *Mars Orbiter Mission (Mangalyaan)* in 2013 made India the first Asian country to reach Mars orbit and the first in the world to do so in its maiden attempt. Later, the *Chandrayaan missions* showcased India's lunar exploration capabilities. Chandrayaan-1 (2008) confirmed the presence of water molecules on the Moon, while Chandrayaan-3 (2023) made history by achieving a soft landing near the lunar south pole — a world-first. In addition, ISRO has been developing its own navigation system (*NavIC*), working on the human spaceflight program (*Gaganyaan*), and expanding international cooperation. Future plans include a Venus mission (*Shukrayaan*) and the Aditya-L1 mission for studying the Sun, which was successfully launched in 2023. ISRO's achievements are not only scientific but also symbolic of India's growing global stature. Its missions combine technological innovation with cost efficiency, making it a model for developing nations in space research.

Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Which was India's first satellite launched in 1975?

- a) Bhaskara-I
- b) Aryabhata
- c) INSAT-1A
- d) Rohini

Answer: b) Aryabhata

Explanation: It marked India's entry into space technology.

2. India became the first country to reach Mars orbit in its maiden attempt through:

- a) Chandrayaan-1
- b) PSLV-C11
- c) Mars Orbiter Mission
- d) Aditya-L1

Answer: c) Mars Orbiter Mission

Explanation: Launched in 2013, it was praised globally for its success and low cost.

3. Chandrayaan-3 achieved which unique feat in 2023?

- a) India's first satellite in space
- b) Soft landing near lunar south pole
- c) First Indian astronaut in orbit
- d) First Sun observation mission

Answer: b) Soft landing near lunar south pole

Explanation: No other country had achieved this before India.

4. The Indian regional navigation system developed by ISRO is called:

- a) Gaganyaan
- b) NavIC
- c) INSAT
- d) IRNSS

Answer: b) NavIC

Explanation: NavIC is India's answer to GPS.

5. Which of the following is India's first mission to study the Sun?

- a) Aditya-L1
- b) Shukrayaan
- c) Mangalyaan
- d) Astrosat

Answer: a) Aditya-L1

Explanation: Launched in 2023 to study the solar corona and solar winds.

Passage No. 6

The digital economy refers to an economy that is based on digital technologies, including digital communication networks, computers, software, and other information technologies. It encompasses online services, e-commerce, digital banking, fintech, and the broader use of data and analytics to drive business, governance, and innovation. Over the past two decades, the digital economy has transformed the way businesses operate and individuals interact, reducing transaction costs and increasing efficiency. In India, the digital economy has seen significant growth due to widespread internet penetration, smartphone adoption, and government initiatives like Digital India, Unified Payments Interface (UPI), and Aadhaar-linked services. E-commerce platforms, online

education, telemedicine, and digital payments have expanded access to goods and services, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. The digital economy also generates new employment opportunities, such as app development, data analytics, cybersecurity, and digital marketing. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) benefit from online marketplaces, which allow them to reach national and international consumers without heavy investment in physical infrastructure. However, the digital economy faces challenges. Digital divide, cybersecurity threats, data privacy concerns, and lack of digital literacy in some populations limit its full potential. Regulatory frameworks and policies are evolving to address these challenges while promoting innovation. Internationally, the digital economy is reshaping trade patterns, supply chains, and competition, requiring countries to adapt to rapid technological changes. Sustainable growth of the digital economy requires inclusive policies, investments in digital infrastructure, skill development, and robust data protection mechanisms. A well-managed digital economy can enhance productivity, improve governance, and promote financial inclusion, making it a cornerstone of modern economic development.

Multiple Choice Questions

1. The digital economy primarily relies on:
- a) Traditional trade markets
 - b) Digital technologies and networks
 - c) Manual labor and physical cash
 - d) Agricultural exports

Answer: b) Digital technologies and networks

Explanation: Digital technologies like internet, computers, and software form the backbone of the digital economy.

2. Which government initiative in India promotes digital services?
- a) Make in India
 - b) Digital India
 - c) Startup India
 - d) Smart Cities Mission

Answer: b) Digital India

Explanation: Digital India aims to enhance digital infrastructure, governance, and literacy.

3. One key benefit of the digital economy for SMEs is:

- a) Reduced access to markets
- b) High infrastructure costs
- c) Wider reach through online platforms
- d) Restriction to local consumers

Answer: c) Wider reach through online platforms

Explanation: SMEs can sell products nationally and internationally with minimal physical infrastructure.

Q4. Which of the following is a challenge for the digital economy?

- a) Increased agricultural production
- b) Digital divide and cybersecurity threats
- c) Traditional banking methods
- d) Urbanization

Answer: b) Digital divide and cybersecurity threats

Explanation: Unequal access to digital tools and risks of cybercrime limit potential benefits.

5. Inclusive growth in the digital economy requires:

- a) Reducing internet access
- b) Skill development and data protection
- c) Limiting e-commerce platforms
- d) Focusing only on urban areas

Answer: b) Skill development and data protection

Explanation: Training, infrastructure, and strong privacy laws are essential for sustainable digital growth.

1.10 Exercises:

Que. A) Choose the correct alternative from the ones given below.

Q1. What do comprehension exercises in competitive exams mainly test?

- a) Memorization skills
- b) Reading, analysis, and interpretation
- c) Mathematical ability
- d) Writing long essays

Q.2. Approximately what proportion of UPSC CSAT Paper-II questions are based on comprehension?

- a) One-fourth
- b) One-third
- c) Half
- d) None

Q.3. In MPSC Prelims CSAT Paper-II, comprehension questions carry about:

- a) 10–15% weightage
- b) 15–20% weightage
- c) 25–30% weightage
- d) 40–50% weightage

Q.4. In IBPS Mains, comprehension questions usually account for:

- a) 1–2 marks
- b) 5–10 marks
- c) 15–20 marks
- d) 50 marks

Q.5. What is the typical length of comprehension passages in exams?

- a) 50–100 words
- b) 100–150 words
- c) 250–350 words
- d) 500–700 words

Q.6. Which of the following best defines a paragraph?

- a) A collection of several unrelated ideas
- b) A short piece of writing on one main idea
- c) A speech delivered in exams
- d) A full-length essay

Q.7. A passage is different from a paragraph because:

- a) It contains only one line
- b) It may contain one or many paragraphs with related ideas
- c) It never appears in exams
- d) It is shorter than a paragraph

Q.8. Literal comprehension focuses on:

- a) Hidden meanings
- b) Tone of the author
- c) Explicit facts like who, what, when, where
- d) Reader's opinion only

Q.9. Interpretative (critical) comprehension requires:

- a) Memorizing vocabulary
- b) Recalling only factual details
- c) Reading between the lines and drawing inferences
- d) Ignoring the author's purpose

Q.10. Which of these is NOT a recommended guideline for comprehension?

- a) Preview the questions before reading
- b) Ignore tone and purpose of the passage
- c) Note important facts and keywords
- d) Re-read difficult parts for clarity

Q.11. Which skill is most essential for effective comprehension?

- a) Knowledge of vocabulary
- b) Copying text directly
- c) Skipping unfamiliar words
- d) Reading without focus

Q.12. Good comprehension skills help candidates by:

- a) Reducing marks in exams
- b) Managing time and scoring higher
- c) Avoiding study of language skills
- d) Eliminating the need for practice

Que. 2 Read the passages given below and answer the following questions.

Passage-A

Urbanization is the increasing concentration of populations in cities, driven by migration from rural areas and economic development. It presents both opportunities and challenges. Cities act as hubs for employment, education, healthcare, and innovation, contributing significantly to national GDP. However, rapid urban growth often leads to pressure on infrastructure, housing shortages, traffic congestion, pollution, and strain on water and sanitation systems. To address these challenges, the concept of Smart Cities has emerged, which integrates information and communication technology (ICT) to improve urban living. Smart cities use sensors, data analytics, and digital platforms to manage traffic, monitor pollution, optimize energy use, and enhance governance. Citizens benefit through better access to services, real-time information, and participatory decision-making. In India, the Smart Cities Mission aims to develop 100 cities with sustainable infrastructure, efficient public transport, green spaces, and digital connectivity. Initiatives such as e-governance, IoT-based utilities, and renewable energy integration are central to smart urban planning. Urbanization also requires attention to affordable housing, social inclusion, and disaster resilience. Sustainable urban development balances economic growth with environmental and social well-being. Policies promoting compact city planning, public transport, waste management, and green infrastructure can reduce the negative impacts of urbanization. Collaboration between government, private sector, and citizens is essential for building resilient, inclusive, and technologically advanced cities.

MCQs

Q1. Urbanization primarily refers to:

- a) Growth of rural areas
- b) Population concentration in cities
- c) Industrial development in villages
- d) Decline in city populations

Q2. A Smart City mainly relies on:

- a) Manual governance systems
- b) Information and communication technology (ICT)
- c) Agricultural development
- d) Heavy industries only

Q3. India's Smart Cities Mission aims to:

- a) Build only high-rise apartments
- b) Develop 100 sustainable and technologically advanced cities
- c) Privatize urban services completely
- d) Restrict rural migration

Q4. Major challenges of urbanization include:

- a) Improved public transport
- b) Traffic congestion and housing shortages
- c) Digital connectivity
- d) Increased forest cover

Q5. Sustainable urban development requires:

- a) Ignoring environmental concerns
- b) Collaboration among government, private sector, and citizens
- c) Expanding cities without planning
- d) Reducing ICT integration

Passage-B

Social media refers to online platforms and applications that enable users to create, share, and interact with content and communities. Popular platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and TikTok. Over the past decade, social media has transformed the way people communicate, access information, and engage with society. It allows instant sharing of news, opinions, and multimedia content across the globe. Social media plays a key role in shaping public opinion, mobilizing social movements, and fostering civic engagement. It has been instrumental in movements such as #MeToo, climate activism, and political campaigns, allowing ordinary citizens to have a voice in public discourse. Businesses leverage social media for marketing, brand promotion, and customer engagement, while governments use it for public awareness campaigns and e-governance initiatives. However, social media also presents challenges. The spread of misinformation, fake news, cyberbullying, and data privacy concerns are major issues. Excessive use can affect mental health, leading to anxiety, depression, and reduced attention spans. Social media algorithms often create echo chambers, reinforcing existing beliefs and limiting exposure to diverse perspectives. Regulatory frameworks and digital literacy programs are crucial to mitigate negative impacts. Users must be

educated about responsible online behavior, verification of sources, and protecting personal data. Social media has immense potential to drive positive social, economic, and political change, but it requires conscious and ethical use to ensure that its benefits outweigh its risks.

Multiple Choice Questions:-

- Q1.** Social media primarily allows users to:
- a) Travel virtually
 - b) Create, share, and interact with content
 - c) Avoid online communication
 - d) Work offline
- Q2.** Which of the following is a positive role of social media?
- a) Cyberbullying
 - b) Misinformation spread
 - c) Mobilizing social movements
 - d) Reducing attention span
- Q3.** A major challenge of social media is:
- a) Enhancing e-governance
 - b) Cyberbullying and fake news
 - c) Instant communication
 - d) Business promotion
- Q4.** Excessive use of social media can affect:
- a) Physical fitness only
 - b) Mental health and attention span
 - c) Internet speed
 - d) Offline education only
- Q5.** Mitigating negative effects of social media requires:
- a) Ignoring content verification
 - b) Digital literacy and responsible use
 - c) Complete ban on social media
 - d) Only government monitoring

Passage- C

Agriculture forms the backbone of the Indian economy, providing employment to nearly 50% of the workforce and contributing around 17–18% of the national GDP. India has diverse agro-climatic zones, enabling the cultivation of a wide variety of crops, including cereals, pulses, fruits, vegetables, and cash crops. Major crops include rice, wheat, sugarcane, cotton, and spices. Traditional farming practices coexist with modern methods, including mechanization, irrigation, high-yield variety seeds, and precision farming. Irrigation plays a crucial role in ensuring crop productivity. India has a vast network of canals, tube wells, and tanks, though agriculture still relies heavily on monsoon rains. The Green Revolution of the 1960s significantly increased food production, particularly for wheat and rice, making India self-sufficient in food grains. Despite these achievements, challenges remain, including fragmented landholdings, declining soil fertility, groundwater depletion, and dependence on monsoons. Government initiatives such as **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, Soil Health Card Scheme**, and subsidies for fertilizers and seeds aim to improve farmer welfare and productivity. Organic farming and sustainable agriculture are gaining importance as solutions to environmental and health concerns. Agricultural exports contribute to India's economy, while crop diversification and horticulture promote income stability for farmers. Climate change, unpredictable rainfall, and pest infestations pose significant threats to agriculture. Technology-driven solutions such as **remote sensing, GIS-based crop monitoring**, and **digital marketplaces** are being adopted to improve resilience and efficiency. In addition, farmer producer organizations and cooperatives enhance bargaining power and market access. Strengthening agriculture in India is essential not only for food security but also for inclusive economic growth, poverty reduction, and rural development.

Multiple Choice Questions:

Q1. Agriculture contributes approximately what percentage to India's GDP?

- a) 10–12%
- b) 17–18%
- c) 25–27%
- d) 30–32%

Q2. The Green Revolution primarily impacted:

- a) Cotton and sugarcane
- b) Rice and wheat
- c) Pulses and oilseeds
- d) Fruits and vegetables

Q3. Major challenges in Indian agriculture include:

- a) Excess urbanization
- b) Declining soil fertility and fragmented landholdings
- c) High industrial output
- d) Coastal erosion

Q4. Government schemes supporting agriculture include:

- a) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana
- b) Beti Bachao Beti Padhao
- c) Digital India
- d) Smart Cities Mission

Q5. Technology in agriculture helps by:

- a) Reducing rainfall
- b) Improving resilience and efficiency
- c) Increasing soil erosion
- d) Limiting market access

Passage -D

Biodiversity refers to the variety of life forms on Earth, including plants, animals, fungi, and microorganisms, along with the ecosystems they inhabit. India is one of the **17 mega-biodiverse countries**, hosting approximately 8% of the world's species. Biodiversity sustains ecological balance, supports food security, provides medicinal resources, and maintains climate regulation. Forests, wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs, and grasslands are vital biodiversity hotspots. Human activities such as deforestation, habitat fragmentation, industrialization, overexploitation of resources, and pollution pose serious threats to biodiversity. Climate change and invasive alien species further exacerbate the decline of ecosystems. Loss of biodiversity can disrupt ecosystem services, reduce agricultural productivity, increase vulnerability to natural disasters, and threaten

livelihoods, especially for communities dependent on natural resources. Conservation efforts are therefore essential. India has established protected areas, including **national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and biosphere reserves**, under the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972** and the **Biological Diversity Act, 2002**. Community participation, eco-tourism, and afforestation programs complement governmental action. International agreements like the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)** and **CITES** promote global cooperation for biodiversity protection. Sustainable development practices, such as organic agriculture, habitat restoration, and controlled resource use, are crucial. Awareness, research, and policy interventions are necessary to conserve endangered species and fragile ecosystems. Protecting biodiversity is not only a moral responsibility but also a practical necessity to ensure ecological stability, food security, and the well-being of future generations.

Multiple Choice Questions:

Q1. India is classified as a:

- a) Biodiversity-poor country
- b) Mega-biodiverse country
- c) Desert ecosystem country
- d) Arctic ecosystem country

Q2. Threats to biodiversity include:

- a) Habitat fragmentation, pollution, and invasive species
- b) Planting trees
- c) Protecting wetlands
- d) Eco-tourism initiatives

Q3. The **Wildlife Protection Act** was enacted in:

- a) 1952
- b) 1972
- c) 1992
- d) 2002

Q4. Biodiversity contributes to:

- a) Only industrial growth
- b) Ecological balance, food security, and climate regulation
- c) Urban expansion
- d) Limited resource extraction

Q5. International agreements for biodiversity include:

- a) Kyoto Protocol
- b) CITES and CBD
- c) Paris Agreement only
- d) Ramsar Convention only

Answer Key

Que. A)

- Q1. Answer: b) Reading, analysis, and interpretation
- Q2. Answer: b) One-third
- Q3. Answer: b) 15–20% weightage
- Q4. Answer: c) 15–20 marks
- Q5. Answer: c) 250–350 words
- Q6. Answer: b) A short piece of writing on one main idea
- Q7. Answer: b) It may contain one or many paragraphs with related ideas
- Q8. Answer: c) Explicit facts like who, what, when, where
- Q9. Answer: c) Reading between the lines and drawing inferences
- Q10. Answer: b) Ignore tone and purpose of the passage
- Q11. Answer: a) Knowledge of vocabulary
- Q12. Answer: b) Managing time and scoring higher

Passage -A

MCQs

Q1. Answer: b) Population concentration in cities

Explanation: Urbanization is the process of more people living in urban areas than rural.

Q2. Answer: b) Information and communication technology (ICT)

Explanation: ICT enables efficient city management, service delivery, and citizen engagement.

Q3. Answer: b) Develop 100 sustainable and technologically advanced cities

Explanation: The mission focuses on infrastructure, digital governance, and sustainability.

Q4. Answer: b) Traffic congestion and housing shortages

Explanation: Rapid urban growth strains infrastructure and resources.

Q5. Answer: b) Collaboration among government, private sector, and citizens

Explanation: Inclusive planning and joint efforts are essential for resilient and livable cities.

Passage- B

Q1. Answer: b) Create, share, and interact with content

Explanation: Social media platforms enable content creation, sharing, and user engagement.

Q2. Answer: c) Mobilizing social movements

Explanation: Social media empowers citizens to participate in campaigns like #MeToo and climate activism.

Q3. Answer: b) Cyberbullying and fake news

Explanation: Negative impacts include harassment, misinformation, and privacy issues.

Q4. Answer: b) Mental health and attention span

Explanation: Overuse is linked to anxiety, depression, and reduced focus.

Q5. Answer: b) Digital literacy and responsible use

Explanation: Educating users about ethical behavior, data protection, and fact-checking is key to safe social media use.

Passage-C

Multiple Choice Questions:

Q1. Answer: b) 17–18%

Explanation: Agriculture remains a significant sector, providing employment to half the workforce.

Q2. Answer: b) Rice and wheat

Explanation: High-yield varieties and irrigation increased production of staple cereals.

Q3. Answer: b) Declining soil fertility and fragmented landholdings

Explanation: Soil degradation, small land plots, and monsoon dependence limit productivity.

Q4. Answer: a) PradhanMantriFasalBimaYojana

Explanation: It provides crop insurance to farmers to mitigate losses.

Q5. Answer: b) Improving resilience and efficiency

Explanation: Remote sensing, GIS, and digital marketplaces aid decision-making and market linkage.

Passage-D

Multiple Choice Questions:-

Q1. Answer: b) Mega-biodiverse country

Explanation: India hosts around 8% of the world's species, making it a mega-biodiverse nation.

Q2. Answer: a) Habitat fragmentation, pollution, and invasive species

Explanation: Human activity and climate change degrade habitats and endanger species.

Q3. Answer: b) 1972

Explanation: The Act provides legal protection to endangered species and ecosystems.

Q4. Answer: b) Ecological balance, food security, and climate regulation

Explanation: Diverse species support ecosystems and human survival.

Q5. Answer: b) CITES and CBD

Explanation: These promote global cooperation in species conservation and biodiversity protection.

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Module-II**Word Usage – Contextual Meaning**

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2.1 Objectives:

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

- 1) define ‘words’ and their ‘context’ in your own words.
- 2) use context to understand the overall meaning of a sentence, paragraph, or text
- 3) explain the importance of using context to determine a word’s appropriate meaning,
- 4) verify the inferred meaning of a word by checking the context or using a dictionary
- 5) analyze how specific word choices, tone, and sentence structure contribute to the overall meaning and impact of a text
- 6) engage in hands-on activities that will allow them to practice these skills.

2.2 Introduction

In language, the meaning of a word can vary significantly depending on the context in which it is used. Understanding contextual meaning is essential for interpreting language accurately and effectively. Words can have multiple definitions, and it’s the surrounding words, phrases, and situations that guide us in determining the correct meaning. This unit will explore how context influences the meaning of words, shedding light on the nuances of language that go beyond simple dictionary definitions. By examining various examples, you will learn to identify and apply contextual meaning in both written and spoken language, enhancing your ability to communicate clearly and comprehend more deeply. Whether in literature, everyday conversation, or technical writing, understanding the relationship between words and their context is a key skill for effective language usage. It is necessary to identify that words shift in meaning depending on context, with practical applications and deeper comprehension.

2.3 Words

Word is a unit of language that carries meaning. However, understanding language is not just about knowing words. It is about knowing how to use them effectively in a given situation. The knowledge of certain vocabulary does not guarantee you for successful communication, because the same word may change its sense depending on where, when, and how it is used. So, it is necessary to study in-depth meaning of ‘words’, their usage and their contextual meanings.

Dictionary defines ‘word’ as a sound or letter or group of sounds or letters that expresses a particular meaning. It also defines ‘word’ as a unit of language, consisting of one or more spoken sounds or their written representation that functions as a principal carrier of meaning. *For example* ‘dog’ is a word, ‘happy is a word, or ‘run’ is a word. Such words are required to be used in a contextual situation. Its true meaning in communication depends on the context in which they are used in.

For the aspirants of public service examinations like **MPSC, UPSC** and other similar examinations, the ability to understand and apply contextual meaning is essential for the following types of competitive examination questions:

- 1) Comprehension passages (*decoding the sense of a **word** in a given paragraph*)
- 2) Précis and essay writing (*choosing the most accurate and impactful **words***)
- 3) Translation and grammar sections (*selecting contextually correct equivalent **words***)
- 4) Interview and personality test (*using **words** appropriately in formal communication*)

2.4 Word Usage

Correct word usage ensures that communication is proper and to the point. In simple terms, word usage is an art of precision in any language that is selecting words that convey the intended meaning without confusion or ambiguity.

2.4.1 Grammatical Correctness

Correct word usage demands attention to grammar. Words must be used in proper **forms, tenses, agreement, and positions**. Certain common issues in this regard are the use of prepositions, articles, and subject–verb agreement.

For example:

- a) *She has went to the market. (Incorrect)*
- b) *She has gone to the market. (Correct)*
- c) *He is senior than me. (Incorrect)*
- d) *He is senior to me. (Correct)*

2.4.2 Lexical Appropriateness

A language may offer many **synonyms / antonyms**, but only one may suit the situation. Selecting the **most precise, economical, and impactful word** is crucial. Lexical errors often create vagueness or awkwardness.

For example:

- a) *He is a very nice student. (vague: “nice” is too general)*
- b) *He is a diligent/hardworking student. (precise)*
- c) *The medicine cured my headache fastly. (incorrect word formation)*
- d) *The medicine cured my headache quickly. (Appropriate use of adjectives and adverbs)*

2.4.3 Pragmatic Sense (Social and Cultural Context)

Language is used in real-life contexts where tone, relationship and culture matters. A word may be grammatically correct but socially inappropriate if the context is ignored. Pragmatics teaches us to use words **politely, formally, or informally** depending on the situation.

For example:

- a) Speaking to a friend: “*Hey, what’s up?*”
- b) Speaking to an examiner: “*Good afternoon, how are you?*”
- c) *Give me water.* (grammatically fine but rude)
- d) *Could you please give me some water?* (polite, socially correct)

2.5 Kinds of Meaning: Denotative vs. Connotative

2.5.1 Denotative Meaning (Dictionary or literal meaning of a word. Precise and objective.)

For example:

Rose = a type of flower

Childish = like a child

Youthful = having qualities of youth

2.5.2 Connotative Meaning (emotional, cultural, or subjective association attached to a word, varies across societies and contexts)

For example:

Rose = symbol of love, beauty, or romance

Childish = immature or silly

Youthful = energetic and lively

It is important to note that for effective word usage, both denotative and connotative meanings are be considered together.

Check Your Progress: I

The following table contains verbs in their base form. Use them as a Noun and as a Verb in separate sentences:

access	book	change	drink	Face
jump	love	plant	watch	Work
sink	switch	trip	bark	Train
play	fly	roll	shake	scratch
patch	pin	stand	store	vacuum

2.6 The Role of Context in Word Usage

Why Context Matters

Words do not exist in isolation; they gain their real meaning only when placed in a context. A single word may have multiple dictionary meanings (polysemy). Without context, communication may lead to confusion or misinterpretation. Context

tells us which meaning of a word is **intended, appropriate, and relevant** in a given situation.

*For example: **Bank***

- 1) Financial institution (*He deposited money in the bank.*)
- 2) River edge (*He was sitting on the bank of the river.*)
- 3) To rely on (*You can bank on her support.*)

Thus, context functions as a guide to interpretation.

For example,

What do you think the word “light” can mean?

Can you name two different meanings of “light”?

The word “*light*” may mean *not heavy, illumination, or even pale in color*, and only context decides which interpretation is correct.

In linguistics, this idea is central to semantics (study of meaning) and pragmatics (study of language in use). Semantics helps us understand the range of meanings a word can carry, while pragmatics explains how speakers and listeners rely on context; linguistic, situational, and cultural to assign the most appropriate meaning.

The contextual meaning of words refers to how the meaning of a word can change depending on the situation, sentence, or surrounding words in which it is used. Essentially, words often have multiple meanings, but the specific meaning that applies in a given context is shaped by how it’s used in the particular situation. From a pedagogical perspective, teaching word usage and contextual meaning develops learners’ ability to read critically, write precisely, and speak appropriately, because students are encouraged to move beyond rote memorization of word lists and instead practice words in real sentences, passages, and discourse situations.

Ultimately, contextual mastery of words leads to precision, clarity, and effectiveness in language use. It reduces ambiguity, strengthens expression, and enhances analytical ability, all of which are key qualities evaluated in competitive examinations and in the real-world communication practices.

Importance of Context in Competitive Exams (MPSC/UPSC Focus)

- ◆ **Reading Comprehension:** Understanding contextual meaning of words.
- ◆ **Précis Writing:** Selecting words that preserve the sense of the original passage.
- ◆ **Essay Writing:** Avoiding ambiguous terms; using words with correct connotations.
- ◆ **Grammar/Vocabulary MCQs:** Distinguishing between dictionary meaning and contextual meaning.
- ◆ **Interview:** Adapting vocabulary to formal and polite contexts.

2.7 Types of Context

Context plays a decisive role in determining the correct meaning of words. Linguists generally classify context into different types depending on how it influences word usage and interpretation. The following are the most significant types:

2.7.1 Linguistic Context

The immediate linguistic environment in which a word occurs, including **grammar, syntax, and neighbouring words**. It helps to disambiguate words with multiple meanings (polysemy or homonymy).

For example:

1. *He scored a **run** in cricket.* (noun)
2. *She likes to **run** every morning.* (verb)
3. *The bag is **light** (not heavy).*
4. *Please switch on the **light** (illumination).*
5. *It is healthier to use stairs instead of a **lift** (Elevator).* (noun)
6. *The mother **lifted** up the child in her arms.* (verb)
7. *A mother's **love** surpasses everything.* (noun)
8. *All mothers **love** their children equally.* (verb)

2.7.2 Situational Context

The meaning determined by the physical and social situation in which communication takes place—time, place, participants, and purpose. The same words may mean different things depending on the **speaker-listener relationship** or the setting.

For example:

1. *“Can you open the window?”*
 In a classroom ! a **polite request**.
 In a medical test ! a **question of ability**.
2. *“We’ll meet at the bank.”*
 In a city ! financial institution.
 Near a river ! river bank.

In interviews, situational context decides whether the language should be formal, polite, or technical.

2.7.3 Cultural Context

The background knowledge, traditions, beliefs, and values shared by a community that shape the interpretation of words. Many idioms, proverbs, and metaphors only make sense within a cultural frame.

For example:

“*Spill the beans*” ! reveal a secret (English idiom)

“*White*”

Western culture ! purity (on the occasions like weddings)

Indian context ! mourning (on the occasions like funerals)

“*Lotus*” in Indian culture ! national flower and spiritual symbol

Understanding cultural context is crucial in translation questions and in essays where terms may carry emotional/cultural weight.

2.7.4 Psychological Context

The meaning shaped by the **mental state, mood, or attitude** of the speaker and listener. Tone and emotions alter the interpretation of the same words.

For example:

1) “*Leave me alone!*”

Angry tone ! genuine demand.

Playful tone ! joke or sarcasm.

2) “*Fine.*”

Calmly spoken ! agreement.

Irritated tone ! disagreement.

This type of context is often tested indirectly in reading comprehension passages, where candidates must infer emotions or intentions.

2.7.5 Institutional/Professional Context

Specialized fields such as law, medicine, science, and politics often assign **technical meanings** to words. A single word may have distinct meanings depending on the professional domain.

For example:

1) *Charge*

In the context of Law ! accuse of a crime.

In the context of Physics ! electrical property.

In the context of Finance ! price for a service.

Examination papers in Union and State Public Service Commission often include **words in administrative, political, or legal contexts**, so awareness of professional usage is essential.

Check Your Progress: II

Explain the given words in the following table signifying different contexts. Use them in different sentences giving different contexts.

bow	lead	figure	Kind	bat
match	spring	rock	pool	season
nail	fly	delivery	dull	review
stroke	project	command	address	charm

2.8 Common word usage errors

2.8.1 Misused Words

Misused words means the words used incorrectly due to similarity in spelling, pronunciation, or meaning. It is only because English has many homophones, homonyms, and near-synonyms that look/sound alike.

For example:

- 1) *Affect* (verb: to influence) vs. *Effect* (noun: result)
 - a) The new law will effect people's lives. (incorrect)
 - b) The new law will affect people's lives.
- 2) *Advice* (noun: guidance) vs. *Advise* (verb: to recommend)
 - a) He gave me a good advise. (incorrect)
 - b) He gave me good advice.
- 3) *Compliment* (praise) vs. *Complement* (something that completes)
 - a) The wine complements the meal. (correct)
 - b) She paid him a compliment on his work. (correct)
- 4) Principle vs. Principal
 - a) *Principle* = rule/idea ("He lived by strong principles").
 - b) *Principal* = head of school/primary thing ("The principal greeted the students").
- 5) Disinterested vs. Uninterested
 - a) *Disinterested* = impartial ("A judge must remain disinterested").
 - b) *Uninterested* = not interested ("She was uninterested in the lecture").

2.8.2 Redundancy

In language, redundancy refers to using more words than necessary to express an idea. In general, it signifies a state of being unneeded or superfluous, where something exists but isn't essential or useful. It is unnecessary repetition of meaning (wordiness) using **unnecessary, repetitive words** that add no new meaning. This occurs because of common translational habits, overemphasis, or direct borrowing from spoken style. It makes writing verbose and lowers precision.

For example:

- 1) “Each and every” → just “each” or “every”
- 2) “End result” → just “result”
- 3) “Advance planning” → just “planning”
- 4) “Past history” → just “history”
- 5) *Return back* → just ‘*Return*’

2.8.3 Clichés and Vagueness

Cliché is a phrase or idea that has been used so many times that it no longer has any real meaning or interest, whereas vagueness is a state of being unclear or uncertain. It is something like using overused expressions or imprecise wording that weakens writing. Overused phrases or expressions that sound stale and lack originality. It happens because of common reliance on memorized stock phrases rather than fresh, precise language.

For example:

1. At the end of the day
2. Think outside the box
3. Only time will tell
4. Last but not least
5. *Hit the nail on the head*

Vague Expressions:

“stuff,” “things,” “a lot,” “kind of,” “sort of”...

Instead: be concrete (e.g., instead of “a lot of problems,” write “several financial difficulties”).

- 1) *Things are getting better.* (What things? Better in what sense?)
- 2) *Some people say...* (Who? Which authority?)

It is advisable that one should avoid the frequent use of such clichés and vague expressions in the use of language.

2.8.4 False Friends (Confusing Pairs)

Words that look or sound similar but have different meanings always confuse us. Words that look similar across languages but differ in meaning causes errors.

For example:

- 1) Actual vs. Current
Actual = real, existing (“The actual cost was higher”)
Current = present time (“The current situation is difficult”)

- 2) Sympathetic vs. Sympathic (non-standard)
Sympathetic = showing understanding or compassion
Sympathic is not Standard English (false borrowing)
- 3) Eventually vs. Possibly
Eventually = in the end, after some time
Possibly = perhaps

2.8.5 Idiomatic Misuse

Idiomatic expressions, or idioms, are phrases whose meaning cannot be understood by literal definitions of the individual words within them. These expressions are a significant part of a language's culture and history conveying ideas figuratively rather than literally.

Students commit errors when using idiomatic expressions because idioms have a fixed structure. Changing word order or mixing literal and idiomatic senses causes errors.

For example:

- ◆ "I like coffee. On the other hand, I drink it every day." (*incorrect*)
- ◆ Correct: "I like coffee. On the other hand, tea is healthier." (*correct*)
- ◆ He kicked the bucket yesterday evening party. (*incorrect*)
- ◆ He kicked the bucket yesterday. (*idiomatic = died*)
- ◆ He is in hot soup. (*incorrect*)
- ◆ He is in hot water. (*correct idiom = in trouble*)

Check Your Progress: III

A) The following table contains confusing pair of words. Use the following word pairs in your sentences making complete meaningful sentences:

accept / except	illusion / allusion	suit/ suite	desert / dessert
acute / chronic	ascent / assent	Sell / cell	cloth / clothe
aesthetic / ascetic	borne / born	defuse / diffuse	elicit / illicit

B) There are certain words that can be explained in terms of synonyms and antonyms. Read the following paragraph carefully. The task is specially designed for exercising identification of synonyms and antonyms from the list of words given below. Try to match the synonyms / antonyms from the given list with the bold words from the paragraph.

(structured, triumph, enthusiastic, complex, tough clear, conquer, fast, success, extended)

Despite the **difficult** task at hand, Maria was determined to **succeed** and **overcome** the challenge. She was **eager** to show everyone her ability, even though she knew it would be a **long** journey. However, she quickly realized that the **simple** instructions provided were **confusing** and the project became increasingly **disorganized**. Her **slow** progress was also discouraging, but Maria refused to let **failure** stop her from moving forward.

2.9 Word Usage in Competitive Exams

Basically, the questions based on words in the competitive examinations like Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC) and Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) do focus on the following types:

- ◆ Error Spotting / Sentence Correction
- ◆ Fill in the Blanks (Contextual Usage)
- ◆ Synonyms and Antonyms (Word Precision)
- ◆ Idioms and Phrases
- ◆ One-Word Substitutions

Such competitive examinations usually check the accuracy, along with appropriateness, in English with the help of following type of questions related to words and their contextual usages.

For comprehending these skills, it is required to make it a daily habit to read daily newspapers like *Times of India*, *Indian Express* and *Daily Hitavada* to enhance your ability to understand, analyze, synthesize, and use what you have read with the help of given words. It is also advisable to study the following reference books in detail. Internet and smart phone is another way to up skill yourself.

2.10 Glossary:

<i>ambiguity</i>	:	the quality of being open to more than one interpretation; inexactness
<i>Comprehension</i>	:	the ability to understand something, especially by actively interpreting and processing information
<i>confusion</i>	:	a lack of understanding or order; a state of being unclear
<i>connotative</i>	:	relating to the subjective or emotional associations a word evokes, in addition to its literal meaning

<i>context</i>	:	the circumstances, background, or setting in which an event, statement, or idea occurs, in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed
<i>convey</i>	:	to communicate a message, idea, or feeling; make something known or understandable to someone
<i>decoding</i>	:	the process of translating a message from a coded form into a plain form; in communication, understanding the meaning of a sender's message
<i>denotative</i>	:	relating to the literal or primary meaning of a word, in contrast to the feelings or ideas that the word suggests
<i>determined</i>	:	having reached a decision or resolution; firmly decided
<i>idiom</i>	:	a phrase or expression whose meaning cannot be deduced from the meanings of its individual words (e.g., "kick the bucket")
<i>idiomatic</i>	:	using, containing, or relating to idioms; natural or characteristic of a specific language
<i>impactful</i>	:	having a major impact or effect; influential
<i>intended</i>	:	planned or meant to be; the desired or anticipated result
<i>pragmatic</i>	:	dealing with things sensibly and realistically in a way that is based on practical rather than theoretical considerations
<i>Precision</i>	:	the quality, condition, or fact of being exact and accurate
<i>redundancy</i>	:	the inclusion of unnecessary words or information; being superfluous or excessive
<i>vague</i>	:	of uncertain, indefinite, or unclear character or meaning

2.11 Answers to check your Progress: I

1. access

As a verb: You can **access** the files online.

As a noun: We need better internet **access**.

2. change

As a verb: The weather might **change** later.

As a noun: I have some loose **change** in my pocket.

3. drink

As a verb: She likes to **drink** tea every morning.

As a noun: Would you like a cold **drink**?

4. face

As a verb: We must **face** our challenges head-on.

As a noun: Wash your **face** before bed.

5. jump

As a verb: The dog loves to **jump** in the park.

As a noun: He made a big **jump** over the puddle.

Attempt the remaining words in different sentences giving different contexts.

Answers to check your Progress: II

This conceptual assignment requires you to explain the different meanings (contexts) of several homonymous words and use each meaning in a separate sentence.

Bow

Noun: A decorative knot with loops.

Sentence: She tied the ribbon in a perfect bow on the gift box.

Verb: To bend the head or body as a sign of respect or greeting.

Sentence: The performer will bow to the audience after the show. VERB

Noun: The front part of a ship.

Sentence: The waves crashed over the bow of the boat.

Lead

Verb: To guide or direct others by going in front.

Sentence: The experienced hiker will lead the group through the wilderness.

Noun: A heavy, soft, gray metallic element

Sentence: Old houses sometimes have water pipes made of lead.

Noun: A clue or piece of information that helps in an investigation.

Sentence: The police are following a promising lead to solve the case.

Figure

Noun: A number or an amount expressed numerically.

Sentence: Government figures suggest that inflation is falling.

Noun: The shape of the human body.

Sentence: She has a slender figure and is very healthy.

Noun: A well-known or important person.

Sentence: He is an important figure in modern politics.

Verb: To calculate or compute an amount.

Sentence: Can you figure out the total cost of the trip?

Attempt the remaining words in different sentences giving different contexts.

Answers to check your Progress: III

Words	Synonym	Words	Antonym
difficult	<i>complex</i>	simple	<i>tough</i>
succeed	<i>conquer</i>	confusing	<i>clear</i>
overcome	<i>triumph</i>	disorganized	<i>structured</i>
eager	<i>enthusiastic</i>	slow	<i>fast</i>
long	<i>extended</i>	failure	success

2.12 Exercises:

A) Rewrite the following sentences uses the correct word from the given confusing pairs in the bracket

- The _____ of your marks in the examination is below what I expected. (aggravate / aggregate)
- Since illness she had _____ of different types. (illusion / allusion)
- He is a very brilliant student and has _____ to any library in the city. (access / excess)
- He goes to Mumbai on _____ days. (alternative / alternate)
- I have reserved a _____ in *Vande Bharat* Express from Pune. (birth / berth)
- Several Indians will _____ to the Gulf countries soon after the war is ended. (immigrate / emigrate)
- _____ is grown on a large scale in India. (Maze / Maize)
- Gold is a precious _____. (mettle / metal)
- They were very _____ of the time as they hurried to the event. (conscious/conscience)
- I _____ the weight of the decision on my shoulders for weeks. (bare/bear)

B) Each of the following sentences is divided in to four parts – A,B,C,D. Find out the part which has an error. If the sentence is correct, write the letter E.

- | A | B | C | D | |
|--|---|---|---|---------------------|
| 1. Calcutta / is / the most biggest city / in India. | | | | Answer – A, B, C, D |
| 2. She / did not eat / nothing / at all. | | | | Answer – A, B, C, D |
| 3. Last year / many people / died / from cancer. | | | | Answer – A, B, C, D |
| 4. Though / he looks weak / but / he is strong. | | | | Answer – A, B, C, D |
| 5. A honest person / is / respected / by all. | | | | Answer – A, B, C, D |
| 6. You /must listen / this / song. | | | | Answer – A, B, C, D |
| 7. We / returned back / from the / mountains recently. | | | | Answer – A, B, C, D |
| 8. Being thirsty / I / gave him / some water. | | | | Answer – A, B, C, D |

C) There are certain words given in the following table. Select the proper word as a one word substitution for the following phrases / clauses.

ornithology	fauna	Kleptomaniac	soliloquy
theist	misanthrope	Archaeologist	sojourn
drift	denouement	Anonymous	galaxy

- 1) Of an unknown name, or undeclared authorship
- 2) A person who hates mankind
- 3) The scientific study of birds
- 4) The animals of particular region
- 5) Someone who believes in God
- 6) A person who is in the habit of stealing
- 7) Large band of stars encircling the heavens
- 8) A person who is interested in the study of ancient things

D) There are certain words that can be explained in terms of synonyms and antonyms. Read the following paragraph carefully. The task is specially designed for exercising identification of synonyms and antonyms from the list of words given below. Try to match the synonyms / antonyms from the given list with the bold words from the paragraph.

(ready, frigid, sure, distant, reassuring, old, calm, elevated, uneven, calm, challenging, hazardous, powerful, peaceful, noisy, assured, radiant, extended, far, easy, enthusiasm)

The **cold** wind blew fiercely through the **quiet** forest, where **bright** leaves had fallen from the **ancient** trees. As Maria walked, she felt a **strong** sense of **peace** wash over her, though the path ahead was still **long**. She had been walking for hours, but the terrain was now becoming **rough** and **difficult**. While she was initially **confident**, the **treacherous** trail soon made her feel uncertain and **nervous**. Even though she was prepared for an adventure, the **quiet** stillness around her began to feel **unnerving**. Eventually, she realized that the **high** mountain before her was **far** and not nearly as **close** as she had hoped. Yet, despite the **hard** climb, Maria felt a surge of **excitement** as she continued her journey.

2.13 References for Further Reading:

1. Leech, Geoffrey. *Semantics: The Study of Meaning*.
4. Yule, George. *The Study of Language*.
5. Crystal, David. *A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics*.
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8. Wren & Martin. *High School English Grammar & Composition*.



Module 3**Letter Writing-Formal and Informal**

3.0 Objectives

- ◆ Acquaint students with key differences between formal and informal letters.
- ◆ Help students to write effective formal and informal letters
- ◆ Help students apply format, tone and language appropriate to the formal and informal letters.
- ◆ Prepare students for letter writing questions in competitive examinations

3.1 Introduction

Writing a letter is a vital form of effective communication and a key to success, essential in both personal and professional spheres. Despite the rise of digital communication, letter writing remains a crucial skill that involves crafting well-structured and purposeful letters. In competitive examinations like civil services, management entrance tests, banking exams (such as IBPS), staff selection commission examinations, and railway recruitment board examinations, letter writing is a significant component, assessing a candidate's ability to express thoughts, ideas, and opinions clearly and effectively. Moreover, letter writing evaluates a candidate's personality, tone, and language proficiency, making it a fundamental skill for success in these exams and professional communication.

Letters are of two types

1. Formal or business or official letters
2. Informal letters

3.2 Formal letters

Formal letters are written to authorities, employers, organizations, principals, managers, and government officers. Consequently, these letters play a significant role in professional communication. Moreover, they are used for various purposes such as job applications, complaints, requests, seeking information, enquiries, invitations etc. Therefore, it is essential to use precise, polite, clear, and concise language in these letters. Ultimately, mastering formal letters is crucial for success in the corporate world and competitive examinations, where knowing the format and language is vital.

3.2 Presentation of the Matter**3.2.1 Section I: Application Letters**

An application letter is a cover letter that serves as the first impression of the applicant. It works as a messenger taking details regarding qualifications, skills,

experience and interest of the candidate to the employer. The CV attached to this cover letter helps the employer to understand whether the applicant is suitable for the job or not. The format of this formal letter includes sender's address, date, receiver's address, subject, reference, salutation, body of the letter, complementary close, signature and enclosure. The following format will help you to understand the position of each point in the letter.

Sender's address
Date
Receiver's address
Subject
Reference
Salutation
Body Of the letter
Para 1
Para 2
Para 3
Complementary close
Signature
Enclosure

Some sample formal letters

Sender's address Saneguruji VasahatShikshak, Galli No. 5, Kolhapur. Date 8th June,2025.
Receiver's address The Principal, M. G. College,Kolhapur.
Subject: An Application for the Post of An Assistant Professor.
Reference: Your Advertisement in Daily Sakal dated 4th June 2025.
Salutation Respected Sir,
Body Of the letter

<p>Para 1 -</p> <p>I am writing to express my interest in the Assistant Professor in the Department of English at M. G. College, Kolhapur as advertised in daily 'Sakal' dated 4th June 2025.</p>
<p>Para 2 -</p> <p>I have recently passed the NET examination in English and have completed my Ph.D. in Australian Literature from Shivaji University, Kolhapur in March 2024, . During my doctoral studies, I had the opportunity to teach undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Lohia College, Pune. I am confident that my research experience and enthusiasm for teaching will allow me to contribute meaningfully to your college and department of English.</p>
<p>Para 3 -</p> <p>I have attached my CV for your consideration. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss how I can contribute to the academic community.</p>
<p>Complementary close</p> <p>Thank you for your time and consideration.</p>
Signature
XYZ
<p>Enclosure</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My C. V. 2. Attested copies of Marksheets and Certificates 3. Cast Certificate

Important Points in application letter

- ◆ Source - Name of the newspaper and date
- ◆ Your interest in the post
- ◆ Your qualifications, research and experience
- ◆ Your achievements if any
- ◆ Special Honors if any
- ◆ Proper beginning and closing
- ◆ Essential attachments

You can use the following expressions to write an application letter.

- ◆ In response to your advertisement no.123 in daily ‘.....’(name of the newspaper/magazine/journal) for the above mentioned post, I wish to offer my candidature for the same in your..... (Name of the company/firm/institution/organization)
- ◆ With reference to your advertisement in dated for the above mentioned post, I wish to apply for the same in your.....
- ◆ This is to apply for the post of..... in your, that has been advertised in dated.....
- ◆ Please refer to your advertisement that appeared in dated for the post of I wish to offer my candidature for the same in your reputed.....
- ◆ I am interested in the vacancy advertised in daily dated for the post of, I wish to offer my services to you.
- ◆ I submit this application willingly in response to your advertisement published in, dated
- ◆ I have looked carefully at the job requirements of the (name of the post) advertised by you in the..... (newspaper)of 27 October 224.
- ◆ I have secured the first/second/..... class at B.A./BSc/BCom/.... (name of any undergraduate or postgraduate degree) and passed MSCIT / (any course) with 80% marks.
- ◆ I have passed (Name of degree) with....class in the year and MBA withclass in (year).
- ◆ I have completed a course in in (year)
- ◆ I am an Arts/Commerce/Science graduate from (Name of the college).
- ◆ I have obtainedclass at BA in and my specialization is in English.
- ◆ Please refer to my CV attached herewith for more details.
- ◆ I have two years’ experience as (Name of the position held) in (name of institution)
- ◆ Having worked as (Name of the position held) for three years, I have necessary experience of the job I have applied for.
- ◆ Since I am a fresh graduate, I have not got any opportunity to work in any kind of Institution. However, I will learn duties and responsibilities very quickly.
- ◆ At present I am working in..... (name of institution) as (Name of the position held)
- ◆ I have worked as.....in.....

- ◆ I hope you will give me an opportunity to serve with you.
- ◆ I hope you will consider my application favourably and give me an opportunity in your esteemed company.
- ◆ I shall be obliged to you if you give a favourable response to my application.
- ◆ I am sure I will receive a favourable response from you.
- ◆ I am waiting for a call for a personal interview.
- ◆ I would be greatly obliged if you consider my letter of application favourably.
- ◆ Hoping to get an interview call.

3.2.2 Section II: Appointment Letters

An appointment letter is a letter issued by an employer to a candidate who has been selected by a panel of interviewers. It is a formal and official confirmation of the employment. It is an important document that includes the position offered to a candidate, salary details, other terms and conditions related to the job, etc.

Institution/company/organization letterheadName Address, email, website, phone numbers etc.	1
Ref. No.	2
Date	3
To [Name and address of the candidate	4
Subject	5
Salutation	6
Body Of the letter	7
Signature	8
Enclosure	9
Copy to	10

1	<p style="text-align: center;">P.G.K. Shikshak Sanstha's M. G. College Kolhapur.</p> <p>Web - www.mgcollege.ac.in Mail Id - mg1996@gmail.com Mob. 9697989910 Ph. 02326 2609096</p>
2	Ref. No. MGC/2025/84
3	Date: 25th July, 2025
4	Pratap Bidkar Plot no. 206 Rajarampuri Kolhapur
5	Subject: Appointment for the post of Assistant Professor
6	Dear Pratap,
7	<p>We are pleased to offer you the position of Assistant professor at M. G. College, Kolhapur, effective from 1st August, 2025 on the total salary of 105000 per month. Your appointment is based on the terms and conditions attached herewith with this letter. You will be on probation for a period of 9 months from your date of joining. You are required to report to the principal on or before 25th September, 2025. We require a joining report and essential original documents for verification on the reporting date. The list of documents is attached herewith.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We look forward to having you as part of our team and we believe your expertise and passion for teaching will benefit our students.</p>
8	Signature of the authority
9	Enclosure: 1. Terms and conditions 2. The list of documents
10	Copy to: 1. The Principal 2. Accounts section

Important Points in Appointment Letter

- ◆ Company's address, mail, website, phone numbers etc.
- ◆ Reference number
- ◆ Date
- ◆ Job title/position
- ◆ Salary
- ◆ Reporting date
- ◆ Joining report and production of original documents

Some important expressions used in appointment letters.

It gives us immense pleasure to appoint you as _____

We are very glad to inform that you have been selected for the post of _____ on the scale—

Congratulations! You have been selected for the post of _____

You will be offered a monthly salary as per the rules and regulations of the company.

You will receive allowances such as _____

You will be entitled to a monthly salary of _____

Your probation period will be of _____

You will have to sign an agreement with the company.

You will have to report your duties on or before _____

We are delighted to have you in our team.

We welcome you to our institution.

Wishing you a bright and successful career with us.

3.2.3 Section III: Job Acceptance Letters

A job acceptance letter is a positive response from a candidate to the company's appointment letter for a job. It is an expression of gratitude on the part of a candidate for the opportunity, salary and other benefits offered. It is a confirmation of job acceptance.

Yogesh Majgaonkar
Papachi Tikati
Near Bajap Talim Mandal
Kolhapur
2nd June, 2025
To,
The Manager,
Kaka Industries
Udyamnagar
Kolhapur
Respected Sir,
<p>I am writing to accept the offer of employment as an Accountant at your Industries. I am thankful to you for the letter of Appointment dated 28th May, 2025. I am excited to join the team and contribute to the company's success. I agree to the terms and conditions of the company and am joining my duties on 3rd June, 2025. I assure you that I will do my best to the satisfaction of all the stakeholders of the company.</p>
Yours sincerely,
Yogesh Majgaonkar
<p>Enclosure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Copy of Appointment Letter 2. Signed copy of Terms and conditions of the company

Important Points in Job Acceptance Letter

1. Thankful for the job offer.
2. Clear acceptance of the position.
3. Clear acceptance of terms and conditions of company
4. Clear mention of joining date.
5. Enthusiasm before starting the role.

Study some useful expressions in a job acceptance letter.

I am very happy to accept your offer for the post of _____

I am very much pleased to accept your offer for the post of _____

Thank you so much for offering me the position of _____

This is in response to your offer letter dated _____, I formally accept the job.

I would like to thank you for offering me the job opportunity in your company.
 I am very grateful for the opportunity to join your company.
 I am very pleased to confirm my acceptance with this letter.
 I do agree with the terms and conditions of the company.
 I accept the terms and conditions of the company attached with the appointment letter.
 I am joining my duties on ——— accepting the conditions laid down in the appointment letter.
 I am very much excited to work with your devoted team.
 Thank you very much for showing confidence in my skills and abilities.
 Looking forward to joining and starting working with you.
 Thank you so much for the appointment letter.

3.2.4 Section IV: Application for leave of absence

It is a formal letter written by an employee to his senior to request permission to remain absent from work, duties, college or school for a specific period. This letter is a part of the discipline. It also shows respect and responsibility towards the authority. It includes reasons such illness, emergencies, unavoidable circumstances, personal reasons and family functions. A well drafted letter for leave of absence shows proper and smooth communication between the authority and his subordinates.

25th August, 2025
The Manager,
Ajinky Cooperative Bank,
Satara.
Subject: - Application for three days casual leave
Respected Sir,
I request you to consider my application for leave from 2nd October to 4th October 2025 since I have to attend the wedding ceremony of my very close relative in Mumbai. Mr. Dayanand Dhone will cover my responsibilities in my absence.
Thank you for considering my request and I appreciate your understanding and support
Yours faithfully,
Hari K
Mob. 9677998829

Important Points in application for leave of absence Letter

- ◆ Request for sanction of leave
- ◆ Mention of leave duration
- ◆ Reason for leave
- ◆ Substitute person for your responsibilities
- ◆ Expression of gratitude

Study the following expressions for writing leave of absence letters.

I am writing to inform you that I won't be attending my duties from —— to ——.

I would like to apply for leave of absence from —— to ——

I request you to grant me leave of absence for —— days.

I appreciate your understanding and support.

Thank you for giving approval for my leave of absence.

I shall be obliged if you sanction me leave of absence for four days.

Please sanction my leave application for the period mentioned above.

Please consider my leave application sympathetically.

Thank you in advance.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

3.2.5 Section V: A Complaint Letter

A complainant writes a letter about the grievances or problems to the authorities to bring their attention to the problems. He/she wants to seek solutions or resolutions to the problems by writing such letters effectively. Complaints can be about irregular water supply, electricity issues, waste garbage, drainage problems etc. However, it should be addressed to the concerned authorities in a proper and effective manner.

The following letter is about the bad condition of the roads.

Prakash Bidkar
Shivaji Colony
'A' Ward, Kolhapur.
12th July, 2025

To,
The Commissioner
Municipal Corporation,
Kolhapur.

Subject: Poor Condition of the roads in Shivaji colony

Sir,

I am writing to bring to your attention the extremely bad and dangerous condition of the roads in our Shivaji colony located in A ward of Kolhapur. Specifically, the roads in Galli no.5,6 and 7 are covered or filled with numerous potholes and cracks. The residents in the area find it extremely difficult and unsafe to commute. The bad conditions of the roads have resulted in several issues such as traffic delays, vehicle damage and serious accidents. We have attempted to report the issue to the local authorities but nothing has been done so far.

Therefore, it is a humble request for you to take immediate action to inspect the roads and initiate repairs promptly to avoid injuries to the old people and especially to school going children.

Thank you so much for your time and attention to this most urgent issue.

Yours faithfully,

Prakash Bidkar

Resident of the colony

Mob. 8788828490

Sample Complaint Letter for Electricity Issue

.....

Rakesh Jha
Datta Complex Area
Shivaji Nagar
Kolhapur
6th August 2025.

To,

The Assistant Engineer

Distribution Unit,

MSEB Tarabai Park,

Kolhapur

Subject: Complaint regarding electricity issue in Tarabai Park Area

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to bring to your attention the electricity issue in the Tarabai Park area. The residents of the area have been facing the issue for three to four months, and it is causing significant inconvenience to them, precisely the students who are preparing for competitive exams.

There are frequent voltage fluctuations and failure in supply. We request you to look into the issue seriously and take necessary action to resolve the issue

immediately. We expect from you to identify the root cause of the problem at the earliest to make the supply regular and stable in the area. We would appreciate your efforts if you could do something to compensate for the damages to the electric appliances and equipment.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Sincerely,
Rakesh
Mob. 9089798804

Important Points in a Complaint Letter

- ◆ Concerned authority
- ◆ Clear mention of the problem
- ◆ Area/location
- ◆ Consequences of the problem
- ◆ Earlier actions taken if any
- ◆ Expectations or solutions to the problem
- ◆ Expression of gratefulness.

Useful Expressions in writing complaint letters

We are compelled to write you about ——

I writing to draw your attention to ——

I am very sorry to inform you that ——

This is to inform you that ——

I am writing to bring to your notice that ——

I am dissatisfied by the lack of attention.

The problem has caused lot of inconvenience to ——

The problem has caused a great deal of trouble to ——

Looking forward to prompt attention.

Expecting necessary actions immediately.

We would be grateful if you take necessary action to resolve the issue.

I request you to take immediate action.

I would appreciate your corrective actions.

Looking forward to a positive response.

Check your progress I

A. Fill in the blanks and rewrite the sentences.

1. Writing a letter is a vital form of effective _____.
2. Letter writing is essential in both _____ and _____ spheres.
3. _____ is a significant component in competitive exams.
4. Letter writing assesses _____ ability to express thoughts, ideas, and opinions clearly and effectively.
5. Letter writing evaluates a candidate's _____, _____, and _____ proficiency.
6. _____ letters are written to authorities, employers, organizations, principals, managers, and government officers.
7. An enquiry letter is a type of _____ letter.
8. _____ formal letters are crucial for success in the corporate world and competitive examinations.
9. Language of the formal letter should be _____, _____ and _____.
10. _____ letters play a significant role in professional communication.

B. Match the following pairs

	A	B	
1	Formal letters are written to	a.	Complementary close
2	Thank you for your time and consideration	b.	C.V. & attested certificates
3	Enclosures	c.	Authorities
4	Appointment letter should have	d.	Job title and salary

C.

3.2.6 Section VI: An Enquiry letter

When you want to seek accurate official information on products, guarantee and warranty of products, services after sales, events, services, hall booking for functions, courses, admission, facilities in educational institutions, job opportunities etc. as an individual or on behalf of a company, an organization or an institution, you can write a letter of enquiry. But the tone of such letters must be polite and professional. The information received through such letters help us to make proper decisions. Here are two examples of an enquiry letter.

Divya Kolhapure
M. G. Pathare Road,
Plot No. 392
Kolhapur.
Maharashtra
1st August, 2025.

To,
Prakash Electronics
Sumitra Raje Housing Society,
Satara.
Maharashtra

Subject: Enquiry about Computers and Laptops.

Dear Sir,

I am interested in learning more about computers and laptops that your company provides. We are looking to purchase 100 computers and 150 laptops for the office. Let us know specifications about the latest computers and laptops. Could you please provide information about processor type and speed, operating system, display size, resolution, battery life, storage capacity, warranty and guarantee of products and parts, pricing and payment options, ongoing promotions and discounts etc. The information should reach us before 23rd of August 2025 or you can send your representative for a product demonstration on coming Sunday.

I would appreciate it if you could inform us about services after sales, during and after warranty and guarantee period.

We look forward to your prompt response.

Yours faithfully,
Divya
Head, Accounts Section
Sitara Consultancy
Email – dpk123@gmail.com
Mob. 9876543452

Important points in the Enquiry letter.

- ◆ Product details- specifications
- ◆ Product services
- ◆ Deadline for information
- ◆ Request for additional action
- ◆ Expect prompt action

Prof. Syam Sundar
S. P. College
Temblai Wadi
Kolhapur.
5th Sept., 2025.

To,
The Registrar,
Shivaji University,
Kolhapur.

Subject: Enquiry about Physics seminar Hall

Dear Sir,

Our college is organizing a three-day National seminar on Biodiversity from 1st to 3rd October, 2025. We expect more than 300 participants from different states of India. We are interested in booking a Physics seminar Hall in the university for the seminar. Please provide the following details about the hall.

- ◆ Availability of the hall
- ◆ Seating capacity
- ◆ Charges for three days
- ◆ Internet, Wi-Fi, audio visual equipment
- ◆ Parking place and capacity
- ◆ Place for catering services
- ◆ Generator etc.

Kindly let us know about the booking procedure at the earliest.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Yours faithfully,
Shyam Sundar
Convenor of the seminar
Email – syam566@gmail.com
Mob. 9879976589

Some of the expressions used in enquiry letters.

I am writing to enquire about _____

I am writing on behalf of _____ to enquire about _____

I wish to know about _____

This is to request details about _____

We would like to know about _____

We are very much interested in ————

We would be grateful if you could immediately send us information about ————

Kindly send me information about ————

We look forward to your positive response.

Send the information at your earliest convenience.

I look forward to your cooperation.

Could you please send us information about ————?

Prompt response would be appreciated.

Invitation Letter

**Satya Sai Education Society's
M. S. S. College, Satara
Shivaji Peth
Website – www.msscollege.ac.in
Phone – 665654,767655**

Ref- SSE/MSS/college/234

27th October, 2025

To,
Dr. Rajesh Khambe
Head,
Department of Physics
Shivaji Vidyapeeth.

Subject: Invitation to be the chief speaker for the national seminar.

Dear Sir,

Sir, we are pleased to inform you that our college is organizing a Two Day National Seminar on Wednesday 3rd December, 2025 in our college on 'Theoretical Physics and Cosmology'. The seminar aims to bring together teachers and students to exchange insights on the topic. We would be greatly honored if you could grace the occasion as the chief speaker for the seminar and address the gathering. Your presence would add value to the event.

We look forward to your positive response at the earliest. We are very eager to welcome you at the seminar.

Sincerely,
Prin. V. V. Date
Mob. 7655676564

Invitation to parents for college annual gathering function
Satya Sai Education Society's
M. S. S. College, Satara
Shivaji Peth
Website – www.msscollege ac.in
Phone – 665654, 767655

Ref- SSE/MSS/college/234

2nd Feb., 2025

To,

Dear parents,

Subject: Invitation to the Annual Gathering Function

We are very much pleased to inform you that our college is organizing its Annual Gathering on Saturday 8th February, 2025 at 6.00 p.m. in the college seminar hall. The students from classes have prepared various performances such as record dances, skits, mimicry, mimes, solo singing, magic show, comedy stand up, instrumental performance, group. dances etc. Your presence will encourage and motivate our students to showcase their talent best.

We cordially invite you to attend the function and make it a grand success.

We look forward to your presence and support.

With regards,

The principal

Important points in an invitation letter.

- ◆ Name of the event, day and date and time
- ◆ Venue
- ◆ Purpose of the event
- ◆ Role of the guests
- ◆ Formal request
- ◆ Personal touch

Study the following expressions and you can use them while writing letters to invite someone for the event or the function.

It gives us immense pleasure to invite you for _____

We cordially invite you for the event _____

This is to invite you to attend the function as a chief guest _____

It would be an honor to have you as keynote addresser for the National seminar on _____

We look forward to welcome you —————

Your presence will grace the occasion.

Your presence will be highly appreciated.

Your honorable presence will make the event more memorable.

We would be grateful if you accept our invitation for —————

Check your progress II

A. State whether the following statements are true or false.

- a) A letter enquiring about availability of projectors for school should include a deadline for information and specifications of projectors.
- b) An invitee should feel a personal touch in a letter of invitation.
- c) A letter of invitation should not have a salutation.
- d) It is not necessary to include the venue in the invitation letter.
- e) The purpose of the event should be clearly mentioned in the invitation letter.
- f) A complaint letter is written to express satisfaction about services given.
- g) The tone of the complaint letter should be respectful.
- h) A complaint letter should clearly describe the problem.
- i) Complaint letters should not include contact details of the complainant.
- j) The company writes a job acceptance letter to confirm the job.
- k) A job acceptance letter is written before the interview.
- l) A leave application is always without any reason.
- m) Leave applications are informal.
- n) The authority should thank the applicant for the leave of absence.

B. Match the following pairs.

	A	B	
1	The purpose of the enquiry letter is to	a	Formal and polite
2	The tone of the enquiry letter should be	b	Name and contact person and service details
3	The enquiry letter should include and builds a positive response	c	Helps to clarify requirements
4	Benefits of a well-written enquiry letter	d	To request information about a product or service

A. Answer in one word or sentence of the following questions.

2. To whom a job application letter is written?
3. What should be mentioned in an appointment letter?
4. What is the important attachment with the application letter?
5. What type of letter is an appointment letter?
6. Who writes an application letter?
7. Who is the recipient of the appointment letter?
8. What is the purpose of the application letter?
9. What details are necessary in an application letter?
10. Who receives the application letter?

3.3 Presentation of the Matter**Informal Letters**

Letters such as a letter of gratitude, a letter of apology, a condolence letter, a welcome letter, or a get-well-soon letter are all forms of informal letters. These letters are written to keep in touch with friends, family members, and acquaintances. They serve the purpose of maintaining and strengthening personal relationships. Through informal letters, people share personal news, thoughts, and experiences. Unlike formal letters, these are not bound by strict rules or formats. The tone is casual, friendly, and expressive, allowing the writer to communicate their feelings freely. Such letters often offer support, express emotions, or convey encouragement, making them an important part of personal communication.

3.3.1 Section I: A letter of Gratitude

Study the format of an informal letter

Sender's address	1
Date	2
Salutation	3
Body of the letter	
Para I – introductory	4
Para II – main content	5
Para III – conclusion	6
Informal closing	7
Sender's signature	8

A sample letter of gratitude

A letter of gratitude means a letter of thanks to our friends and relatives for their help, support and kindness. You can express your heartfelt thanks to them in a very polite and thoughtful way.

Diksha Bidkar Plot no. 197. Rajaram Puri Kolhapur.	1
27/10/2024	2
Dear Rani,	3
I am very much thankful for your kindness and generosity in giving me one lac rupees when I needed it the most. This act of yours means the world to me. I am very much grateful for your support. Your timely help was a great relief for me. I could manage my financial difficulty without any tension due to your help.	4
I am grateful to have a friend like you. I shall return the amount by the end of the next month. However, I will never forget your kindness and trust that you have shown in me. Your timely help made a significant difference in my life. I appreciate your willingness to lend me a helping hand during my hard time.	5
I know that you are an amazing friend of mine. Thank you for the same. Thank you once again for your great kindness and stable support.	6
With sincere appreciation	7
Diksha	8

Important points in a letter of gratitude

- ◆ Reason for writing
- ◆ Details of specific help
- ◆ Appreciation
- ◆ Acknowledgement
- ◆ Promise of returning a favor

Useful expressions for showing gratitude.

I must express my sincere thanks for your timely help and support.

I am very thankful for your support.

From the bottom of my heart, I thank you ———

I would like to express my sincere gratitude for ———

You are always kind and generous to me.

This time your help and guidance really made a big difference in my life.

I must appreciate your guidance and support.

I shall always be grateful to you.

3.3.2 Section II: a) A letter of congratulations

Hi Ayush,
Huge congratulations on your success in the state level competition of cooking traditional dishes in Maharashtra. Finally, your dedication, determination, hard work and discipline paid off.
We all are very proud of you and wish you all the best in all coming competitions especially for the national level competition being held in the next month. We are confident that you will achieve greater success in your life.
We see you shining and aiming higher targets and achieving them.
Best wishes,
Divya and Diksha

b) Letter of congratulations for academic achievement

Dear Anu,

I am so happy that you stood first in your college securing 97%marks in HSC board examinations. Many congratulations for the excellent achievement. Your constant efforts and perseverance truly paid off.

I know the real credit goes to you and your mom and dad for their invaluable, constant and encouraging support. It is a moment of joy and celebration for the whole family. Once again, I congratulate you and wish you all the best for your future endeavors.

Salute to your commitment and wish you a great success ahead.

Best wishes

Ayush

Important points in congratulatory letter

- ◆ **Mention of specific achievement**
- ◆ **Appreciation of personal qualities and efforts**
- ◆ **Expression of genuine praise, happiness and enthusiasm**
- ◆ **Best wishes for the future**

While congratulating your friends, relatives and colleagues on their success you can take help of the following expressions.

We are so happy to congratulate you for your —————

Please accept our warmest congratulations on your success in —————

Heartiest congratulations on your success in —————

The news gave us immense pleasure.

We wish you all the best for your future.

Your achievement encouraged and inspired many.

It is the result of your hard work and dedication.

We are very proud of it.

It is really a proud moment of joy and celebrations.

Once again congratulations.

We wish you much more success in years to come.

Your success in ——— have set an example to many aspiring candidates.

Check your progress III

1. Answer in one word or sentence of the following questions.

- a) What is the main purpose of a gratitude letter?
- b) Who do we write a letter of congratulations to?
- c) How is the tone of the letter of gratitude?
- d) What is a letter of gratitude?
- e) What is the main purpose of a congratulatory letter?

3.3.3 Section III: A letter of apology

Dear Didi,

I am very sorry for taking your mobile phone without asking you. Even though you were looking for your mobile for two to three hours, I didn't tell you that it was with me. I just wanted to use it for a short time for searching video songs on YouTube. Now I realize my mistake. I should have taken your permission or should have informed you when you were looking for your phone.

Actually, I didn't want to cause you any trouble or invade your privacy. But I now understand that it was very wrong. Please forgive me. I assure you I will be more responsible in future.

Your little bro,
Chintya

Important points in letters of apology

- ◆ **Mention reason of apology**
- ◆ **Expression of clear apology**
- ◆ **Expression of assurance not to repeat**
- ◆ **Acceptance of mistake or wrong done**
- ◆ **Sincerity in expression**

You can take help of the following expressions while writing a letter of apology.

I feel very sorry for the mistake ———

I take full responsibility for the wrong done to you.

Actually, I didn't want to trouble you.

Now I realized it was a blunder on my part.

I feel ashamed of the act.

I now feel how deeply it must have hurt you

I feel terrible ——

3.3.4 Section IV: A letter of condolence

Dear Gouri,

I was shocked to hear that your grandma is no more. It is a great loss to the family. I know you were very close to her and had a great time with her. She was a real treasure of knowledge and wisdom. I know it is very difficult for you to come out of this. She was really a very kind, wonderful and loving person. She was such a strong woman that she will be deeply missed by everyone.

Be brave and take care of yourself and your family. Please call me if you need anything.

With heartfelt sympathy,
Teju

Important points in a letter of condolence

- ◆ **Acknowledgement of pain, loss and grief**
- ◆ **Expression of sympathy**
- ◆ **Mention of the qualities of the deceased person**
- ◆ **Use of supportive words**

Study the following expressions for writing a letter of condolence.

- ◆ I was shocked to hear the news about _____
- ◆ Please accept my condolences on _____
- ◆ I am very sorry to know that _____
- ◆ Please accept my heartfelt condolences _____
- ◆ We are always with you during this challenging time.
- ◆ Wish the almighty give you strength _____
- ◆ I wish you peace and comfort
- ◆ My prayers and wishes are always with you and your family.

Check your progress IV

Choose the best alternative

- 1) The tone of a letter of apology is _____.
 - a) Casual and funny
 - b) Polite and sincere
 - c) Harsh and strict
 - d) Formal
- 2) You can write a letter of apology to _____.
 - a) Your dear friends only
 - b) Your relatives
 - c) Your enemies only
 - d) Anyone you have wronged
- 3) A condolence letter is written to _____.
 - a) Share jokes
 - b) Demand something
 - c) Express sorrow
 - d) Give news

- 4) A condolence letter can be _____.
- Only formal
 - Only informal
 - Both formal and informal
 - None of the above
- 5) Which of the following is an important part of an apology letter.
- Advice
 - Offering something
 - Expressing pain and regret
 - Mention of achievement

3.3.5 Section V: A welcome letter

Hi Sonu,

We welcome you to our group 'Paryawarn Purak Jeevan'. The purpose of the group is to create awareness about the environment and promote sustainability and conservation. We work together to address the local environmental issues. We aim to inspire individuals to take action in protecting the planet.

We are excited to have you here and look forward to working together for the betterment of the planet.

Warm regards,
Shanti

The following table will show Who you can write welcome letters and for what purpose

To friends	To welcome to class/hostel/team/group etc.
To relatives	To welcome to your new home/city/town etc.
To neighbors	To welcome to your relatives' house, to your new area etc.
To guests	To welcome to the event/function/special celebration etc.

While writing the following expressions will help you

Grand welcome _____

We are so excited to welcome you _____

We are so happy to welcome you _____

It gives us a real pleasure to _____
We have planned so many things to welcome you _____
We have been waiting for you arrival _____
Everybody is excited to see you here _____
You will enjoy here _____
You won't forget your stay here _____
Your stay here will be memorable one _____

3.3.6 Section VI: Get well soon letter

Dear Anju,

I just came to know that you are not feeling well. I hope you are taking enough rest and receiving proper treatment. Health is more important than anything else in our life. So, take proper diet and medication and come back stronger. We miss you a lot.

We wish you a very speedy recovery.

With lots of love,
Sonya

You can write get well soon letters to
Your relatives who have been hospitalized for some days show concern and care.
To friends for speedy recovery etc.

You can use the following expressions

We wish you a very speedy recovery.
Take care of yourself.
We are just a call away
Don't hesitate to ask for anything
Take full rest
Take medicine in time and spare some time for meditation.
Your health is of prime importance.
Don't worry about your pending work.
We miss you a lot.

Check your progress V

State whether the following statements are true or false

- a) A welcome letter may include information about the organization/group/ company/role purpose and responsibilities.
- b) A welcome letter usually starts with a disrespect to the recipient.
- c) The tone of a welcome letter is not friendly.
- d) A get well soon letter is written to a person who is healthier.
- e) A get well soon letter gives discomfort to the recipient.

3.3.7 Terms to remember

Acquaint with - make familiar with

Professional- trained in specific job

Crucial - extremely important consideration - and act of thinking when decision is being taken

Candidature- being a candidate

Entitled to - to give the right to

Complainant- a person who makes a formal complaint

To commute- to travel from home to office

Inconvenience- trouble

Appreciate- to understand the value of somebody

Corrective- restore to a normal condition

Prompt- immediate

Insights- deep understanding

Perseverance- determination

Invaluable- extremely useful

Endeavors- attempts

Commitment- dedication

Aspiring- ambitious

3.3.8 Summary

Writing formal and informal letters is an essential and crucial skill in both personal and professional life. To succeed in any field, one must have mastery over both types of letter writing. Moreover, such letters are often included in competitive examinations as a test of a candidate's ability to communicate effectively and demonstrate written communication skills.

In formal letters, the language should be concise, grammatically correct, polite, and precise. These letters are usually written to authorities, companies, or industries for official purposes. On the other hand, informal letters are written to friends, relatives, and acquaintances. The tone of such letters is personal, warm, and friendly, allowing the writer to express emotions and maintain personal relationships.

Answers to Check your progress I

A. Fill in the blanks and rewrite the sentences.

1. communication
2. personal and professional
3. letter writing
4. candidate's
5. personality, tone and language proficiency
6. formal
7. formal
8. mastering
9. precise, polite and clear
10. letter writing

B. Match the following pairs

1-c, 2-a, 3-b, 4-d

Answers to Check your progress II

A) State whether the following statements are true or false.

- ◆ A letter enquiring about availability of projectors for school should include a deadline for information and specifications of projectors. - **true**
- ◆ An invitee should feel a personal touch in a letter of invitation. - **true**
- ◆ A letter of invitation should not have a salutation. - **false**
- ◆ It is not necessary to include the venue in the invitation letter. - **false**
- ◆ The purpose of the event should be clearly mentioned in the invitation letter. - **true**
- ◆ A complaint letter is written to express satisfaction about services given. - **false**
- ◆ The tone of the complaint letter should be respectful. - **true**
- ◆ A complaint letter should clearly describe the problem. - **true**
- ◆ Complaint letters should not include contact details of the complainant. - **false**
- ◆ The company writes a job acceptance letter to confirm the job. - **false**
- ◆ A job acceptance letter is written before the interview. - **false**
- ◆ A leave application is always without any reason. - **false**
- ◆ Leave applications are informal. - **true**
- ◆ The authority should thank the applicant for the leave of absence. - **false**

B. Match the following pairs.

1– d, 2 – a, 3 – b, 4 - c

C. Answer in one word or sentence of the following questions.

1. What is an appointment letter?
A letter given to the selected candidate for the job.
2. To whom a job application letter is written?
To the employer
3. What should be mentioned in an appointment letter?
Job title, salary and terms and conditions.
4. What is the important attachment with the application letter?
CV
5. What type of letter is an appointment letter?
Formal
6. Who writes an application letter?
Job seeker
7. Who is the recipient of the appointment letter?
A selected candidate
8. What is the purpose of the application letter?
To express interest in the job.
9. What details are necessary in an application letter?
Educational qualifications, experience, skills of the applicant.
10. Who receives the application letter?
The employer

Answers to Check your progress III

- a) **To express thanks and appreciations**
- b) **To show thankfulness**
- c) **Formal or informal**
- d) **A letter written to express thanks and appreciations**
- e) **To appreciate someone's success and express joy and excitement.**

Answers to Check your progress IV

1 – b, 2 – d, 3 – c, 4 – c, 5 - c

Answers to Check your progress V

- a- True
- b- False
- c- False
- d- False
- e- False

3.3.9 Exercises

A) Draft job application letters for the following posts

- a) a clerk in a private firm.
- b) a sales executive in a private company
- c) a post of a reporter in a local newspaper.
- d) a post of an office assistant in a private institution.
- e) an accountant in a firm.
- f) a teacher in a private school.
- g) a translator in a publication company.

B) Write complaint letters to the concerned authorities about the following problems.

- a) delay of money orders
- b) delay of parcels
- c) frequent power supply cuts in your area.
- d) poor sanitation
- e) defective laptop and computers
- f) delay in insurance claims
- g) speed of internet
- i) overflow of garbage

C) Write appointment letters to the selected candidates for the following posts.

1. a computer operator
2. an assistant engineer
3. a receptionist in a hospital
4. a librarian in a high school
5. a lab attendant in a private laboratory

D) Frame job acceptance letters to the above-mentioned posts.

E) Write an application for leave of absence to the concerned authorities for the following reasons.

- 1) Two days for attending a training programme.
- 2) Three days for the house warming ceremony.
- 3) Sick leave for seven days.
- 4) Two days for family function
- 5) Three days for the marriage ceremony.

F) Write a letter of enquiry about the following to the concerned.

1. Availability of hall for state level seminar.
2. Admission procedure for Integrated MA programme.
3. Fee structure for B.Sc in Entire computer.
4. Latest Laptops- discounts and festival offers
5. Furniture for office – offers

G) Draft a formal invitation letter to the following.

1. To the Lead College group members to attend a workshop on Preparing for Competitive Examination.
2. To the President of the Sanstha to attend Independence Day Celebration Function.
3. To The Director, Sports Department of university to attend Inter college competition in your college.
4. To the Mayor of Municipal Corporation to attend as a chief guest for the Annual Prize Distribution function at your school.
5. To the Minister for higher education for Inauguration of a new college building.

H) Draft a letter of gratitude to the following.

1. To a relative who has given you a laptop as a birthday gift.
2. To a friend helping you during a medical emergency.
3. To your cousin who has given you good advice and encouragement for the board examination.

I) Write a letter of congratulations in the following situations.

1. One of your friends cracked the MPSC examination recently.
2. Wedding of your very close friend.
3. Your friend received a state level award.

J) Write a letter of apology in the following situations.

1. Misbehavior in the class.
2. To a relative for using harsh language during discussion.

K) Write a letter to your classmate who is hospitalized.

L) Write a letter of welcome in the following situations

1. Your relative is returning from Russia after two years.
2. Your friend who is coming to your home for the first time after marriage.



Module IV**Mastering Essay Writing**

Objectives:

- Understand the purpose and importance of essay writing in academic and competitive examinations.
- Identify the key elements and structure of a well-organized essay.
- Learn how to develop ideas and organize ideas logically and coherently.
- Enhance the ability to write essays on a variety of topics with clarity, relevance, and appropriate language.

Learning Outcomes:

After completing this chapter, the students will be able to:

- Explain the role and relevance of essay writing in academic and competitive examinations.
- Outline and apply the standard structure of an essay: introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Generate relevant content for a given topic and maintain coherence throughout the essay.
- Write clear, well-organized essays on diverse topics with appropriate content and language.

4.0 Introduction

The essay is an important topic in the competitive examinations like UPSC Civil Services Examination (CSE), MPSC, Banking, etc. for written descriptive papers normally in Main examinations after preliminary examinations.

At the outset, let me clarify that MPSC has revised its syllabus for State Services Main Examination recently. The commission has adopted the examination scheme similar to that of UPSC. The overall nature, number of papers, and the marking scheme. These are exactly same. There is a little difference in language papers. The UPSC has one English paper and one Indian language paper. The students from the state like Maharashtra can opt Marathi as their second language paper, besides English. They can opt any other Indian language like Tamil, Malayalam, Kannada, Telugu, Bengali, Odia, Gujarati, Hindi, etc. They should select one of the 22 scheduled Indian languages. For the MPSC examination, the students should opt English and Marathi for the language papers.

There is separate language paper for English of 300 marks. It is of qualifying nature (the marks obtained in the paper are not considered for the final score). The essay is for 100 marks in these qualifying papers.

There is a separate essay paper for 250 marks. It has two sections. The candidates should select one of the topics from Section A and Section B. There are four topics in each section. The candidate should choose one topic from each section. The word limit for each essay for UPSC is 1000-1200 words. The topics are based on the current affairs, international relations, environment, social media, technology, education, philosophy, ethics, government initiatives, among others. You have to write these two essays in three hours. The same scheme is there for MPSC, as it is mentioned above.

The following are the sample essays from UPSC-CSE Main Examination.

Section A

1. *Forests precedes civilizations and deserts follow them.*
2. *The empires of the future will be the empires of the mind.*
3. *There is no path to happiness; Happiness is the path.*
4. *The doubter is a true man of science.*

Though we have mentioned only UPSC and MPSC above, the essays are asked in other competitive examinations, too. It is asked in UPSC-CDS, Railway Recruitment Board, Banking including Reserve Bank of India (Grade B), and State Bank and other Banks (Probationary Officers' Examinations). There are many more such examinations.

After having ample background about the importance and weightage of essays in the context of competitive examinations, you might have understood that one has to master the skill of essay writing on diverse topics if he/ she wants to qualify the competitive examination. Let us study the topic in detail in the following sections.

The word essay is defined as “a short piece of writing on a particular subject”. The *brevity* (concise and exact use of words) is an important feature of the essay. The writer presents his/ her argument or point of view. Essays are typically structured in three parts: an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. The purpose of the essay is to express ideas clearly, organize thoughts coherently, and argue a particular stance or perspective, often supported by evidence or examples.

The French writer Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) invented the “essay” form, though there were writings similar to essay before. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) is called as the father of English essay. Other writers such as Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882), T. S. Eliot (1888-1965), George Orwell

(1903-1950) their significant contribution as essayists. Shashi Tharoor, Arundhati Roy and Amartya Sen are some of the significant contemporary Indian essayists.

For competitive examinations like the UPSC, MPSC, and university level assessments, essay writing is more than just an academic exercise. It is an essential skill that demonstrates the candidate's ability to think critically, analyse complex issues, and communicate effectively.

Through essays, the following things are tested in the competitive examinations: Candidate's knowledge, his/ her analytical skill, clarity of thought and presentation, writing skill, time management, and his/ her creativity and originality. Shortly, essays are mirror of his/ her personality. Candidate's knowledge will be reflected in his/ her essay. His or her perspective towards certain social, political, historical, or other issues will also be reflected in the writing. Essays also aim to evaluate candidate's ability to analyse different sides of the issue, identify root causes, and propose solutions. It not only tests your thorough knowledge of the topic; it also tests your critical thinking and reasoning ability. Further, it tests whether there is coherent structure in the essay, and whether the material presented in the topic is organized suitably. The ideas presented in patches or pieces without logical connection will make negative impression about the writing.

The writing skill is another important aspect that is tested through essay. It includes your choice of words i.e. proper vocabulary, grammar, sentence construction, and overall writing style. Simple, concise, and clear writing is expected. The incorrect grammatical usage, ambiguous language, long and incomprehensible sentences, and verbosity make negative impression, too.

Students are required to finish his or her essay in given time. They should not devote major space for introduction and end the essay abruptly having a less time at the end. The evaluator test candidate's ability to plan, organize, and present an effective essay within the given time.

The most significant thing is that students should not imitate others. The examiners test the creativity of the candidate. The candidate's unique approach to deal the topic makes an impact. The originality of thought and expression is always praiseworthy in competitive examinations.

Afte this brief introduction, we will move to the next section to know the major types of essays.

4.1 Types of Essays

There are different types of essays. We will focus on major four types of essays. These are descriptive, narrative, expository, and argumentative essays. Descriptive use sensory details to create a vivid picture in the minds of readers.

Narrative essays tell stories. Expository essays explain or inform about the topic. And the argumentative or persuasive essays present the position to convince the readers. Let's discuss each type in details as follows to understand them better. We begin with the descriptive essays.

4.1.1 Descriptive Essay

As mentioned earlier, descriptive essays use sensory details to create vivid images for the readers. The sensory means it is related to our five senses. Our eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin are called sense organs. They are related to sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch respectively. We have technical terms like visionary (related to vision or sight), auditory (related to listening or sounds), olfactory (related to smell or odor), gustatory (related to the tastes), and tactile (related to touch).

Before discussing further, make a list of sensory vocabulary. You search for the words related to our senses in the dictionary or by using your smart phone. You spend sometimes to learn new words. Once you know the meaning of these words, use these words in your writing and speech.

Normally, we use descriptive vocabulary to describe objects, people, places, and events. For instance, we are interested in different parts, colours, sizes, and functions of objects. We are keen to describe person's complexion, age, height, build up, hair, eyes, nose, etc. We also describe different places and events, too. Students should possess a fair amount of descriptive vocabulary to write the descriptive essays. The use of adjectives and figures of speech is observed in such writing.

The purpose or objective of descriptive essay is to create vivid imagery or picture in the minds of readers. They can visualize the scene or event while reading the description about it. The descriptive essays focus on showing the things. You can get the very idea of a peaceful morning by reading an entry in the journal by a person or you can enjoy a poem by reading a description in it about the sunset. Robert Frost, an American poet, has created a scenic picture of sunset and how he as a narrator witnessed the snowy evening at woods in the famous poem, *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*. You can think of similar descriptions in English or Marathi.

Let's have some writing exercise. The topic is *the immemorable day of my life*. It can be a person or an event that has a lasting impression on you. It can be a turning point in your life. You can write about *a good day* or *a bad day* – the welcoming or the hateful event of the particular day. Someone can write about his or her birthday – that might have been turned to be very special or unique. Someone can write about the demise of his or her relative – and that might have a great impact on his or her life, thereafter. After discussing descriptive essay, we will study Narrative essay in the next section.

4.1.2 Narrative Essay

To narrate is to give an account of real or imaginary people or events. To narrate is to tell the story. The story is a tale. To tell a tale is a narration. There is a little difference between a tale and a story. The story is a larger in scope, while a tale is a specific and having a narrow sense. The tale is mostly related to the folklore and oral traditions. Mostly, these terms are used interchangeably in the general context.

A narrative essay tells a story, often a personal one, that conveys a specific message or experience. Mostly, the reports in the newspapers are also called as stories.

Let's study some interesting phrases regarding 'story':

but that's another story: used when one does not want to expand on it for now

end of story: used to emphasize that there is nothing to add on the matter just mentioned

it's a long story: used to indicate that, for now, one does not want to talk about the experience – that might be painful

to make a long story short: to conclude quickly or briefly

The story has a specific structure – a beginning, a rising action, a climax, a falling action, and a resolution. After the well beginning, there is an expansion of the story that reaches to the top i.e. climax. It follows the episode of the story that is known as falling action usually leads to the resolution. Though there is general structure of the story, some stories do not follow this generic structure. Similarly, there is no resolution at the end in the imaginary stories. Some stories are in chronological order, while others do not follow the order. They go back and forth with the events. Some stories use **flash back technique**. It is a narrative device that interrupts the present story to show scenes or events from the past, providing background, character motivation, or plot context. The use of past tense is peculiar to the narrative essays.

While writing narrative essays, the candidates are expected to follow the chronological order, wherever it is possible. They should follow the generic structure – the beginning, the middle, and the end. Ideally, it should provide solution or resolution at the end.

Let's discuss the one of the following topics:

(a) *Lessons learned from failure*

(b) *Discovering my passion.*

The following steps will be helpful to organize your ideas and write them with more clarity on the paper.

- (1) Choose one of the topics.
- (2) Discuss the topic with your friends or classmates.
- (3) Make some points.
- (4) Add more points (if you think these are significant and not considered before)
- (5) Remove some points (if you think these are irrelevant or not important)
- (6) Number them sequentially (it will help to follow the order while writing)
- (7) Write down your ideas in your own words.
- (8) Revise your draft if required (it is possible during your practice, and not in examination).
- (9) Get it assessed from the expert and incorporate their suggestions.

After Descriptive and Narrative essays, we will discuss Expository essay in the following section.

4.1.3 Expository Essay

The purpose of the Expository Essay is to inform, to explain, to educate readers in a clear, objective, and factual manner. It follows standard structure – an introduction, a body, and a conclusion in general. However, it also considers ideas to be organized on the basis of topic using compare and contrast, problem and solution, or cause-and-effect criterion. The language used in these essays is formal, clear and objective. In these essays, facts and observations speak for themselves in the most effective way. Critical thinking, analyzing causes and effects, processing reasons for something, and coming up with solutions or suggestions have been observed in such essays.

These essays do not entertain. They do not share personal biased opinions. They do not persuade. These essay expose to the factual information. They reveal the facts systematically. They explain the things logically. They present the data effectively. They definitely provide conclusion at the end.

Let us discuss one of the following essays.

(a) *Use of plastic in India*

(b) *Corruption in India*

Let us begin with the first topic. You can discuss pros and cons of plastic use. You can think of demand and supply of plastic in India. You can think of current practices regarding plastic use. You can discuss about waste management of plastic

materials. You can think of alternatives for plastic use. And you can think of biodegradable plastic material, too. Collect the information about these and then compose your essay. Use primary sources like updated reports by government or important organizations working in the field.

Study the second topic. Try to define the term ‘corruption’. Relate it with ethics and morality. You can list the fields in which you think there is a problem of corruption. You can list according to most hampered fields versus less hampered fields. Think of the rural and urban areas, government and non-government organizations, etc. Think of motivations behind the corruption and add the different means used in corruption. Think of the present legal provisions, RTI, and other tools used for awareness and transparency. You can discuss the solutions and how to handle this problem most effectively to create corruption-free India.

When you face the social, health, or any other problem, you can write about such problems using the above questions. You can follow the structure like: **define** the issue, **scope** of the issue, **reasons** or **motivations** behind the issue, and **solutions** for the issue. You can define on your own. There is no need to provide number of definitions regarding the issues. Think of the issue from different sides. Think of better and feasible actions as solutions, not imaginary and illogical.

After discussing the three major types of essays, we will discuss the final type in the next sections.

4.1.4 Argumentative (Persuasive) Essay

Though there is a little difference in Argumentative and Persuasive essay, they are normally grouped together. The purpose of these essays is to persuade the readers. The writers wish to convince the readers to take the favourable actions. Argumentative essays use logic and factual information to influence readers, while the focus of Persuasive essays is on the emotions and feelings of the readers. Briefly, the former affects the mind (thoughts) and the latter affects the heart (emotions) of the readers. The goal is common.

Sometimes, there are two sides for the issue. You support certain idea or oppose it. You argue to support certain kind of idea or you present your counterarguments to it.

These essays engage readers. They provide background information (about the particular topic or issue). They present the clear thesis statement (or the main argument). Each paragraph focuses on a single claim to support the main thesis (argument). Authors use evidence to support their point. They can include some counter arguments and refute them in a couple of paragraphs. At the end they restate the thesis in a new way. (For example, *considering the above discussion, we can conclude that ...*). They offer a final thought to take an action for the readers.

In the persuasive essay, the authors use emotional appeals and rhetorical devices in addition to logic to convince the readers. We can find such argumentative and persuasive appeals in the televisions shows and in the political campaigns.

Let us discuss the topic *Should smartphones be banned in the college campus?* You can discuss the physical as well as mental issues related to the excessive use of smartphones. You can discuss about addiction, compulsive behaviour, and its impact on daily life. You can discuss mental issues like loneliness, depression, anxiety and stress among college students. You can discuss sleep patterns, back pain, headache, and neck pain. You can discuss the interrelation of smartphone usage and study habits. You can discuss shorter attention span among the college student and their lower concentration power.

After discussing the negative impacts, you can discuss the possible positive outcomes if they reduce the smartphone usage. You will observe the improved mental well-being of the students. They will overcome the feeling of loneliness and enhance the meaningful connections in the real life, among friends and family. They will witness the increased productivity in them. They will live their life with the greater intentionality, with the greater intensity, and with the greater purpose.

You can think of innovative ideas about how to reduce smartphone usage. As we observe fasting or as we observe no vehicle day to improve health or the outside environment respectively, we can create clubs that promote different face to face activities to avoid smartphone usage. Add your all innovative and feasible ideas here.

After discussing the four major types of essay writing, we will see the general structure of essay and will recapitulate the important points to be remembered while writing an effective essay.

4.2 Structure and Format

Though we discussed four types of essays, their purpose, language and structure, there is a thin line between these types. Sometimes, they overlap. However, we can't mix them all while writing on the essay topics. It is necessary to understand these basic types and their organization.

Though there is a little difference, the general structure is – an introduction, a body, and an end. The logical coherence is required. Language should not be ambiguous. Your approach or perspective must be positive. The qualities like time management, specificity and clarity of thought are revealed through the essay writing, and you should aware of it. There is ample scope for creativity in the essay writing and showing your personality.

To sum up, an essay is comprised of number of logical paragraphs. It has an introduction that grabs reader's attention or provide necessary background information

to proceed further. It depends on the introduction whether readers go on reading further or not. The main body engages the reader for a longer duration. And the end gives him or her the specific message or clear idea after the long read. Each paragraph is consisted of interconnected sentences. The first sentence is again introduction to that paragraph. It is called as a topic sentence. Other sentences within a paragraph provides supportive information to the topic sentence. The concluding sentence in each paragraph tries to finish the idea, or a part of broader idea, or one of the arguments. Each sentence is made up of different words, grammatically correct and meaningful. And word is the basic unit of sentence. You should choose appropriate words in your writing.

Let's recap the points in the next section.

4.3 Points to be remembered

1. **Understand the topic:** Read the topic closely. Identify the main theme and scope of the topic.
2. **Make an outline:** Brainstorm the ideas, think about the suitable examples, and make brief outline to organize your thoughts.
3. **Follow the structure of essay:** Don't start writing abruptly. Introduction, main body encompassing a well-developed ideas and examples, and clear conclusion must be followed.
4. **Maintain the coherence and flow:** Your ideas must be connected to each other logically.
5. **Support your ideas with facts and evidence:** Your arguments must be supported by the factual data and relevant information.
6. **Pay attention to Language:** Write in formal language. You must be aware that the language of description differs from the language of narration.
7. **Be Creative.** Do not imitate others. Create your own style of writing by developing your own ideas and practicing them. Besides this, if you wish to cite information from other sources, mention it. May it be a quotation, citation, statistics or anything else, you can give reference, source, etc. to give due credit. Citing of the information without giving credit is called as Plagiarism.

4.4 Terms to be understood

1. **Essay:** a short piece of writing, at least three paragraphs long
2. **Paragraph:** usually a group of related sentences having a separate thought or idea in it.

3. **Topic:** subject, what the piece of writing is about
4. **Organize:** to arrange information in a clear, logical way
5. **Gather:** to find and collect together information
6. **Step:** one thing in a series of things you do
7. **Edit:** to change or correct a piece of writing
8. **Proofread:** to check a piece of writing for errors
9. **Coherence:** the quality of being logical and consistent
10. **Describe:** to evoke picture through words
11. **Narrate:** to tell story
12. **Expose:** to make something visible by uncovering it, reveal something
13. **Argue:** to give reasons or evidence to convince the readers for something
14. **Persuade:** to convince the readers and motivate them to act for something

4.5 Cohesive devices

The cohesive devices are the words or phrases that connect the ideas throughout the essay. You can avoid repetitive use of the same words. You can use the cohesive devices as below. These are few examples, add more to the list.

- To add information: *and, also, in addition, furthermore, etc.*
- To give examples: *for example, for instance, such as, etc.*
- To sequence ideas: *firstly, next, after that, finally, etc.*
- To indicate contrast: *however, but, in contrast, on the other hand, despite that, etc.*
- To show cause and effect: *because, so, therefore, etc.*
- To refer previous information: *this, that, these, those, etc.*
- To conclude: *to sum up, to summarize, to conclude, therefore, etc.*

After discussing the cohesive devices or the linking words or phrases and their importance, we will discuss some common errors that students commit during essay writing in examinations.

4.6 Common Errors in Essay Writing

Though we are discussing these errors in the context of essay writing, these errors should be avoided in other forms of descriptive writing, too.

4.6.1 Bad handwriting

Handwriting plays an important role in descriptive writing in competitive examinations. Your handwriting must be legible. What will you achieve with the illegible writing? If the handwriting is not readable or comprehensible, it is very difficult to assess your answers and pay attention to the content. By good handwriting, we do not mean very attractive, artistic, or calligraphic handwriting. Calligraphy is a separate art. By good handwriting, we mean the legible i.e. easily readable writing. Practice your writing and it's very foundational thing you have to improve, if you wish to succeed in any competitive examination that is of descriptive kind. It will give you an added advantage in professional life, too.

4.6.2 Capitalization and punctuation

Each sentence must begin with the capital letter. All capitals in the sentence hampers the readability and reading speed. You should be careful about the capitalization during your essay writing. Students have a knowledge about capitalization; however, they do not pay attention while writing.

Punctuation marks are of immense importance in English. Full stop (period), question mark, exclamatory mark, comma, colon, semi-colon, single and double quotation marks, apostrophe, hyphen, dash, and parentheses are the basic punctuation marks in English. The declarative sentences always end with the full stop. Question mark indicates the questions. Exclamations are used to show emotions or to give emphasis. Double quotation marks are used for the direct speech or to quote from the important personalities or books. Single quotation mark is used for quote within quote or to indicate important phrases. Colon introduced a list or an explanation, while semi-colon joins two main (independent) clauses within a sentence. Each clause has a separate verb phrase. The comma is used to separate items, words, phrases, or clauses within a sentence. Parenthesis is used for addition information. There are three dash symbols in English: the hyphen (-) is used for compound nouns like *short-term*, em (-) dash is used to show interruptions in the sentence or additional information as in *My dad's friend—the advocate—came to visit us yesterday*, and en (-) dash is used to show ranges like *10-20* or *April-June*.

In writing, we can't use italics. You can use underline if you wish to focus certain part of the sentence. Overuse of underline is again of no use. Capitalization is not a part of punctuation marks, but it is a separate component of writing

conventions. We should pay attention to both capitalization and punctuation marks for clear and comprehensible writing.

4.6.3 Subject-Verb Agreement or Subject-Verb Concord

The nominal phrases (Nouns and Pronouns) occur as Subject in the sentences. The singular and plural nouns should agree with the verb. The singular subject takes the singular verb and the plural subject takes the plural verb as in *the cat sits on the mat* or *the cats sit on the mat*. The modifiers within a subject will not affect the verb, for example, *the box of apples is heavy*. In this sentence, *the box* is the Subject and it is singular. The prepositional phrase *of apples* is modifier. It can be *the box of [something]*, *the box of apples*, *the box of firecrackers*, *the box of bottles*, *the box of gold coins* or *the box of the powder*, *the box of sand*, *the box of TV*, *the box of fridge*, etc.

The first person *I* (singular) and the second person *you* (singular and plural) take the same plural form of the verb *go* in English. The indefinite pronouns *everybody*, *each*, or *anybody* takes singular verb.

The collective nouns such as *team* and *group* can be used as singular or plural depending on the context. When you use *team* as a singular subject, you indicate it as a unit, and when you use *team* as a plural subject, you refer to the individuals in the team.

Thus, the **subject-verb agreement** is one of the important aspects in writing essays.

4.6.4 Spellings

You can use British or American spellings. It would be better to follow style consistently throughout your writing. The American or British spellings does not affect the meaning. For example, *color* vs. *colour*; *behaviour* vs. *behaviour*; etc. However, the spelling mistakes loses the meaning, completely. You cannot use *there* in the place of *their* and vice versa. The word *there* is used to indicate place. It is also used as generic subject as in *there are many issues*. The word *their* is the possessive form of the pronoun *they*. You can understand its use as in *they are capable of handling their problems*.

4.6.5 Use of Quotations

The quotations help to improve the quality of writing. The quotations should be used aptly. The incorrect use of quotations, the excessive use of quotations, or wrong attribution of quotations will create negative impression. You cannot attribute Aristotle's quotation to Plato or vice versa. The quotation cited should improve your

content. It is meaningless to use inappropriate quotations. If you are writing about leadership, you can use quotation from a great leader or you can use quotation related to great leadership qualities.

4.6.6 Statistics or Data

If you use data, you can provide source of the data. You should not present wrong data. Your facts and figures must be accurate. Moreover, you should interpret your data properly to give assumption about the future trend or give possible conclusion based on the given data. For example, if there is general trend that number of students appearing for competitive examinations are increasing in last ten years, then it is possible to increase in future – if the trend remains the same. However, you cannot conclude that the competition is becoming tough based on the previous assumption.

We will conclude the discussion of essay by the quotation by Francis Bacon: “Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man”.

4.7 Exercises

4.7.1 Choose the most appropriate option from the options given below for each question.

1. **What is the main purpose of the introduction in an essay?**
 - A. To introduce the topic and present the thesis statement
 - B. To provide all supporting evidence
 - C. To summarize the entire essay
 - D. To give the reader a conclusion
2. **What does a thesis statement do?**
 - A. Describes the conclusion
 - B. Adds citations
 - C. States the main argument or position of the essay
 - D. Lists all topic sentences
3. **What is the correct order of a standard academic essay?**
 - A. Body – Introduction – Conclusion
 - B. Title – References – Body
 - C. Introduction – Body – Conclusion
 - D. Conclusion – Body – Introduction
4. **What is a topic sentence?**
 - A. A sentence that introduces the main idea of a paragraph
 - B. A summary at the end of the paragraph

- C. A concluding sentence
 - D. A sentence containing a citation
- 5. Which of these is an example of a cohesive device (linking word)?**
- A. Because
 - B. Apple
 - C. Jump
 - D. However
- 6. What should the conclusion of an essay include?**
- A. Summary of main points and restatement of the thesis
 - B. New arguments and data
 - C. A new hook
 - D. Opening statements
- 7. What tone is most appropriate for an essay to be written for competitive examination?**
- A. Formal and objective
 - B. Informal and funny
 - C. Personal and emotional
 - D. Humorous and sarcastic
- 8. What is plagiarism?**
- A. Using your own ideas
 - B. Copying work without proper credit
 - C. Editing your writing
 - D. Writing in passive voice
- 9. What does coherence in writing mean?**
- A. Using many complex words
 - B. Making ideas flow logically and clearly
 - C. Adding more citations
 - D. Using rhetorical questions
- 10. What is the purpose of an outline in essay writing?**
- A. To organize ideas before writing
 - B. To add visuals
 - C. To increase word count
 - D. To summarize the essay
- 11. Which of the following is a good thesis statement?**
- A. Pollution is everywhere
 - B. I don't like pollution
 - C. Pollution in cities affects health and needs stricter laws
 - D. This essay talks about pollution

- 12. What is one way to improve clarity in writing?**
- A. Use complex vocabulary
 - B. Use simple and precise language
 - C. Repeat points often
 - D. Avoid punctuation
- 13. What should you avoid in your essay conclusion?**
- A. Final thoughts
 - B. A restatement of thesis
 - C. New arguments or ideas
 - D. Summary of main points
- 14. How many main points are usually in the body of a 5-paragraph essay?**
- A. 3
 - B. 5
 - C. 1
 - D. 2
- 15. What is the purpose of supporting evidence?**
- A. To support the main argument
 - B. To make the essay longer
 - C. To introduce new topics
 - D. To write a conclusion
- 16. What is a common essay writing mistake?**
- A. Clear structure
 - B. Strong thesis
 - C. Poor organization and lack of coherence
 - D. Staying on topic
- 17. What kind of content should go into the body paragraphs?**
- A. Background information
 - B. Supporting details and analysis
 - C. A summary of the topic
 - D. Only your opinions
- 18. What is the main function of an introduction of any essay?**
- A. To grab the reader's attention
 - B. To list citations
 - C. To end the introduction
 - D. To introduce all arguments
- 19. Which of the following is NOT a good Cohesive device?**
- A. However
 - B. Therefore

- C. Beautiful
- D. Moreover

20. What is the most important factor when selecting an essay topic?

- A. It should be interesting and manageable
- B. It must be long
- C. It should be about a celebrity
- D. It should confuse the reader

4.7.2 Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence.

1. What is an essay?
2. What is coherence?
3. How will you define a paragraph?
4. What do you understand by the word ‘topic’?
5. Explain the difference between *Argumentative* and *Persuasive* essay.
6. In the context of essay, what is ‘organization’?
7. What is mean by proofreading?
8. Define the concept Narration?
9. What does by the word ‘expose mean
10. What is the basic difference between the description and narration?

4.7.3 Write an essay on the following topic(s).

1. Will AI replace human jobs?
2. Indian Space Research
3. The memorable day of my life
4. Yoga in 21st Century
5. Technology or Nature
6. GST 2.0
7. Higher Education in India
8. Art and Life
9. Global or Local
10. Human vs. Humane
11. War and Peace

12. Organic farming in India
13. Corruption in India
14. Ethics or Profits?
15. Terrorism
16. My College Trip
17. Indian Economy
18. Your idea of happiness
19. Challenges before India
20. Be the change

(**Note:** The essay topics are generalized for the purpose of understanding for the B.A. II students. There is a little variation in words in actual examinations. Students are advised to read each topic twice and understand it fully before writing.)

4.8 Answer Key

Answer Key for 4.7.1 Multiple type Questions.

- | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. A | 2. C | 3. C | 4. A |
| 5. D | 6. A | 7. A | 8. B |
| 9. B | 10. A | 11. C | 12. B |
| 13. C | 14. A | 15. A | 16. C |
| 17. B | 18. A | 19. C | 20. A |

Answer Key for 4.7.2 Objective type Questions.

(Please refer 4.4 above in the unit for the answers.)

4.9 References

Books for Essay Writing

Wren, P. C., & Martin, H. (2019). High School English Grammar and Composition. S. Chand & Company.

Rumisek, A, Lisa, Zemach, E, Dorothy. (2005). Academic Writing from Paragraph to Essay. Spain: Macmillan.

Websites for authentic information and previous question papers

You can refer to the official websites of government agencies such as UPSC and others to seek authentic and authoritative information. You can use material such as previous question papers available on the topics like essays to understand the focus and diversity.

(For example, www.upsc.gov.in).

Other material for competitive examinations, especially for essay writing

The high-quality periodicals (including government publications): Yearbooks, Bi-annual, Quarterly, Bimonthly, Monthly, Weekly publications and daily newspapers such as the Hindu.

The Hindu-the high-quality editorials, the essays on diverse subjects on current affairs, the book and movie reviews, and other material of your own interest.



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Semester : IV
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Module I**Public speaking, Debates, Extempore**

Contents:**1. Objectives**

After studying this unit you will be able to understand:

- ◆ The history of the art of public speaking, extempore and debates.
- ◆ The importance of the art of public speaking, extempore and debates.
- ◆ The techniques of public speaking, extempore and debate to use it in personal and professional life.
- ◆ The importance of the skills of public speaking, extempore and debates and how to prepare for competitive examinations with focus on these skills.

1.1 Introduction

In the earlier units you have learned the different topics like comprehension of passage, uses of words in the contexts, letter writing, and essay writing. These skills are mostly writing skills. But in this unit you will be studying skills of public speaking, extempore and debates. These skills are more of speaking skills of speaking. Public speaking has a long history and it has played a significant role for the development of human civilization. In the modern times, public speaking is a highly valued skill in various sectors which include government, industry, and advocacy and marketing .Now it has also evolved with the advent of digital technologies, incorporating video conferencing, multimedia presentations, and other innovative forms of communication which are widely used for various purposes.

1.2 The subject matter

We will look at communication from two perspectives.

A) Communication in personal life in general

Communication is indispensable in human life. A man is a social animal who lives in a civilized world. We all belong to family, society, state, nation and globe. Human life is changing very fast. Newer techniques are becoming part of our routine life. But nothing can replace communication. Communication is the lifeline of our life.

Here we have used communication as an umbrella term. So it includes public speaking, extempore and debates .We need to communicate with family, different people, and also in professional life. Communication helps to exchange our ideas,

emotions, and information. Communication is very essential to understand each other, for relationships and to solve problems. In fact communication is the foundation of society because it helps social interaction which is very essential for social progress and harmony. It is communication that helps to resolve the different issues and conflicts. Communication provides us a way to express our feelings, needs, and thoughts etc.

B) Communication in professional life

Most of us opt for some career. You may opt for a career in government jobs, banking sector, marketing sector, private sector etc. But it is very challenging and difficult to secure a career in every sector. We should be aware that to seek employment is not easy. There is tough competition. Thousands of the candidates are trying to get jobs or to go for careers of their choice. But the government or the private sector provide jobs only to those who are worthy of it. The candidates have to undergo the rigorous selection process. The process of selection begins with advertisement, followed by a letter of application and interview. In many companies written examinations, group discussion and debates etc. are also part of the selection process. So you have to be excellent in interviews, group discussion and extempore.

There is a great craze for competitive examinations. Thousands of the students try to get jobs through different competitive examinations like M.P.S.C., U.P.S.C., nationalized and private banks and private companies. But very few of them are selected. Many students cannot perform up to the mark in the interview. The students lack the necessary skill of facing the interview. In this unit you will certainly understand the techniques of the preparation and how to present yourself in the interview and debates and how to face the questions using skills of public speaking and extempore speech. Remember the interview is a matter of speaking skills. But you can speak only if you are prepared in terms of knowledge and the art of speaking properly.

If you are selected, your professional career begins. But you can remain in the company as an employee as long as you are performing as per company's targets or expectations. But remember, you can be successful in your career provided you have certain skills. These skills include public speaking, extempore and debates etc. In fact these skills will help you all the time in your professional life. So it is essential for you to learn these skills. Learning these skills is a never ending process. It is more like work in progress all the time. If you learn and master these skills, you will become very successful in your career and you will be promoted in the organization. The college years are crucial to prepare for your career. It is essential and necessary for the students to keep themselves updated in terms of knowledge and current affairs. You can keep yourself updated only if you are a good reader and you have to regularly read the necessary books and good newspapers. Remember good readers are invariably good leaders. You can speak or communicate only when you have

something to speak or communicate. But this is possible only when you are a good reader. Communication and reading go hand in hand. Now let's learn about the skills of public speaking, extempore and debates.

2.1 Section - I

Public Speaking

A brief history

Let's take a look at the history of the art of public speaking in very brief. It will help us to know the importance of the art of public speaking. We find that in the ancient civilized societies on the different continents the art of public speaking played a very important role in the development of various disciplines. In fact, public speaking has played a very vital role in the development of mankind.

We find glimpses of public speeches in ancient Indian literature. Ancient Indian rhetoric has its roots in *Vedas*, epics like *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata* and *Nyaya Sutras* which is a formal system of logic and debates. It is mostly religious and philosophical discourse. The figurative language is used to explain the different concepts which are useful in spiritual enlightenment. In ancient India, around 700 BCE, public debates by Indian rhetors on the topic of religion were a popular form of entertainment. Ancient Indian literature shows a refined sense of rhetoric and it is seen in the use of similes. *Bhagavad Gita* is a classic example of deliberative rhetoric. The Buddhist tradition of India highlights the importance of the value of engaging in calm and humorous discourse.

In the pre-classical period evidence of public speaking can be found in ancient texts like *Instructions of Suruppag* which includes advice on speaking properly. Public speaking was essential for civic and political life because citizens had to debate in the assemblies.

According to the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, there are three types of speeches: deliberative (political), forensic (judicial), and epideictic (ceremonial or demonstrative). Aristotle is considered as a father of public speaking. He is the first who wrote systematically about the study of rhetoric and compiled his observations in the book *The Rhetoric*. He developed a framework for persuasion. He also defined its three ethoses: ethos, (credibility) pathos, (emotion) and logos, (logic)

In ancient Rome the techniques of Greek rhetoric were adopted. But Cicero, the Roman philosopher, developed the art of public speaking. He classifies public speeches into three types: judicial (courtroom), deliberative (political), and demonstrative (ceremonial). The classification of public speeches of Aristotle and Cicero is in the same line. According to Cicero there are five canons of rhetoric – invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery.

In the medieval period rhetoric remained as a part of liberal art but its practice declined because some Christian scholars condemned it as a pagan art. But in the renaissance period there was renewed interest in classical rhetoric with stress on the connections of truth, morality and communication.

Confucius, the ancient Chinese philosopher, is a very important figure in the study of public speaking. He insisted on the importance of public speaking to affect the persons including those who are not even present in the audience. He thought that words have the power to inspire people to change the world.

The study of rhetoric continued with focus on proper pronunciation and delivery in 20th century especially after the Second World War. Public speaking became more conversational in the last century .Technology began to transform the speeches with overhead projectors and with tools like powerpoint presentations and social media. But in the world of technology the importance of public speaking, extempore and debates continue in different sectors and in general life.

Public speaking as art

Public speaking is a very essential skill. It may be called as a powerful weapon or tool to become a successful person, executive, businessman, political leader and activist etc. Remember public speaking is not only called an art but also science. It is called an art because it uses communication skills, psychology, persuasion, storytelling, voice modulation etc. Successful people, executives, businessmen, political leaders and activists speak effectively in public. It is important to understand that skill is mastered if you practice very hard. How can you become a successful public speaker?

Remember you should not make yourself a machine that speaks. You should talk about the thing or values that are worthy of public utterance .Public speaking is not all about voice, gesture and the rest but also to aim to improve each time by observation and criticism of those who hear you. Experience is the best teacher. But the experience of others should also be used as our experience. Thus, experience is of two types, personal and others. You should be a severe critic of your own speech.

Importance of public speaking

- ◆ Public speaking helps in transferring knowledge, wisdom, culture, traditions, and history across the nations and generations.
- ◆ It helps in shaping societies and governments. Revolutions and democracies were built on persuasive speeches.
- ◆ Spiritual leaders and preachers guide through sermons about moral values.
- ◆ Great speeches have inspired movements for civil rights, struggle for independence and many social reformations.

- ◆ Public speaking improves confidence and it helps to lead and influence others.
- ◆ Today public speaking through media bringing people across the boundaries and uniting the people for the causes like climate change, peace and human rights etc.
- ◆ If you are good at delivering public speeches, it will help you to get a job or you may be selected by the organization.

Keep the following points in mind for effective public speaking.

Have something to say

Reading should be a habit with you. It should be a part of your daily duties. A lifetime reading will be always very useful to prepare your speech. If you are a good reader then it would be easier for you to prepare your speech. Library is an essential part of a good speaker's life. Fill your mind with speech-material. You should be absorbed with your subject. Never go without any preparation, or with some knowledge of the previous speech, you will definitely become self-conscious. You know that you are not prepared properly to speak. So you should know what you are going to talk about. It is a good idea to work on the beginning of the speech completely, at least with the first few sentences, so that you will not have any trouble in the beginning. Good beginning is always better. Good beginning is half done .But remember, it is half done. You should know your subject better than your audience and you have nothing to fear rather you have something valuable to say.

Mindset, practice and practice and practice

Be confident and let your fear not discourage you from speaking from what you have planned to speak. Overconfidence is bad. Don't indulge in self-consciousness. Self is secondary to your subject. Try to face an audience as frequently as possible. Don't think of doing poorly because it is worse than self-consciousness. If you believe you will fail, then there is no hope for you. It is said that all things are ready if the mind be so. It is practice that will help you to overcome the fear of the stage .So practice and practice and practice. It will help you to overcome fear. Even brave people know the fear but they don't bother about it. The victory lies in a fearless mind. Your attitude is more important than your capacity. So master your fear. It is only practice that can remove your fear and nothing else can. The audience is more important than you and truth is more important than both of you. Truth is the most valuable company. So never deviate from the truth.

Take a pause in front of the audience. Face the audience with a proper smile to show that you are cool, calm, confident and going to deliver something of great value. Take a few seconds before you start. Haste is a big waste because it shows lack of control and confidence .Take deep breath, relax and start in a conversational tone as if you are talking to a good and dependable friend.

It is bad to be monotonous in your speech. The monotonous speaker delivers his speech in the same volume, pitch of the tone, and the same speed. For a good public, speaker monotony is a sin. We appreciate variety. There is power in variety. Many times you are told to be natural. But to be natural does not mean monotonous. A variety gives pleasure. Remember if you want to teach or influence people, you must please them. You should avoid monotony in your speech by multiplying our powers of speech by increasing tools. You may play with feelings of the audience or a joke relevant to the topic; guide the beliefs of the audience. Every word in your speech is not important. But certain words demand emphasis. In public speech use of proper emphasis is very important. You need to be selective in giving emphasis in your speech. For example, Destiny is not a matter of chance but choice. Now it is for you to select the words or words that you want to emphasize. But it does not mean that you should shout to highlight some word or words. If you are talking loudly then, it is a good idea to say the important word or words in concentrated whisper. If you are talking in low pitch, then raise your voice to highlight the emphatic word or words. Sometimes it is necessary to stress every word. Remember every good public speaker has his own strategy about it.

You should use vocal tone as high, low, medium or any variation between. Change of pitch is a must and it should be continuous in the speech. A pause in public speech is not just silence but it is eloquent silence. In fact a good pause in speech is an art. A pause helps the speaker to gather power before he says something forcefully and it not only creates suspense but also prepares the mind of the audience to receive the message. The pause provides time to the audience to penetrate the idea or message.

The most expressive element of our speech is to master naturalness in speaking foreign language and its correct use is the main element in the naturalness of the speech. Concentrate hard on your prepared speech. Do not allow your mind to withdraw. When you speak, speak with force. Force means internal and external force. Speech without force is good for nothing. You have to speak with authority, conviction and language of force. Enthusiasm is of great importance. It is said by Emerson that nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm. You have to sweep your audience with your enthusiasm. The flow of the speech is important. Fluency of the speech depends on ready easy use of words. Actually, fluency is a matter of preparation. Preparation means gathering necessary facts, ability to think independently and arranging thoughts, full and precise vocabulary and easy manner delivery of speech. It is important to note that, for us, English is a foreign language. We should be able to deliver speech in English as if English is our first language. Your speech should not sound as if non- native speaker is speaking. Of course, it is very challenging but not impossible. Reading English literature and practice will certainly help to speak in Standard English. Remember, English is used as a medium

of communication and instruction in most organizations. It is obligatory for you to use English confidently if you are aiming for a good career or job in any sector. Remember, public speaking is not a matter of mastering a few rules but the most important thing is that your speech is for truth, force, feeling, and life.

The voice is a very important asset in speech. We should pay attention to our voice. A good voice is essential for the public speaker. A good voice is like a delicate instrument. We need to handle it very carefully. Nervousness or mental strain may affect your voice. So you should be free from stress and full of confidence.

Gestures are very important. Gestures are necessary accessories to help our communication. Gesture is an outward expression of inward condition. It is like the effect of the mental or emotional impulse that is struggling for expression through physical expression. The purpose of the gesture is to carry your thoughts and feelings into the minds of the audience. But it is important to avoid monotony in gestures. Facial expressions are very important.

There are different ways of giving public speeches. For example, some public speakers speak from their notes while some speak extemporaneously. Now the speakers use P.P.T., videos etc. for their speeches.

Check your progress

A) Questions

Answer the following questions in one word/ phrase/ sentences each.

1. According to Aristotle, how many types of speeches are there?
2. What should be with you as a habit?
3. What is bad to be in your speech?
4. What is meant by force?
5. What is necessary accessory to help our communication?
6. What is more important than capacity?

2.2 Section II

Debates

History

Public speaking debate has a long history. In ancient Greece philosophers like Socrates used debate as a pedagogical tool. Aristotle and Sophists played a vital role in the development of debate as a method for instruction and persuasion. Roman republic figures like Cicero used debate in the legal and political forum. In ancient

India early examples of debates are found in Upanishads. Formal theory of debate evolved with debate manuals written around 2nd century BCE .Imperial China also had intellectual debates. The European parliament developed its characteristic debate and it has inspired modern competitive debates. There was a rise in intellectual debate in the 18th century. In 19th and 20th centuries political debate became common. Today debate exists in governmental and legal proceedings, in education and many other fields to explore complex issues. Now debate has become institutionalized in schools, parliaments and international forums and job recruitments.

As the students you must know that debate is a crucial part of the recruitment process. To win a job, you have to win debates. Debate is something that is very useful to earn respect in both personal and professional life.

What is debate?

Debate is a both formal and semi-formal method of interactive and representation method .In debate two or more individuals or teams take part .Debate follows a certain structure with a set of rules. Debate is different from causal arguments. When it is organized, two or more individuals or teams speak either in favour or against a proposition or idea or motion. Remember, the clash between positive and negative sides is the soul of the debate. It follows a certain structure with a set of rules. Debate differs from causal arguments in a number of ways. Debating is a crucial skill in both personal and professional life. In a professional environment, a classroom, or even at a family gathering, you can argue effectively to win your point or topic. In short, debate is an argument to win or to defend ideas using logic, facts, analysis and skill of rhetoric. In the age of severe competitions, political crises, polarization and the art of debate is very valuable .It establishes the supremacy of reason over rhetoric and evidence over emotion and dialogue over division. In debate you should be clear about what you hope to accomplish. Before you plan your strategy, you should know the structure of the debate .To win a debate you should have the right information, right strategy, persuasion, and a deep understanding of the topic.

To become a successful debater it is necessary to have knowledge of different disciplines. The points which are mentioned above while discussing the art of public speaking should be kept in mind for the debate too. The knowledge of one discipline or subject may not help to win the debate. Debaters should have the ability to think critically with help of different sources of knowledge. A good debater anticipates counterarguments and disarms it effectively. To win the debate comprehensive research and thorough study and preparation are very important. You have to collect reliable data, statistics, and examples to support your arguments. But your information you have to use from credible sources such as academic journals, books, and reputable websites .After the collection of all necessary information you have to organize your evidence logically to strengthen your case.

In debate there are two opposing sides .Each side presents arguments on a specific topic. Each side has the opportunity to present their case and to rebut the opponent's arguments, and provide closing statements. You should know the central question or proposition .Accordingly you should think about the major issues that will be raised by the opposite side. So it is necessary to know the key issues, relevant points, facts and different perspectives about the question. You should know the time that is allotted to you. Accordingly you have to plan your presentation. Your presentation must be supported by evidence and sound logic. But remember content alone is not important but delivery of the content is also very important. Speak clearly and confidently. Use a clear, confident voice and articulate your words. Avoid speaking too quickly or too slowly. Your message is strongly carried forward by your body language. Think of body language. Maintaining good posture and eye contact with your audience help your content. Use body language to emphasize main points. Use exaggerated body language is not a good thing. Use your arms and facial expressions skillfully.

It is compelling to plan your presentation. First, state your claim, and then provide the evidence and explanation for your claim. Your arguments should be coherent and it should contribute to your claim. Use persuasive language and rhetorical devices like metaphor, anecdote, analogies etc.

To begin with, first introduce your main arguments to establish the base or foundation of your case. Present your evidence and reasons to support your main question or proposition. If there is an ambiguous term or concept, explain it in simple manner and language. But there should be no repetition of the points. After presenting your proposition, make sure that you counter the arguments presented by your opponent. Before you close your presentation summarize your arguments and in it you should reinforce your position or stance.

The preparation also includes gathering the information about the opponent. You should know what will be the stance, arguments and counter arguments of the opponent.

It is important to know that there is no place for personal attack and charges because debate is a formal and professional matter. There is no place for anger or insult in the debate. Acknowledge opponent's viewpoints but respectfully refute them with evidence, logic and reasoning. Stay calm, collected and focused in the debate.

What is the goal of the debate?

Persuasion is the ultimate goal of the debate. This goal can be achieved only if the audience is convinced. The audience is convinced only when your appeal is full of emotions, rhetoric, logic and evidence and the proper skill of presentation .As a debater you must be a very good listener. Debate is not just about presentation but it

is also about receiving the arguments. You have to pay close attention to your opponent's arguments and take notes of opponent's arguments. Try to see if there is any discrepancy, logical inconsistency or unsupported claims.

To become a solid debater you have to practice debating. You can arrange mock debates with your friends or mentors. In the mock debates you will understand your weakness. If you try you can refine your delivery. Use a mirror to see yourself. In other words it is practice that will make a solid debater. Finally, mastering the art of debate is continuous work. So always gather knowledge, practice sincerely and participate in the debates with confidence. The skills that you will learn will always help you in your personal and professional life.

II Check your progress

B) Answer the following questions in one word/ phrase/ sentences each.

Questions:

1. What is the crucial part of the recruitment?
2. What is the soul of the debate?
3. What is the ultimate goal of the debate?
4. What do you have to do to become a solid debater ?
5. Is there any place for personal attack in the debate?
6. What kind of a language should be used in debate?

2.3 Section III

Extempore Speech

Extempore speech is the most popular way of delivering a speech. A speech given without preparation or any prior notice or time is called extempore speech. In simple words, extempore speech may be called in simple language as a speech on the spot. The speaker is given a topic just a few minutes before speaking to express his ideas instantly in an organized manner. Many times you have to deliver extempore speech in college, job interviews and at social events or gatherings.

History

The practice of speaking without preparation dates back to ancient Greece, Rome. Orators like Cicero and Demosthenes etc. mastered the art of extempore speech. Extempore speeches are very challenging. It can really scare you to deliver extempore speech. In Greek forums and Roman assemblies, speakers had to reply to the arguments on the spot. In fact extempore speech was a mark of intelligence and quick thinking. In the medieval and renaissance times extempore speech was used in

sermon, debates and it was a part of rhetoric education, wit, logic and pervasive power. In the modern times in 18th and 19th centuries public speaking became common and universities encouraged extempore debates to develop leadership qualities. Politicians Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill were famous for their ability to speak without notes very effectively.

But with a certain understanding of the basics of extempore speech, you can give a good extempore speech. A speech without preparation is called an impromptu speech. In impromptu speech the topic is given on the spot. It means that you don't have prepared notes or written speech in your hand. Extemporary speeches are commonly used in debates, interviews and public speaking to check the candidates' caliber.

Importance

Extempore speeches are necessary in different situations. Today extempore speech is essential skills in professions like law, politics, teaching and media. It is a common practice even in schools, colleges and competitions, helping us to express ideas clearly. It helps to develop quick thinking, our confidence and communication skills. It is very useful and praiseworthy if you have the ability or skill to deliver effective extempore speeches. The skill of extempore speech helps us to communicate our thoughts, ideas etc. in a very clear way. This also helps us to enhance our critical thinking. The ability to deliver extempore speech shows that you are adaptable and can handle unexpected situations. It trains our mind to think logically and to express our thoughts under pressure. In fact it is a lifelong skill for success.

How to prepare yourself for extempore speeches

A good extempore speech has a brief start and logical explanation and the body of the speech contains main points or arguments and finally a summary or your opinion. There are different techniques and some points to make a good impactful speech. The techniques that we see in public speaking and debate must be kept in mind. The techniques and preparations that are explained in the public speaking and debate are equally important and useful in the making of good extempore speeches. There is no point in repeating the same.

A good extempore speaker speaks with confidence, clarity of thoughts and calmness. Stay calm and cool .When you are suddenly asked to speak; it is natural to feel panic. Focus on your topic and gather the ideas and thoughts on the given topic. Take a deep breath before you start. Take a few seconds to compose yourself and take a deep breath to relax before you start .This will help you to deliver polish and confident speech. Do not be afraid to speak about your ideas or points. Talk in a voice that is heard by the audience easily. There is no need to raise your voice but speak with conviction and clarity. With this you can capture the audience and keep them engaged in your speech.

Start your extempore speech with a very strong statement. It is important to be creative and innovative in the opening statement. Make sure that your statement is very crucial which will help you to set the tone of your speech. It will be a good idea to make a statement that will challenge the conventional idea or the mindset of the audience. But don't underestimate the audience. You may start your speech with your personal anecdote or statistics that can surprise the audience.

Think about what you want to say about the topic that is given to you. Take a few seconds to organize your thoughts, key points and ideas in a coherent and in neat manner. Think of the order of the points so that each point smoothly moves forward to the next point in simple but effective language. All this is important for successful extempore speech.

Make sure that you know your audience. You should know that the audience is familiar with technical terms or acronyms that you are using in your speech. Language of the speech should be clear and simple which will help you to deliver your message effectively and it is understood by the audience. Understanding of your speech will establish good rapport with the audience.

Remember time allotted to you is very limited. If you cross the time limit your speech is good for nothing and the audience will be annoyed with you. It gives the impression that you have not organized your thoughts and ideas properly. It is necessary to make the best of the time available to you. So your speech must be concise and to the point. Deviation from the topic will waste time and it will result in unsuccessful speech. It is better to focus on the main idea and use concrete examples. When you finish your speech in time, you earn the respect of the audience and create a good impression about yourself.

It is necessary to summarize the main points of your speech in the end. End your speech with a memorable, strong statement that will leave the audience with a thought provoking question. You may choose to end your speech with an anecdote or memorable quote that is linked with your opening statement. You may choose to end your speech by any method but make sure that you leave the audience with a positive and lasting impression and your message remains with the audience for quite a long time.

III Check your progress

C) Answer the following questions in one word/ phrase/ sentences each.

Questions:

1. Which is the most popular way of delivering speech?
2. What is impromptu speech?

3. What you should not underestimate as a speaker?
4. Is it a good idea for the speaker to speak more than allotted time?
5. With what kind of statement you should start your speech?
6. What is natural for the speaker to feel when he is suddenly asked to speak?

3. Summary

The skill of public speaking, debate and extempore speech are essential. These skills are useful in both professional and personal life. In human life communication is very essential. It helps to exchange ideas, emotions, information etc. It is essential for social harmony and progress. We like to choose a career but it is difficult and challenging because competition is very tough. The candidates have to undergo the rigorous selection process. You have to face written examination, group discussion and debate etc. So you have to be excellent in interviews, group discussion and extempore speech. There is a craze for competitive examinations but most of the students do not prepare themselves properly.

The students should know how to present themselves in the interview, debate, public speaking and extempore speech. Even to remain in the profession as a successful employee you should have the skills of debate, public speaking and extempore speech. It is necessary for the students to keep themselves updated and for this they should use college years for reading good books, newspapers and books of the subject that you have selected. Communication in professional life and reading go hand in hand.

Public speaking has a long history. Public speaking has played a vital role in the development of mankind. We find glimpses of public speeches in ancient Indian literature and in European literature. Public speaking is a very powerful weapon to become a successful person. Public speaking is both art and science. It involves psychology, persuasion, storytelling, voice modulation etc. But this is possible only after very hard practice. Public speaking is not all about voice, gesture and the rest but also to aim to improve each time by observation and criticism of those who hear you and yourself too. Public speaking is very important because it helps to transfer knowledge, wisdom, culture, traditions, and history across nations and generations. It helps in building societies and nations and movements of various causes. If you are a public speaker you will be certainly valuable person.

You can be good public speaker if you are great reader. It is reading that will help you to become a good public speaker. Library must be a part of your routine life. You will have something to say if you have read something. Never speak without preparation. Good beginning is good but with good beginning only half the work is done and half to do. Your knowledge must be more than the audiences.

Public speaking is an art and for every art practice is must. With practice you can grow as good speaker. So you have to practice and practice and practice. Your attitude is most important. You have to master your fear. The audience is more important than you and truth is more important than both of you. Never forget to pause and smile in your speech. Haste can spoil your speech. Take a deep breath, relax and start your speech in a conversational tone as if you are talking to a close friend. Never speak in the same tone and pitch. Increase the power of your speech by using different tools. A pause in speech can be very eloquent. The pause in a speech is also the pause for the audience to receive the message of the speaker. You have to master naturalness in your speech especially, if you are talking in foreign language. It is good to speak with authority; conviction in forceful language. Speech has to be prepared with the facts, proper arrangement of thoughts, and adequate vocabulary. On many occasions English is used as medium instructors .It is challenging to speak in English. But we have to speak in English. This is possible with reading of English literature and practice.

The voice and gesture are very important assets in speech. We should pay a deliberate attention to both a voice and gesture .Make yourself free from stress and be confident so that your voice will be natural. There are different ways of giving public speeches .For example, some public speakers speak from their notes while some speak extemporaneously. Now the speakers use scripts, P.P.T., videos etc. for their speeches.

Debating has a long history .Debate has its roots in ancient cultures like Greek, Egyptian and India. Debate has played a very vital role in the making of human civilization. Debate is a method for instruction and persuasion. Debate is a both formal and semi-formal method of interactive and representation method. In the debate two or more individuals or teams speak either in favour or against a proposition or idea or motion. The clash between positive and negative sides is the soul of the debate. It follows a certain structure with a set of rules. Debating is a crucial skill in both personal and professional life. In the present times due to severe competitions, political crisis, polarization, art of debate has become very valuable. To win a debate you should have strategy, information, and a deep understanding of the topic. Presentation must be supported not just as content but also delivery of it. Importance of body language must be kept in mind. Be a good listener as a debater. Persuasion is the ultimate goal of the debate. This goal can be achieved only if the audience is convinced. To become a solid debater you have to practice debating. You can arrange mock debates with your friends or mentors. Mastering the art of debating is continuous work. Debate is useful in a professional environment, a classroom, or even at a family and social gathering.

Extempore speech is the most popular way of delivering a speech. A speech given without preparation or any prior notice or time is called extempore speech. Many times you have to deliver extempore speech in college, job interviews and at social events or gatherings. The practice of speaking without preparation dates back to Greece and Rome. Extempore speech was a mark of intelligence and quick thinking in the past. Extempore speeches are very challenging. It can really scare you to deliver extempore speech. Extempore speeches were used in the medieval and renaissance period. In the modern times in 18th and 19th centuries public speaking became more popular and universities encouraged extempore debates to develop leadership qualities. With a certain understanding of the basics of extempore speech, you can give a good speech.

Extemporary speeches are commonly used in debates, interviews and public speaking to check the candidates' caliber. Today extempore speech is essential skills in professions like law, politics, teaching and media. Extempore speech is a common practice even in schools, colleges and competitions, helping the students to express ideas clearly. It trains our mind to think logically and to express our thoughts under pressure. In fact it is a lifelong skill for success. A good extempore speech has a brief start and logical explanation and the body of the speech contains main points or arguments and finally a summary or your opinion. The techniques and preparations that are explained in the public speaking and debate are equally important and useful in the making of extempore speeches. The techniques and preparations that are explained in the art of public speaking and debate must be kept in the mind.

Focus on your topic and gather the ideas and thoughts on the given topic. Take a deep breath before you start. Talk in a voice that is heard by the audience easily. It will be a good idea to make a statement that will challenge the conventional idea or the mindset of the audience. But don't underestimate the audience. Think about what you want to say about the topic that is given to you. Take a few seconds to organize your thoughts, key points and ideas in a coherent and in neat manner. Think of the order of the points so that each point smoothly moves forward to the next point in simple but effective language. Understanding of your speech will establish good rapport with the audience. Remember time allotted to you is very limited. It is necessary to make the best of the time available to you. It is necessary to summarize the main points of your speech in the end. End your speech with a memorable, strong statement that will leave the audience with thought provoking questions.

Terms

Aristotle (384 BC – 322 B.C.):

He is known as a father of logic and he has contributed in fields Ethics, Politics, Biology, Metaphysics and established foundation for scientific knowledge.

Cicero (Born 106 BC- 43B.C.):

He is considered as one of the greatest orators of Rome. His speeches are known for their powerful, pervasive rhetoric and style. He is famous as brilliant Roman statesman, lawyer, prolific writer and philosopher

Greek civilization:

It refers to Greece from 8th BC to the 6th century AD. It is characterized by independent city-states like Athens and Sparta. These city-states shared common culture and language.

Medieval period:

It is the period between 5th century to late 15th century. In the period only priests, elites, monks, studied. Science and technology started developing slowly.

Renaissance period:

It is the period between 15th and 16th centuries. It is a period of cultural, artistic and intellectual rebirth in Europe.

Enlightenment period. It is the period between 17th and 18th centuries. The period in which there was progress and rise in awakening of values like liberty, natural rights and challenge to the traditions.

5. Answers to check your progress

A) 1) 3

- 2) Reading
- 3) Monotonous
- 4) Internal and external
- 5) Gesture
- 6) Your attitude

B) 1. Debate

2. The clash between positive and negative sides is the soul of the debate.
3. Persuasion is the ultimate goal of the debate
4. Practice debate.
5. No
- 6 . Persuasive language

- C) 1. Extempore speech
2. A speech without preparation
3. Audience
4. No
5. With a very strong statement
6. To feel panic

6. Exercise:

A) Write short notes on the following

1. How will you prepare yourself to make good public speech
2. What are the qualities of good debater
3. How one can become a good speaker of extempore speech
4. Importance of reading in preparing a speech
5. Dos and don'ts in debate
6. Significance of speaking skills in life

B) Write short answers to the following

1. Importance of public speaking
2. Importance of debate
3. Importance of extempore speech
4. Importance of the body language

C) Prepare main points of the speeches on the following topics .

(Not more than 10 points)

1. Unity and development of the country
2. Youth and reading
3. National integration
4. Significance of truth in life

D) Prepare a note either in favour or against the following topics.

1. Population is a hurdle in the development of our nation
2. Arrange marriage is proper way of getting married
3. Pattern of semester examination is good for the students
4. Military education must be made compulsory for all the citizens

7. Reference for further study

Remland, M., Brown, T. j., & Neal, K.(2014). Argumentation and Debate : A Public Speaking Approach. Kendal Hunt.

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Module II**Interview Skills and Mock Interview**

- 2.1 Objectives
- 2.2 Introduction
- 2.3 Section I – Basics of Competitive Exam Interviews
- 2.4 Section II – Interview Skills
 - Pre-Interview Preparation
 - Communication Skills
 - Body Language
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 - Asking Questions
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2.1 Objectives

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- Understand the purpose and structure of interviews conducted in competitive examinations like MPSC, UPSC, and other state/central services.
- Identify and practice essential interview skills such as preparation, effective communication, body language, and professional etiquette.
- Build confidence through mock interviews designed specifically for competitive exam contexts.

2.2 Introduction

In competitive examinations, the **interview or personality test** is one of the most decisive stages. Candidates who have successfully cleared the preliminary and main examinations are invited to appear before an interview board. This stage goes beyond factual knowledge and aims at evaluating the candidate's suitability for a

career in public service. It tests qualities such as integrity, analytical ability, balanced judgment, clarity of thought, and awareness of socio-economic and political issues.

Unlike private job interviews, competitive exam interviews such as all competitive exams conducted by Govt. agencies Personality Test focus on broader dimensions of personality. For example, the panel may ask about issues affecting common people, your views on governance reforms, or your approach to tackling administrative challenges. Your academic knowledge, communication skills, ethical orientation, and practical understanding of governance are under assessment. The marks awarded in the interview can significantly influence the final ranking, making this stage critical for success.

This unit will help you understand the structure of such interviews, equip you with essential skills, and provide strategies and exercises—including mock interviews—to prepare you thoroughly.

Presentation of Subject Matter

2.3 Section I – Basics of Interview

What is an Interview?

In the context of competitive examinations such as UPSC, MPSC, and other state or central service commissions, an interview is formally known as the Personality Test. It is essentially a formal meeting between the candidate and a panel of experts, where the candidate's suitability for administrative service is assessed. Unlike written exams, which test memory and knowledge, the interview evaluates qualities such as confidence, communication, decision-making, integrity, and awareness of socio-political issues. It is a two-way process: the panel assesses whether you are fit for public service, and you, as a candidate, also get an opportunity to understand the expectations and demands of the role.

In simple words, a competitive exam interview allows the panel to learn about you—your personality, values, clarity of thought, and administrative potential. At the same time, it allows you to demonstrate your seriousness for public service and your preparedness for the responsibilities of governance.

Why are Interviews Important?

For the commissions, interviews are the **final and most decisive stage** of selection. Written exams may prove your knowledge, but interviews reveal your character, temperament, and leadership qualities. A resume or application shows only the surface facts—education, marks, or achievements. The interview, on the other hand, reveals how confidently you communicate, how you respond to difficult questions, how balanced and ethical your views are, and whether you have the maturity to hold authority.

For the candidate, the interview is a chance to show strengths that cannot be displayed on paper. It is also an opportunity to explain your motivation for joining the civil services, to highlight your awareness of national and state issues, and to assure the panel that you can serve society with fairness and responsibility. Performing well in the interview can change your destiny. Many candidates improve their final ranking drastically due to strong interview marks, while others lose higher services due to poor performance. Thus, thorough preparation and calm confidence are the keys to success.

Types of Interviews in Competitive Exams

Although the basic format is a **panel interview**, the style of questioning can differ. The following are common types:

- **Face-to-Face (Panel) Interview:** This is the standard format where 4–6 interviewers interact with one candidate. The panel may include a chairperson, senior administrators, academics, and experts. Each member may ask questions from their area of interest.
- **Situational or Hypothetical Interview:** The panel presents you with a real-life administrative situation and asks how you would respond. Example: *“Suppose you are District Collector and a flood hits your area. What steps will you take immediately?”*
- **Opinion-Based Interview:** You may be asked about your views on social, economic, or political issues. Example: *“Do you think India should continue with capital punishment?”* The aim is to test clarity, balance, and logical reasoning.
- **Stress Interview:** In rare cases, panelists may deliberately press you with repeated or tricky questions to test your patience and composure. Example: repeatedly asking about the same issue in different ways to check consistency.

Regardless of type, the essential qualities tested remain the same: honesty, clarity, balance of judgment, and calmness under pressure.

The Interview Process (Stages of an Interview)

Most competitive exam interviews follow a structured sequence. Understanding this structure will help you stay calm and confident:

1. **Before the Interview (Preparation):** Preparation begins days or weeks in advance. You revise your DAF (Detailed Application Form), keep up with current affairs, review your optional subject, and prepare your attire. You should also practice answering questions aloud.
2. **Introduction and Greeting:** When you enter the room, greet the panel respectfully with “Good morning/afternoon, Sir/Madam.” Wait for permission

before sitting. First impressions matter greatly, so your calm body language, eye contact, and polite tone set the right start.

- 3. Questions and Answers (Main Interview):** This is the core stage. The panel will ask you questions on your background, current issues, state and national policies, governance challenges, and hypothetical situations. Common questions include:

- “Tell us about yourself and your motivation for joining civil services.”
- “What are the major problems of your district, and how would you solve them as Collector?”
- “What are your strengths and weaknesses?”
- “How should India balance economic growth with environmental protection?”

Listen carefully, pause briefly if needed, and then answer clearly and honestly. It is perfectly acceptable to say, “I am not aware of this at the moment,” rather than bluff.

- 4. Candidate’s Questions:** At the end, you may be invited to ask questions. This is your chance to show curiosity and seriousness. For example, you may ask: “*What qualities, in your opinion, are most essential for young civil servants?*” or “*What challenges do new officers commonly face during field postings?*”
- 5. Closing and Thank You:** Conclude by thanking the panel sincerely. A short line like “*Thank you for this opportunity. I look forward to serving with dedication if given the chance*” leaves a positive final impression.
- 6. Post-Interview Follow-Up:** After leaving, reflect on your performance. Think about what questions you answered well and what areas need improvement. This habit of reflection will make you better prepared for future interviews or professional situations.

Task 2.1

Think about a major issue in your district—for example, water scarcity, unemployment among youth, or traffic congestion in urban areas. Jot down two questions the interview panel might ask you on this issue. Then, write one practical solution you would propose if you were the District Collector. This exercise will help you think from an administrator’s perspective rather than only from a student’s viewpoint.

Check Your Progress – 1**A) Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)** Choose the correct option:

1. In UPSC/MPSC, the interview is officially called the:
 - a) Group Discussion
 - b) Personality Test
 - c) Aptitude Test
 - d) Screening Test
2. The main purpose of the competitive exam interview is to test:
 - a) Memory power
 - b) Subject expertise only
 - c) Personality and suitability for public service
 - d) Writing skills
3. The usual number of members in an interview panel is:
 - a) 1–2
 - b) 4–6
 - c) 10–12
 - d) 15–20
4. Which of the following is an example of a situational interview question?
 - a) “Tell us about your hobbies.”
 - b) “Why do you want to join civil services?”
 - c) “If you were District Collector during a flood, what steps would you take?”
 - d) “What is your educational background?”
5. Stress interviews are designed to:
 - a) Check how much you read in newspapers
 - b) Test patience and composure under pressure
 - c) Judge handwriting
 - d) Verify optional subject knowledge

B) Answer in One Word / Phrase / Sentence

1. An interview in UPSC/MPSC is also called a _____.
2. True or False: The interview mainly evaluates factual knowledge.
3. Who is the person (or group) that asks questions in an interview?
4. Name one type of interview format other than a panel interview.
5. Mention one thing you should always do at the end of an interview before leaving.

2.4 Section II – Interview Skills

Interviews for competitive exams such as UPSC, MPSC, and other state and central services are not merely question–answer sessions. They are designed to assess whether the candidate possesses the qualities required for public service—integrity, confidence, clarity of thought, balanced judgment, and the ability to take responsibility. While written examinations test your knowledge, the interview evaluates your personality. To perform well, candidates must develop specific interview skills. These include preparation before the interview, effective communication, positive body language, structured answering techniques, the ability to ask thoughtful questions, and professional etiquette.

2.4.1 Pre-Interview Preparation

Preparation is the backbone of success in interviews. Just as you would not appear for mains without studying, you should never enter the interview room without thorough preparation. The most important tool for preparation is the **Detailed Application Form (DAF)**. Many toppers agree that almost 70–80% of the questions in UPSC/MPSC interviews come directly or indirectly from the DAF.

What is the DAF?

The DAF is the form submitted after clearing prelims. It contains personal, academic, and professional details such as:

- Name, age, and background.
- Educational qualifications.
- Hometown, district, and state.
- Hobbies and extracurricular activities.
- Work experience (if any).
- Optional subject chosen for mains.
- Service preferences (IAS, IPS, IFS, Deputy Collector, DSP, etc.).

Every word written in this form is a possible question. If your hobby is cricket, expect questions about Indian cricket, the IPL, or sports policies. If you are from Sangli, questions may come about the sugar industry, floods, or cultural contributions. If you studied engineering, you may be asked how technology can improve governance.

Why is the DAF Important?

For the panel, the DAF is a map of your personality. It allows them to ask questions linked to your own life. For the candidate, the DAF is a chance to highlight individuality and strengths beyond marks. In short, it bridges your personal journey with the requirements of public service.

Common Areas of Questions from the DAF:

1. **Personal background:** “What is your district famous for?”
2. **Education:** “How can your subject knowledge help in administration?”
3. **Optional subject:** “What lessons from History are relevant to governance today?”
4. **Hobbies:** “How does trekking teach leadership?”
5. **Work experience:** “How can IT experience help in reducing corruption?”
6. **Service preference:** “Why IAS instead of IPS?”

Tips for DAF Preparation:

- Be truthful—do not write hobbies or skills you cannot defend.
- Anticipate questions from every line.
- Connect answers with governance and public service.
- Stay updated on areas linked with your profile.
- Practice with mentors or peers through mock sessions.

Example: A candidate from Satara with trekking as a hobby may face questions on the Kaas Plateau, eco-tourism, and what trekking teaches about endurance and planning.

Thus, the DAF is not just a form; it is the **soul of your interview preparation.**

2.4.2 Communication Skills

Strong communication is essential. Even if you know the answer, poor expression can reduce its impact. Good communication includes:

- Speaking in simple, precise, and correct language.
- Listening carefully before answering.
- Pausing briefly to think, then speaking clearly.
- Maintaining a respectful and calm tone.

Example: Instead of saying, “*Fiscal federalism is deteriorating due to asymmetrical devolution of resources,*” you can say, “*There are concerns that states are not receiving enough financial freedom compared to the Centre.*” Simplicity shows clarity.

Listening is as important as speaking. If you do not understand a question, it is fine to ask: “*Sir, may I request you to clarify the question?*” This reflects humility and attentiveness.

2.4.3 Body Language and Demeanor

Your non-verbal communication often creates the strongest impression. Positive body language includes sitting straight with a relaxed posture, making steady eye contact, smiling occasionally, and keeping hands calm. Negative body language such as slouching, avoiding eye contact, or fidgeting conveys nervousness.

Remember that civil servants must often work under stress, so the panel observes whether you remain calm. A confident presence, even in silence, builds credibility.

2.4.4 Answering Techniques

How you answer is as important as what you answer. Some key techniques are:

- **Be Honest:** If you do not know an answer, admit it politely. Bluffing damages trust.
- **Use STAR Method:** Structure your answers as Situation, Task, Action, Result.
- **Be Balanced:** Avoid extreme opinions. Acknowledge both sides before giving your stand.
- **Be Ethical:** Frame answers with fairness, justice, and constitutional values in mind.

Example: If asked, *“What will you do if a riot breaks out in your district?”* you might answer:

- **Situation:** “A riot has broken out in the district.”
- **Task:** “My duty is to maintain law and order and protect lives.”
- **Action:** “I would first ensure adequate police presence, appeal for peace, and open dialogue with community leaders. If violence continues, I would impose Section 144 while ensuring essential supplies remain available.”
- **Result:** “This would control violence with minimal harm and restore order.”

2.4.5 Asking Questions

When invited, asking questions shows curiosity and seriousness. Appropriate questions include:

- “What qualities, in your opinion, make a civil servant effective?”
- “What challenges do young officers commonly face in the field?”

Avoid asking about salary, postings, or perks. Your questions should reflect a learning mindset.

2.4.6 Professional Etiquette

Politeness is a non-negotiable skill. Professional etiquette includes greeting all members, waiting to be seated, switching off your phone, not interrupting panelists, and thanking the board before leaving. Even when challenged, remain calm and respectful. The panel wants to see if you can handle differences of opinion with maturity—an everyday need for administrators.

Task 2.2

1. Take your own DAF (or create a sample with your details). From each section—hometown, education, optional subject, hobby, service preference—write three possible questions.
2. Prepare model answers for each in simple language.
3. Practice answering them aloud with a friend acting as interviewer.

Check Your Progress – 2

A) Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. The STAR method of answering stands for:
 - a) Study, Think, Answer, Respond
 - b) Situation, Task, Action, Result
 - c) Strategy, Timing, Action, Reasoning
 - d) None of the above
2. Which of the following is NOT positive body language?
 - a) Sitting upright
 - b) Avoiding eye contact
 - c) Smiling occasionally
 - d) Calm posture
3. If you don't know an answer, you should:
 - a) Bluff confidently
 - b) Remain silent
 - c) Admit politely that you are not aware
 - d) Change the topic
4. Which is a suitable question to ask the panel?
 - a) "What will be my salary?"
 - b) "What qualities make a civil servant effective?"
 - c) "Can I be posted in my hometown?"
 - d) "How many holidays do we get?"

5. Professional etiquette in an interview includes:
 - a) Greeting and thanking the panel
 - b) Interrupting politely
 - c) Checking your phone in the room
 - d) Arguing to prove your point

B) One Word / Phrase / Sentence Answers

1. What is the most important document to prepare before the interview?
2. Name one quality of effective communication.
3. What should you do if you don't understand a question?
4. Mention one example of negative body language.
5. What should you always say before leaving the interview room?

2.5 Section III – Mock Interviews

Preparing for a competitive exam interview is very different from preparing for written examinations. While prelims and mains test your ability to recall facts, analyze issues, and present arguments in writing, the interview tests your personality in real time. You cannot “revise” your personality in a week; instead, you must prepare by practicing how to present yourself. One of the most effective methods for this preparation is the mock interview.

2.5.1 What is a Mock Interview?

A mock interview is a practice session where the actual interview environment is recreated as closely as possible. In such a session, the candidate faces a panel of teachers, mentors, or retired officers who play the role of interviewers. They ask questions on the candidate's background, hobbies, academic subjects, current affairs, and practical situations—exactly as a real UPSC or MPSC panel would.

The idea is to help the candidate experience the pressure of the interview room before the real day arrives. For example, if a student feels nervous while speaking in front of a group, the mock interview will expose that weakness early. With repeated practice, the nervousness reduces, and the candidate becomes more confident.

Mock interviews can be formal (organized by professional institutes or universities) or informal (arranged by peers or mentors). Even practicing alone in front of a mirror or recording yourself on camera counts as a mock interview, because it allows you to evaluate your expression and body language.

2.5.2 Why are Mock Interviews Important?

Mock interviews are not a luxury; they are a **necessity** for serious aspirants. Here's why:

- **Familiarity with the Setting:** For many candidates, sitting before a panel of 4–6 experts is intimidating. Mock interviews make the environment familiar so that the “fear of the unknown” disappears.
- **Reduction of Anxiety:** Everyone feels nervous before their first interview. The more you practice, the less nervous you will be on the real day.
- **Identification of Weaknesses:** A candidate may not realize they speak too fast, avoid eye contact, or use too many filler words. Mock panels can point out these weaknesses.
- **Improvement in Expression:** Practice improves clarity, fluency, and confidence. With each session, your answers become sharper and more structured.
- **Feedback from Experts:** Many coaching institutes invite retired IAS or MPSC officers to conduct mock interviews. Their advice is invaluable because they know what actual boards look for.
- **Time Management:** In the interview, answers must be concise yet complete. Mock practice teaches you to balance depth with brevity.

Example: A candidate preparing for MPSC was repeatedly told in mocks that he crossed his arms while answering, which looked defensive. By correcting this, he appeared much more open and confident in the real interview, earning appreciation from the board.

2.5.3 How to Face Mock Interviews

To get the full benefit, mock interviews must be as close as possible to the real thing. This includes:

- **Formal Setting:** Use a table and chairs arranged like a boardroom. Sit opposite 3–4 people acting as the panel.
- **Formal Dress:** Wear the same clothes you plan to wear on the real day. This gives a sense of seriousness.
- **DAF-Based Questions:** The majority of questions should come from your Detailed Application Form, because that is what the real board relies on.
- **Current Affairs:** Discuss both national issues (e.g., unemployment, climate change, India's foreign policy) and state issues (e.g., drought management in Maharashtra, farmer protests).

- **Situational Questions:** These are essential to test administrative judgment. Example: “*If a riot breaks out in your town, what immediate steps would you take?*”
- **Feedback Session:** After the interview, panelists should give detailed comments—what went well, what needs improvement.
- **Recording and Review:** If possible, record the mock session on camera. Watching yourself helps identify nervous tics or unclear expressions.

Tip: Do not treat mock interviews lightly. Dress, greet, and behave as if it were the real thing. The more seriously you practice, the more natural you will feel in the actual interview.

2.5.4 Examples of Common Mock Interview Questions

Here are sample questions often asked in mocks to prepare candidates:

1. *Introduce yourself. Tell us about your background and why you chose civil services.*
2. *What are the three biggest problems faced by your district?*
3. *What is your opinion about caste-based reservations?*
4. *Suppose you are a District Collector and a flood destroys crops in your district. What immediate steps will you take?*
5. *Do you think India should continue with capital punishment? Why or why not?*
6. *What have you learned from your hobby that will help you as an administrator?*
7. *If you are posted in a remote tribal area, how will you improve education there?*

Note: These questions are not designed to trap you. They are meant to see how you think, how balanced your judgment is, and how well you communicate your ideas.

2.5.5 Reflection and Self-Improvement

The most important part of mock interviews is not the session itself but the **reflection afterward**. After every mock, spend time asking yourself:

- Did I greet the panel respectfully?
- Were my answers structured and clear?
- Did I avoid bluffing when I did not know?
- Was my body language confident and calm?
- Did I show balance of judgment in controversial issues?

Write down three strengths and three weaknesses after every mock. Work on improving at least one weakness before the next session. Over time, this builds steady improvement.

Example: One candidate realized from reflection that he spoke too softly, making it difficult for the panel to hear him. By practicing with louder, clearer speech, he performed much better in his real interview.

2.5.6 Limitations of Mock Interviews

While mock interviews are extremely helpful, they are not a perfect copy of the real interview. Candidates must remember:

- **Mocks May Differ:** Some coaching panels may focus heavily on knowledge, while UPSC/MPSC panels focus more on personality.
- **Mocks May Be Tougher:** Sometimes mock boards deliberately ask very harsh or unusual questions. Do not get discouraged; the real interview may be friendlier.
- **Mocks Are Only Practice:** They are tools for improvement, not the final judgment. Treat feedback seriously but don't panic if you "fail" in a mock.

The key is to use mocks for building confidence and skills, while understanding that the real board might behave differently.

Student Task 2.3

1. Organize a mock interview with two or three friends as panelists. Ask them to cover your DAF, current affairs, and a few situational issues.
2. Record the session on your phone. Watch yourself carefully and note three strengths and three weaknesses.
3. Repeat the exercise twice, focusing on reducing weaknesses each time.
4. Write a short reflection (half a page) on what you learned from the mock process.

Check Your Progress – 3

A) Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. The main purpose of a mock interview is to:
 - a) Memorize factual information
 - b) Simulate the real interview and provide feedback
 - c) Test handwriting speed
 - d) Practice group discussions

2. Which of the following is NOT a benefit of mock interviews?
 - a) Reduction of nervousness
 - b) Familiarity with panel environment
 - c) Improvement in handwriting
 - d) Improvement in expression
3. A good mock interview focuses mainly on:
 - a) Irrelevant questions
 - b) DAF and current affairs-based questions
 - c) Only optional subject
 - d) Personal criticism
4. After completing a mock interview, the candidate should:
 - a) Forget about it immediately
 - b) Reflect on strengths and weaknesses
 - c) Argue with the panel
 - d) Avoid feedback
5. A limitation of mock interviews is that:
 - a) They cannot exactly replicate the real interview
 - b) They are useless for practice
 - c) They never provide feedback
 - d) They test only handwriting skills

B) One Word / Phrase / Sentence Answers

1. What does a mock interview simulate?
2. Mention one benefit of practicing mock interviews.
3. Who usually conducts mock interviews?
4. What should you do immediately after finishing a mock interview?
5. Why should you not treat mock interviews as identical to real interviews?

2.6 Summary

In this unit, we studied the importance of interviews in the context of **competitive examinations like UPSC, MPSC, and other state/central services**. The interview, often referred to as the **Personality Test**, is not a test of academic knowledge alone but an assessment of the candidate's overall personality. It evaluates qualities such as confidence, clarity of thought, balance of judgment, decision-making ability, honesty, ethical orientation, and awareness of current socio-political issues. Marks obtained in the interview can play a decisive role in the final ranking and service allocation.

In **Section I**, we learned about the **basics of interviews**—what an interview is, why it is important, its structure, types, and stages. The UPSC/MPSC interview is usually conducted by a panel of 4–6 members and lasts for 25–40 minutes. The nature of questions ranges from personal background and optional subjects to current affairs and situational challenges. Types of interview styles include direct, situational, opinion-based, and stress interviews. The process typically moves through preparation, introduction and greeting, question–answer stage, candidate’s questions, closing, and reflection.

In **Section II**, we studied **interview skills** in detail. Pre-interview preparation was shown to be the foundation of success, with particular emphasis on the **Detailed Application Form (DAF)**. The DAF contains your personal details, education, hobbies, and preferences, and nearly 70–80% of interview questions are based on it. We also studied the importance of communication skills, where clear and simple expression is more valued than complicated jargon. Body language and demeanor play a silent but powerful role in shaping impressions. Answering techniques such as honesty, balance, and the STAR method help structure responses logically. We also discussed the importance of asking thoughtful questions and maintaining professional etiquette throughout the process.

In **Section III**, we focused on **mock interviews** as an essential part of preparation. Mock interviews simulate the real interview environment, helping candidates reduce nervousness, identify weaknesses, and improve communication. They allow for constructive feedback and reflection. However, candidates must remember that mock interviews are only practice tools and not exact replicas of the real process. Reflection after each mock and gradual improvement are key to success.

Together, these sections underline one truth: **Interviews are not about memorizing facts but about presenting yourself as a mature, responsible, and balanced individual ready to serve the nation.** Success in the personality test requires not only knowledge but also preparation, confidence, practice, and humility.

2.7 Terms to Remember

1. **Interview:** A formal meeting where the candidate’s suitability is assessed. In UPSC/MPSC, it is officially called the Personality Test.
2. **Personality Test:** The final stage of UPSC/MPSC examinations, where candidates are evaluated for qualities beyond academics.
3. **DAF (Detailed Application Form):** A form submitted before the interview containing personal details, education, hobbies, and service preferences. Most interview questions are based on it.
4. **Panel Interview:** The standard format in competitive exams, where 4–6 experts question the candidate.

5. **Situational Question:** A question that presents a real-life problem (e.g., a flood or riot) and asks how the candidate would respond.
6. **Stress Interview:** A method where the panel presses the candidate with repeated or tricky questions to test patience and composure.
7. **STAR Method:** A structured way of answering questions—Situation, Task, Action, Result.
8. **Body Language:** Non-verbal communication through posture, gestures, and eye contact that influences the panel’s impression.
9. **Professional Etiquette:** Polite and respectful behavior in the interview, including greeting, listening carefully, and thanking the panel.
10. **Mock Interview:** A practice session that simulates the real interview environment, helping candidates prepare and improve.

2.8 Exercise:

Long Answer Questions: Answer each in **150–200 words**:

1. Explain the importance of the Detailed Application Form (DAF) in interview preparation. Give examples of possible questions from hobbies, education, and hometown.
2. Discuss the role of communication skills in competitive exam interviews. Why is clarity more important than complicated vocabulary?
3. Describe the different types of interview styles used in UPSC/MPSC (direct, situational, opinion-based, stress). Give examples.
4. Write an essay on body language and professional etiquette during an interview. How can these silent qualities influence the outcome?
5. “Mock interviews are practice tools, not exact copies of real interviews.” Explain this statement with examples and suggest how candidates should use mocks for maximum benefit.

Practice Tasks: These tasks are designed to make you **practice like a real candidate**:

1. **DAF Practice:** Take your own biodata (or create a sample DAF with your details). Write at least 10 possible questions the panel may ask you and prepare short, clear answers for each.
2. **Situational Practice:** Write answers to the following situational questions:
 - If you are a District Collector and a flood destroys crops in your area, what immediate steps will you take?
 - If communal tension arises in your district, how will you handle it?

- If you are a Sub-Divisional Officer and villagers protest against a new project, what will you do?
- 3. **Mock Session:** With two friends acting as panelists, conduct a 15-minute mock interview. Record yourself and review your body language, tone, and clarity of answers. Write a half-page reflection on what you did well and what you need to improve.
- 4. **Current Affairs Drill:** Pick one major issue from the newspaper (for example, unemployment, climate change, or farmer protests). Write down three possible interview questions on the issue and prepare structured answers.
- 5. **Communication Exercise:** Practice introducing yourself in under 2 minutes. Cover your name, background, education, hobbies, and motivation for joining the civil services. Record it and refine until you sound confident and natural.

2.9 References

2.9.1 Official Sources

- **Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)** – *Instructions to Candidates for Personality Test* (available on the official UPSC website). This document explains the format, purpose, and expectations of the UPSC interview.
- **Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC)** – *Interview Guidelines* (available on the MPSC portal). It provides important instructions for candidates appearing for various state services interviews.

2.9.2 Books on Interview Skills

- Yate, Martin. *Great Answers to Tough Interview Questions*. Kogan Page, 2017. (A classic guide to answering interview questions effectively.)
- Swindall, Lindsey R. *Interview Preparation Guide for Civil Services Aspirants*. (Practical tips for UPSC/MPSC candidates with examples of common questions.)
- Dale Carnegie. *The Quick and Easy Way to Effective Speaking*. (A must-read for improving communication and confidence.)
- Khandelwal, R.S. *How to Crack Civil Services Personality Test*. (A useful book focused on UPSC interview preparation with sample questions and strategies.)

2.9.3 Books on Personality Development and Communication

- Covey, Stephen R. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. (Helps in building balanced decision-making and leadership qualities.)
- Pease, Allan. *Body Language: How to Read Others' Thoughts by Their Gestures*. (Useful for understanding non-verbal communication.)

- Carnegie, Dale. *How to Win Friends and Influence People*. (Classic guide to building confidence and interpersonal skills.)

2.9.4 Current Affairs and General Knowledge

- *The Hindu* and *The Indian Express* – For daily national and international news analysis.
- *Yojana* and *Kurukshetra* – Monthly magazines on socio-economic issues, government schemes, and rural development.
- *PRS Legislative Research* (www.prsindia.org) – For updates on bills, policies, and governance issues.

2.9.5 Online Resources

- **UPSC Interview Experiences** – Platforms like *Insights on India*, *Forum IAS*, and *Vision IAS* regularly publish real interview transcripts of toppers.
- **Government Portals** – Websites like PIB (Press Information Bureau), Ministry of External Affairs, and NITI Aayog provide authentic updates useful for current affairs-based questions.

2.10 Check Your Progress:

Check Your Progress – 1

A) MCQs

1. b) Personality Test
2. c) Personality and suitability for public service
3. b) 4–6
4. c) “If you were District Collector during a flood, what steps would you take?”
5. b) Test patience and composure under pressure

B) Short Answers

1. Personality Test
2. False
3. Interview panel / board
4. Face-to-face, telephonic, virtual, stress, situational (any one)
5. Interviewers
6. Say “Thank you, Sir/Madam” politely

Check Your Progress – 2

A) MCQs

1. b) Situation, Task, Action, Result
2. b) Avoiding eye contact
3. c) Politely admit you are not aware
4. b) “What challenges do young officers face in the field?”
5. a) Greeting and thanking the panel

B) Short Answers

1. Preparing DAF (Detailed Application Form)
2. Clarity / simplicity / politeness (any one)
3. Politely ask for clarification
4. Fidgeting, slouching, crossing arms, avoiding eye contact (any one)
5. “Thank you, Sir/Madam”

Check Your Progress – 3

A) MCQs

1. b) Simulate the real interview and provide feedback
2. c) Increase in handwriting speed
3. b) DAF and current affairs-based questions
4. b) Reflect on strengths and weaknesses
5. a) They cannot exactly replicate the real interview

B) Short Answers

1. The real interview environment
2. Reduces nervousness / builds confidence / gives feedback (any one)
3. Coaching institutes, mentors, teachers, peers
4. Reflect and note strengths/weaknesses
5. Because mock interviews are practice tools, not exact replicas



Module III

Group Discussions (Current Affairs Topics)

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Group Discussion
 - 3.2.1 Objectives of Group Discussion
 - 3.2.2 Types of Group Discussion
 - 3.2.3 Characteristics of Group Discussion
 - 3.2.4 Skills Essential for Group Discussion
 - 3.2.5 Process of Group Discussion
- 3.3 Initiating Group Discussion
- 3.4 Check Your Progress
- 3.5 Inviting Comments or Eliciting Opinion
- 3.6 Check Your Progress
- 3.7 Expressing Agreement and Disagreement
- 3.8 Check Your Progress
- 3.9 Intervening the Discussion
- 3.10 Check Your Progress
- 3.11 Suggestions
- 3.12 Summing up Discussion
- 3.13 Sample Group Discussions
- 3.14 Do's and Don'ts of a Group Discussion
- 3.15 Summing Up
- 3.16 Exercises
- 3.17 References

3.0 Objectives

Study of this unit will enable students to

- 1) understand nature and concept of group discussion.
- 2) participate in group discussion.
- 3) know different manners and etiquettes to be followed in group discussion.
- 4) acquire skills of presentation in group discussion.

3.1 Introduction

Communication is an important part of human existence. The progress human beings have made is possible because of their ability to communicate which originates from memory. Day-by-day man is surrounded by more and more machines—a few friendly and most of them operated by human commands. To operate machines effectively, a man must be able to command effectively. Effectively here means both friendly and convincing which is basically a part and parcel of personal as well as group communicative activities. This means, we need to be able to communicate effectively in person and in a group also if we want to be successful in our life.

3.2 Group Discussion

A 'Group' constitutes two or more persons. They come together for different reasons. One of the important reasons to come together is 'to discuss' one or more issues relevant to or associated with them. Literal meaning of the word 'Discussion' is 'an exchange of views on something'. Members of a group have different views and opinions about the same topic due to their background knowledge and experience. Each member presents his/ her views. Others may either agree, disagree or partially agree with the views. Group Discussion enables each member of the group to understand various viewpoints of an issue and reach out to a better understanding of the issue.

Group Discussion, popularly known as GD, refers to a situation in which small number of persons form a group to share their views, opinions, knowledge, information and experience about a particular topic, issue, problem or situation. The discussion is oral and formal when the purpose is assessment of individual for group work while the discussion is oral and informal when it is among friends and family members. Members listen to others and respond to the points raised during the discussion. This is a group activity and demands group ethics and etiquettes.

3.2.1 Objectives of Group Discussion

Group discussion is an activity that focuses a specific goal. It is organized with one or more purposes together. Each participant knows the goal of the activity at beginning only. It is organized formally and systematically. Participants are expected to be self-disciplined and responsible for the outcomes. In a group discussion, one of the participants emerges as a leader while others are given sufficient opportunities to express their views and opinions. Each participant need to present his or her views which may be original or re-interpretation of what others think and do. The main purpose of a discussion is to understand viewpoints of an issue and improvise understanding of the issue in a better way. Understanding of an issue in a better way results in better solutions and preparations accordingly.

Group Discussion is a stage in the process of selection for employment. Usually GD is employed where the selected candidate has to work in a group or team. GD attempts to test leadership skills along with presentations skills, presence of mind, group manners and etiquettes, domain knowledge, ability to interpret and many other soft skills. GD enables the selectors to select the best of the candidates.

3.2.2 Types of Group Discussion

Group Discussion is basically a formal communicative activity. It is classified on the basis of nature of topic assigned for discussion. Thus, it can be classified into three types as follows.

- ◆ **Topic Based:** In this type of group discussion, a topic is given to the members to discuss. The topic is a general topic and expects the members to present their views and opinions logically following the group ethics. Mostly, this type of group discussion is organized in the recruitment process.
- ◆ **Case Based:** This type of group discussion is employed in different types of organizations where different types of projects are undertaken. Before commencing a project, a thorough case study is undertaken. Such case study is kept open for discussion. Members here are given a common goal to find out a solution or a set of observations.
- ◆ **Report/Article Based:** This is a kind of review or feedback analysis group discussion. The content of the report or article is debated here so as to study it from different perspectives. The pros and cons discussed provide different perspectives for future planning if it is a report or opens avenues along with new ideas if it is an article.

3.2.3 Characteristics of Group Discussion

- a) **Purposeful Activity:** In the formal sense, group discussion is an organized activity with a specific purpose. All the participants are informed about the purpose beforehand. Every member of the group is supposed to discuss the topic to meet the objective.
- b) **Communication and Interaction:** Group Discussion is an organized communicative activity. The purpose is to discuss some issue, problem or topic of current importance. Every member presents his/ her views on the topic. Presentations are expected to be polite and convincing. Communication, and not aggression, is the motive here. Interaction must be present from the beginning to the end. Agreements and disagreements are part and parcel of group discussion as they lead to a common, effective solution.
- c) **Equal Opportunity of Participation:** Group discussion follows a democratic process where every member of the group gets equal opportunity to present his/ her views about the issue or topic. Ideally, each of them must present his/ her

views and contribute to the common goal. Each member may exhibit his/ her knowledge and experience to impress the group.

- d) **Cordial Environment:** The environment of Group Discussion is supposed to be friendly, cordial and cooperative. A Member should understand views of other members, critically appreciate them to reach out to the common goal. Even when one does not agree with the views presented by some member, the disagreement should be expressed politely and without aggression. This creates cooperative environment.
- e) **Leadership:** Leadership is one of the qualities assessed in a group discussion. Leadership here is the shared leadership where one or more of the members may coordinate the discussion allow equitable participation. Positive interventions of members are expected here. The group is expected to be self-disciplined and self-controlled. In case, there is lack of self-discipline and self-control, there are possibilities that a single member emerges as a leader.
- f) **Inclusive Process:** Group discussion is an inclusive process where every member is given sufficient opportunities to present their views and opinions about the issue in discussion. Every member is allowed to express and heard for a better understanding of the topic. If the purpose is to arrive at a decision, it is taken with consensus.
- g) **Flexibility:** Group discussion is a rather flexible and informal to a large extent. It is less formal in style and functioning. The only rule is everybody should participate with essential formalities of etiquettes in presentation. There is no restriction on time for expression. Every participant may take his or her own time to organize and present his/ her views.

3.2.4 Skills Essential for Group Discussion

- a) **Knowledge:** Knowledge of the topic and other relevant topics is always desired by the evaluators. Knowledge of burning social and economic issues, current affairs, scientific advancements, environmental issues is also desired as knowledge of these issues helps the member of the group to present the topic from different perspectives.
- b) **Oral Communication Skills:** Group discussion being discussion is an oral activity. Participants need to be proficient in the language of communication if they want to be influential. Ability to speak confidently and convincingly is one of the prerequisite quality in a successful communication. This leads to success in group discussion.
- c) **Clarity:** Clarity is a quality of expression where the speaker attempts to make his/ her thoughts clear to his audience. The audience understands them, there is no confusion about the meaning expressed. Here the speaker avoids all the

round-about ways, beating around the bush, or indirect and hyperbolic expressions. The only way to clear thoughts is direct, clear and specific wording used for expressing views and opinions. This reduces time on unnecessary discussions.

- d) **Conciseness:** Every expression should be precise and concise so that all the thoughts expressed are clear. Concise expression is easy to understand and interpret.
- e) **Non-verbal Skills:** Body language plays very important role in expression of thoughts. It makes the oral communication more effective. Proper combination of eye contact, gestures, facial expressions, movements of eye, etc. often make the speech effective.
- f) **Analytical Approach:** A member of the group should have ability to analyse views and opinions presented by other members. Analysis should be logical, coherent and organised. If there is any criticism, it should be analytical and not parsimonious. The analytical approach protects a member even if s/he does not have anything new to present to the group.
- g) **Leadership Aspects:** Everybody is a leader in one way or the other. Some know how to exhibit leadership while some avoid it deliberately. However, every group member is expected to exhibit some leadership qualities during the discussion. Some may initiate the discussion or someone may try to keep the track of discussion or clarify points when required or try to maintain the formal aura of group discussion. There may be someone who would conclude the discussion successfully.
- h) **Group Manners:** Turn taking is the most essential manner of a group discussion. Usually, it is found that a single person attempts to dominate the discussion. This is unfair and limits opportunities of other members. Group discussion is a self-controlled and self-disciplinary communicative activity. Every member must be given opportunity to express his/ her views on the topic. Group discussions often become hot and turns into blame game and biting criticism. This should be strictly avoided.
- i) **Patience:** Patience is an essential quality required among the members. S/he should never lose his temper at any cost. S/he should use the words cautious so as not to hurt anybody in the group. Aggression is a demand sometimes but consistent aggression hampers the overall impression of the member.
- j) **Style of Presentation:** A member of the group need have a style of his/ he own. It may not be very special but should something that differentiates him from others. Style may differ due to systematic, logical, scientific and realistic approach to topic. The presentation is expected to be objective and impartial. The ideas presented and arguments should be supported with relevant facts and figures.

3.2.5 Process of Group Discussion

A group discussion can be conveniently divided into three stages.

- **Initiation:** The first stage of group discussion is the introduction to the topic of discussion and the time stipulated for discussion. Once mediator introduces the topic formally, s/he withdraws to the background and the group is left to discuss it from different perspectives. Someone from the group opens the discussion with some remark on the topic.
- **Body:** This is the main course of group discussion. All the members present their views about the given topic. There are
- **Summarization:** This is the final stage of a group discussion. Usually, a group gets divided into two parts where a few speak about pros and a few about the cons and there is the third group which is on the borderline. If there is consensus among all the members, they arrive at a common conclusion. If there is no conclusion, the discussion ends in summarization by some member.

3.3 Initiating Group Discussion

To initiate a discussion means to open the discussion. The one, who opens discussion, takes opportunity to speak first and catch attention of other members as well as the mediator in the background. This creates a special impression about you among the group members. This also exhibits your leadership qualities. As the person who speaks first is remembered easily, it becomes essential to initiate the group discussion. Let us study some ways in which a group discussion can be initiated.

Opening the discussion on a topic

A group discussion may be opened in some of the following ways.

- Good morning/ afternoon friends. The topic of our group discussion is “Is AI a threat to humanity?”
- Ladies and Gentlemen, let me take this opportunity to open this discussion. ...
- Friends allow me to begin this discussion. ...
- I feel privileged to commence this discussion. ...
- I am happy to be a part of this group. The topic for discussion today is ...
- It is a great opportunity for me to be a part of this group to discuss the topic ...

A variety of combinations can help us make our expressions creative. Depending on the situation you are free to combine different expressions to initiate a group discussion.

In case the topic is already introduced by the organizer himself/ herself, we may initiate discussion in one of the following ways.

- This is a topic of great importance. In my opinion _____.
- It is the topic of hot debate. What I personally feel is _____.
- I think we have been aware of this topic. It is believed that _____.
- The topic is quite new for all of us. In my view _____.
- We all are familiar with the topic. I would like to point out that _____.

3.4 Check Your Progress

- 1) Open a discussion on the following topic.
 - a) Semester system of examination: student friendly or troubling students?
 - b) Use of social media: Boon or bane?
 - c) Need of better irrigation and drinking water supply system among villages.
 - d) Classroom instructions: Online or Offline?

3.5 Inviting Comments or Eliciting Opinions

Usually, a group discussion is a multi-leadership activity where a single person is not in control of the group. There are possibilities that a member needs to steer the group so as to arrive at a consensus, or to retain the track of discussion. Sometimes, there are some members who are inactive. There must be some efforts to bring them into the discussion. The person coordinating should motivate the participants tactfully and motivate them to express their views and opinions. If they do not have their own opinions, they may be encouraged to speak about the opinions presented by other members.

Some of the ways in which comments may be invited or opinions elicited are as follows.

- We would like to know the opinion of Mr. Jacob.
- What do you feel about the statement of Ms. Ananya?
- I think Ms. Chavla would like to express her views on this point?
- Let's know what Mr. Bansal wants to say in this respect.
- What is your opinion Miss Priya about the statement made by Mr. B?

Sometimes in a situation where some members of the group do not participate at all in the discussion, one may elicit their opinions using following statements.

- Friends feel free to say something relevant to the topic.
- Please express your views regarding this issue.
- We all would be glad to know your views and experiences about the issue.
- Please correct me if you like.
- Any comment or suggestion friends?

- I think you have something to say about this view.
- How would you respond to this opinion?

These statements may be combined to elicit responses from the members of the group who are hesitant or unwilling to respond.

3.6 Check Your Progress

1. Elicit opinions of your group members on the following topics.
 - a) Indian economy and Cricket
 - b) Students and Social Media Usage
 - c) Reservation Policy in Education and Recruitment
 - d) Agricultural Policies in India

3.7 Expressing Agreement and Disagreement

During the course of a discussion, it is quite natural that one may agree with some points while disagree with some other. Sometimes your agreement is conditional and you may proceed to modify the opinion or view presented with your own reasoning, knowledge or reasoning. Agreement, disagreement or partial agreement needs to be expressed clearly.

Agreements, disagreements or partial agreements depends on your knowledge of the subject, information available and ability to criticise or appreciate views presented by others. When we agree, we need to have valid examples mostly supported with evidences. Same is the case when we disagree. However, when we agree partially, addition and not correction should be the motive. Whether you agree, disagree or partially agree, the intention should not be to hurt or insult other participants. Agreement, disagreement or partial agreement must be presented in a convincing manner that is humble instead of being aggressive.

Study the following examples.

Agreement

1. Neutral/ Safe
 - a) That's what I too think.
 - b) How true!
 - c) That's quite right.
 - d) Absolutely true.
 - e) Yes, I agree with you.
 - f) I couldn't agree more.
 - g) True enough.

- h) Exactly. / Definitely. / Absolutely.
 - i) That's right.
 - j) I can't help thinking the same.
2. Informal
- a) You're right.
 - b) I'm with you.
 - c) That's the point.
 - d) Even I thought the same.
 - e) There you are.
3. Formal
- a) That's precisely my opinion/ view.
 - b) I'd like to endorse that opinion/ view.
 - c) I agree with your entire view.
 - d) I am of the same opinion.
 - e) I would go along with you.
 - f) I see no scope to disagree with you.

Disagreement

Some useful expressions for expressing disagreement are as follows.

1. Neutral/ Safe
- a) I would think of it rather differently.
 - b) I'm afraid I disagree with your view.
 - c) I don't think that's right.
 - d) That's not the way I see it.
 - e) I don't agree.
 - f) I disagree with your opinion.
2. Informal
- a) You must be joking.
 - b) You can't be serious.
 - c) You don't mean it. Do you?
 - d) Oh! Come off it!

3. Formal

- a) I'm sorry but I disagree with this view.
- b) I'm sorry but I cannot accept it.
- c) I'm afraid I completely/ entirely disagree with you.
- d) I see things rather differently.
- e) I'm afraid I'm not at all convinced.

Partial Disagreement

1. Neutral/ Safe

- a) I see you have a point but ...
- b) I agree with you to a certain extent but ...
- c) Yes, but on the other hand ...
- d) I agree with you in case of only two things.
- e) I want to say something different.
- f) I can't agree with you fully.
- g) That's all very well, but ...
- h) Yes. You are right but let me add ...
- i) Very well said but let me add to it.

2. Informal

- a) True to a large extent but ...
- b) It could be but...
- c) Oh, but ...
- d) I can see that but ...
- e) I'd go along a lot with that but ...

3. Formal

- a) I agree with you in principle but practically ...
- b) I take your point but ...
- c) It may be so but ...
- d) Granted but ...
- e) Agreed yet ...
- f) I want to add something ...
- g) I want to say something different ...

Agreement, partial agreement or disagreement are part and parcel of any group discussion activity. You are a free being with all the preconceived notions about any topic in general and may have specialised knowledge of one or more subjects. All these have direct impact on our thought process. These in turn make us agree with some point, disagree with another or partially agree with yet another. The most essential part here is to maintain our temper. We must be careful about stingy statements, rigidness, disregard or disrespect for other members, raising voice to emphasize views, aggression. These are unnecessary elements in a group discussion and hamper impression of the speaker. They should be strictly avoided. Politeness is the key to success to win points in a group discussion. That creates positive opinion about the speaker.

3.8 Check Your Progress

- 1) Express your agreement with the following opinions. State your reason for supporting the view.
 - a. To save environment is to save the Earth.
 - b. Co-education enables students to understand the society better.
 - c. Online education misses the classroom interactions which hampers all round development of students.
- 2) Express your partial agreement with the following views. Justify your partial agreement with adequate reasoning.
 - a. Reward of good work is more work.
 - b. TV Advertisements really help us to select the product we want.
 - c. Our culture is changing day-by-day.
- 3) Express your disagreement. Give reason with suitable examples if required.
 - a. Use of mobile phone has reduced our working efficiency.
 - b. We should be strong comments on social media. That limits the vile creators from generating controversial reels and videos.
 - c. Indian sports arena is largely influenced by cricket only.

3.9 Intervening the Discussion

Group discussion is a purposeful and interactive activity. During the discussion, sometimes we need to intervene the process with some purpose. The purpose may be greater clarification, or restore the discussion after a digression, or to add some information to the view, or some point comes to your mind and you want to express it, and so on. The purpose may differ on different occasions and is to be handled carefully as this may hurt the person you intervene. Any interruption should be highly polite in a formal discussion while you make take liberties in an informal discussion.

Some of the expressions we may use to interrupt others are as follows.

- ◆ If you please, let me have a word on this.
- ◆ May I have your attention please?
- ◆ If you allow me, I would like to add a point.
- ◆ With your permission, may I add a point here?
- ◆ Excuse me for intervention. What I feel is
- ◆ May I add to what you are saying?
- ◆ Please listen to me. I want to share my view about it.
- ◆ Sorry to interrupt, but
- ◆ Would you mind if I add something to your view?

In case, where you need to bring the discussion back to the topic, you may use one or more of the following expressions.

- ◆ Gentlemen, let us get back to the topic of our discussion. We are discussing _____ (name of the topic).
- ◆ Let us stick to the subject please.
- ◆ I think we have left the track of our discussion. We need to get back.
- ◆ That's very interesting but I don't think it relates to our topic of discussion.
- ◆ I think the point is completely irrelevant. We are talking about _____.

Sometimes there is a hot discussion and participants exchange hot words. This is neither expected nor acceptable. Here, you have chance to exhibit your leadership qualities. You can take lead to bring the situation under control. Here are a few expressions which you can use to control the situation.

- ◆ Listen to me please. Friends don't get angry.
- ◆ Calm down gentlemen. Let not accuse each other.
- ◆ Friends, I think instead of criticising each other, we should criticise the topic.
- ◆ Let's stop this. Such aggressive arguments would lead us nowhere.
- ◆ Don't get upset Mr. Raj.
- ◆ Please control yourself Mr. _____. This results in nothingness.

Sometimes in a group discussion, the situation is otherwise. Someone else would interrupt our speech. Here, instead of getting angry and disturbed, we need to handle the situation systematically. Here also, effective and polite communication skills help a lot. When someone tries to interrupt us, stop the person and do not allow him/ her to break the flow of your speech. sometimes

Some of the expressions useful to handle such situation are as follows.

- ◆ Excuse me Sir, let me finish my point first.
- ◆ Please sir you can add your views once I have done with mine.
- ◆ Please listen to me first. You can add later.
- ◆ I think this is unfair on your behalf to break by link.

3.10 Check Your Progress

1. Make suggestions in continuation of discussion on the following topics.
 - a) Politics and Religion in India
 - b) Co-education enables students to understand the society better.
 - c) Classroom interactions as an essence of Education
2. Control ongoing the hot discussions on the following topics.
 - a) Students are not concerned with learning anymore.
 - b) TV Advertisements sometimes misguide us.
 - c) Our culture is changing day-by-day.
3. Stop others from intervening your opinion in discussion on the following topics.
 - a. Social Media is an inseparable part of our life.
 - b. Social Media as a Creativity Platform
 - c. “Money matters.”

3.11 Suggestions

Group discussion is a process of exchange of views, opinions, information, knowledge, suggestions and interpretations. It is hardly possible that we would agree with all the opinions and views presented. We may have counter views or supplementary views. Counter views are often expressed in the form of disagreement while supplementary views are expressed in the form of partial agreement. When the situation demands, one must be able to make suggestions, accept it or refuse. This must be done with a reasonable clarification in a polite manner.

a) Making Suggestions

Suggestions should be made in a polite way. Care must be taken that our suggestion or the manner in which suggestion is made should not hurt the speaker. Some of the ways in which we can make suggestion are as follows.

- ◆ Would you mind if I suggest...?
- ◆ I would like to suggest...

- ◆ I would also propose to ...
- ◆ Might I suggest another thing?
- ◆ I would like to put forward a suggestion.
- ◆ We may also consider
- ◆ We might also think of the issue.

b) Accepting Suggestions

Accepting suggestion in itself is a generous action which adds credits to your personality. This also should be accepted politely.

- ◆ Thank you for your suggestion. _____
- ◆ I accept your suggestion. _____
- ◆ Thank you for your addition.
- ◆ That's very nice of you. You have widened my perspective.
- ◆ Accepted. Let me add it to my opinion.
- ◆ Yes. We can also think of this issue from that perspective.
- ◆ It's a good idea. I accept it as a complement.

c) Refusing Suggestions

Refusing a suggestion is often considered a rude action if there is absence of etiquettes and manners. The refusal should not be rude or hurting. That should not be the intention to hurt the speaker when one refuses a suggestion. Some of the polite expressions used for refusing suggestions are as follows.

- ◆ Thank you for your suggestion but I think that is not related to my view.
- ◆ I think you have interpreted my view the otherwise. What I wanted to say is ____
- ◆ Very nice suggestion but I think it is not applicable to my views.
- ◆ Your suggestion has given me additional perspective. What I want to say is ____.
- ◆ Though your suggestion is good, it does not relate to my views.

3.12 Summing up Discussion

An impressive beginning and logical end are the keys to earn credits in a group discussion. Summing up of a discussion should include main points, remarks, views, opinions, agreements, disagreements, suggestions, etc. made by members during the discussion. If you plan to sum up the discussion, note the points raised, views expressed, agreements and disagreements along with the suggestions during the discussion. Noting always helps us to present the summary effectively. Some of the expressions we may use to sum up a discussion are as follows.

- ◆ Friends, its time to conclude this discussion. _____
- ◆ I think we have discussed most of the issues associated with the topic of our discussion. Some of the take outs of the discussion are _____.
- ◆ Let me make you aware of the time allotted to us. Its time to concluded what we have been discussing for last twenty-five minutes.
- ◆ Its been a very energetic discussion. I feel very sad that all of you have some points to make but we need to follow the time constraints. Let's conclude the discussion.

3.13 Sample Group Discussions

Study the following examples of group discussion for better understanding of the group discussion process and effective participation in a group discussion.

A) Reservation System: Reform or Retain?

Pradip: Good afternoon, everyone. Today, we have a very hot topic for discussion. The topic is Reservation System in India: Reform or Retain? As long as I understand reservation is a policy designed to promote social equality and representation for historically marginalized communities. Let's delve into whether this system should be reformed or retained in its current form, considering various perspectives.

Amit: I believe the reservation system needs thoughtful reform. While its intent was to uplift disadvantaged groups, it often leads to inefficiencies and doesn't address the root causes of inequality effectively. Economic backwardness could be a criterion alongside caste for more targeted benefits. So I think we need to have reforms in the present reservation policy.

Priya: I have a different opinion about this. To my knowledge, reservation policy was introduced in India to address historical oppression of certain castes. I strongly feel it should be retained with robust implementation. Reservations are crucial for ensuring representation and opportunities for SCs, STs, and OBCs who have faced historical injustices.

Rohan: I agree with Priya partially. The system needs nuanced reform balancing caste with economic criteria. It's not a one-size-fits-all solution; we must consider intra-category disparities. Merit shouldn't be seen in opposition to equity. Both can coexist with balanced policies.

Neha: Legally, reservations are enshrined in the Constitution. Any changes must ensure they don't dilute protective measures intended for vulnerable sections.

Vikas: Politically, reservations are sensitive. Reform must balance social justice with meritocracy to avoid controversy and ensure inclusivity. There are

social groups which oppose reservation reforms which challenge their share. This may disturb the social peace. Any reform should be brought into society by adequately convincing the affecting social group.

Sanjay: For marginalized communities like Dalits, reservations are a lifeline. Without reservations, marginalized groups face exclusion; it's about corrective justice. Hence, we must retain and strengthen them to counter ongoing discrimination.

Leela: Outcomes of the reservation policy are mixed. Reservations have opened doors but systemic change is rather slow. Reservations highlight India's caste dynamics. Reform should focus on dismantling systemic inequalities rather than just providing quotas.

Pradip: Thank you, everyone, for engaging deeply on this multifaceted issue reflecting India's complex societal dynamics. The debate underscores the need for balanced approaches addressing equity, merit, and contextual realities.

B) Topic: Social Media — A Boon or a Bane?

Moderator: Welcome everyone. Today's topic is "Social Media: A Boon or a Bane?" Let's begin with opening remarks.

Participant 1: Social media is undoubtedly a boon. It connects people across the globe, helps spread awareness, and gives a voice to the voiceless. Movements like #MeToo and climate activism gained momentum because of social platforms.

Participant 2: I agree, but we must also acknowledge the dark side. Social media is addictive. Studies show people spend over 3 hours daily on these platforms. That's time lost from real-life interactions, productivity, and mental well-being.

Participant 3: Let's not forget the economic benefits. Social media has created new careers—content creators, influencers, digital marketers. Small businesses can now reach global audiences without huge marketing budgets.

Participant 4: True, but it also fuels misinformation. Fake news spreads faster than facts. People often believe and share unverified content, which can lead to panic or even violence.

Participant 5: Another concern is privacy. Platforms collect personal data, and breaches like the Cambridge Analytica scandal show how this data can be misused. Users often don't realize how much they're giving away.

Participant 6: On the flip side, social media helps in education and professional networking. LinkedIn connects job seekers with recruiters, and platforms like YouTube offer free learning resources.

Moderator: Great points. Let's move to the conclusion. Social media is both a boon and a bane. It offers immense opportunities for connection, learning, and growth—but also poses risks like addiction, misinformation, and privacy violations. The key lies in responsible usage, digital literacy, and stronger regulations. Like any powerful tool, its impact depends on how we wield it.

C) Group Discussion: Is NEP 2020 Really Transforming Education in India?

Moderator: Welcome everyone. Today's topic is "Is NEP 2020 Really Transforming Education in India?" Let's begin with opening remarks.

Aarnav: Absolutely, NEP 2020 is a game-changer. The shift to the 5+3+3+4 structure replaces the outdated 10+2 system and aligns with global standards. It emphasizes experiential and competency-based learning, which is a huge leap forward.

Isha: I agree, but transformation takes time. While policies like NIPUN Bharat and Vidya Pravesh have reached millions of students, implementation is uneven across states. Rural areas still struggle with infrastructure and teacher training.

Rohan: Let's not forget the impact on higher education. NEP promotes multidisciplinary learning, multiple entry-exit options, and academic bank of credits. These reforms make education more flexible and student-centric.

Meera: True, but there's concern about execution. Many schools lack internet access, and digital tools aren't uniformly available. While 72% of schools now have internet, the digital divide still affects marginalized communities.

Dev: One underrated aspect is vocational training. NEP integrates it into mainstream education, preparing students for real-world careers—not just exams. That's a major shift from rote learning to skill-based education.

Simran: I'd also highlight inclusivity. NEP supports students with disabilities through tools like the PRASHAST App and promotes Indian Sign Language as a subject. That's a meaningful step toward equitable education.

Moderator: Great insights. Let's move to the conclusion. NEP 2020 is transforming education in India, but the journey is ongoing. The policy has laid a strong foundation for inclusive, flexible, and future-ready learning. However, full-scale transformation depends on consistent implementation, infrastructure upgrades, and teacher empowerment. The vision is bold—the execution must match it.

D) Group Discussion: Is AI a Threat or a Tool?

Sapna: Welcome everyone. Today's topic is "Is AI a Threat or a Tool?" Let's begin with opening statements. I think AI is a marvellous innovation which is very helpful for us on one hand. And on the other, it is a threat to our creativity.

Ravi: I believe AI is a powerful tool. It's revolutionizing industries—from healthcare to agriculture. AI-driven diagnostics are saving lives, and smart farming is improving crop yields. It's not the technology that's dangerous, but how we choose to use it.

Sneha: I agree with Ravi to an extent, but we can't ignore the risks. AI is replacing jobs, especially in customer service and manufacturing. Millions could be unemployed if we don't prepare for this shift. That's a real threat to economic stability.

Arjun: Let's not forget the ethical concerns. AI systems can be biased, especially in facial recognition and hiring algorithms. If left unchecked, they could reinforce discrimination rather than eliminate it.

Megha: But isn't that a human flaw? AI learns from data we provide. If the data is biased, the output will be too. The solution is better regulation and transparency, not abandoning AI altogether.

Tanvi: Another threat is surveillance. Governments and corporations use AI to monitor citizens. Privacy is being compromised. We need strict laws to prevent misuse.

Karan: On the flip side, AI is helping fight climate change. Predictive models are improving disaster response and energy efficiency. It's a tool that can help us solve global problems—if used responsibly.

Moderator: Excellent points. Let's move to the conclusion. AI is both a tool and a potential threat. Its impact depends on how society governs, regulates, and integrates it. With ethical frameworks, education, and inclusive policies, AI can be a force for good. But without oversight, it could deepen inequality and compromise privacy.

3.14 Do's and Don'ts of a Group Discussion

DO's

- ◆ Dress neatly and formally.
- ◆ Maintain eye contact with the speakers.
- ◆ Be loud enough while speaking so that others can hear you without problem.
- ◆ Be clear about your stand or perspective.
- ◆ Listen carefully and react carefully.
- ◆ Allow others to speak.
- ◆ Take your turn politely.
- ◆ Be assertive in a polite manner.
- ◆ Never be aggressive.
- ◆ Be clear about your thoughts and your presentation.
- ◆ Be logical in your presentation, questioning and answering.
- ◆ Follow the politeness principles.
- ◆ Maintain cheerful aura.

Dont's

- ◆ Avoid one-to-one discussion with members of the group.
- ◆ Unnecessary aggression.
- ◆ Pointing fingers, shouting, thumping, taunting.
- ◆ Use of slang or abusive language.
- ◆ Addition of something irrelevant.
- ◆ Taking stand again and again.
- ◆ Breaking into discussion without politeness or permission.
- ◆ Personal arguments.
- ◆ Taking too long a stand.
- ◆ Negative body language like shaking legs, yawning, drumming table, not paying attentions to speakers, etc.
- ◆ No response.

3.15 Summing Up

Group discussion is a communicative activity with a specific purpose which may vary according to the contexts. Whatever the situation is, the participant has to follow certain ethics and etiquettes associated with group communication. One must

have extrovert perspective along with reading and experience. There are certain do's and don'ts which the participants need to follow if s/he wants to gain attention and grace in the assessment.

3.16 Exercises

- 1) Write a detailed discussion on the following topic.
 - a) India's role in global economic war
 - b) Impact of AI on Global Employment
 - c) Climate Change and India
 - d) Digital India: Success or Failure?
 - e) Indian Space Missions: Pride or Priority?
 - f) Freedom of Speech and Social Media Censorship
 - g) Cyber Security in the Age of Smart Devices
 - h) Traditional Education vs Professional Education
 - i) Indian Economy after COVID 19
 - j) Social and Mental Health Awareness Programmes in India
 - k) Reservation System: Reform or Retain?
 - l) Delivery System in Education: Online or Traditional?
 - m) NEP 2020: Will it really transform India?
 - n) Should we make sex education mandatory?
 - o) Uniform Civil Code: Necessary or Divisive?
 - p) Is Social Media Doing more harm than good?
 - q) AI in Education: Boon or Threat?

3.17 References

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Module IV**E-mail Writing, CV/Resume Writing**

4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Content

4.2.1 Section I: E-mail Writing

4.2.2 Section II: Preparing CV

4.2.3 Section III: Resume Writing

4.3 Summary

4.4 Terms to remember

4.5 Answers to check your progress

4.6 Exercises

4.7. References for further study

4.0 Objectives

By the end of this chapter, you will be ready with the knowledge and confidence to:

- Write professional e-mails that are polite, concise, and effective.
- Design CVs / resumes that are tailored, well-organized, and impactful.
- Avoid common pitfalls and adopt best practices that enhance your communication and presentation.
- Prepare for real-world success.

4.1 Introduction

The rapid growth in digital technology has completely changed the system of communication particularly formal communication, business communication and communication in the digital corporate world. Due to the fast-paced digital world, effective written communication has become the need of the hour which requires enhancement of skills especially when navigating academic, professional, or job-seeking environments. Two of the most essential tools in this realm are e-mail writing and preparing CV / resume.

E-mail writing has become a dominant mode of communication in workplaces, institutions, and networking environments. A well-written e-mail reflects clarity, professionalism, and intent, while a poorly structured one can lead to

misunderstandings or a negative perception. In this chapter, you will learn how to write clear subject lines, maintain appropriate tone and structure, and observe proper etiquette in both formal and semi-formal e-mail communication.

Along with e-mail writing, this chapter also introduces the art of preparing a CV or resume which are documents that serve as your professional identity on paper. Whether applying for a job, internship, academic program, or scholarship, your CV/resume provides detailed information about you. Through practical tips and examples, you will learn how to highlight your skills, qualifications, and achievements in a way that aligns with your goals and the expectations of potential employers or institutions.

4.2 Presentation of the Subject Matter

4.2.1 Section I: E-Mail Writing

E-mail (electronic mail) continues to be one of the most vital and widely used communication tools in the modern world, especially in both professional and academic environments. It allows instant communication with people across the globe, regardless of time zones. The e-mail communication remains essential today as it provides a structured, professional channel for correspondence between colleagues, clients, and partners. It also creates a written record of communications, including timestamps, attachments, and conversation history. This is crucial for accountability, reference, and legal purposes. Attachments, links, documents, and multimedia files can be easily shared via e-mail, enabling faster decision-making and smoother collaboration. Despite the rise of messaging apps and social media, e-mail continues to provide a reliable, efficient, and universal platform for meaningful communication.

A. Importance of E-mail Communication

E-mail communication has its own importance in today's digital scenario. Its importance can better be discussed with the following points:

- **Speedy and Convenient:** E-mail communication is fast and convenient because one can write e-mail from any corner of the world to any distant place within a fraction of moment. Besides, it has instant delivery and accessibility across devices.
- **Record Keeping:** The data shared through e-mail is stored on the drive. Hence this type of communication provides a written record of communication.
- **Professionalism:** As e-mail writing is professional one, it reflects sender's professionalism, quick and adequate response and work ethics.
- **Global Reach:** E-mail communication connects people across the world. It's a kind of global platform to communicate with the people across countries and time zones.

B. Types of E-mails

The e-mails are categorised into formal, semi-formal and informal e-mails. The formal e-mails are used in professional or academic settings. These are used for job applications, complaints, requests, purchase and sales, etc. The semi-formal e-mails are sent to the people with acquaintances, colleagues within a firm or classmates, etc. The purpose of these e-mails is to bring team coordination within the firm or organization. The last type of informal e-mails have a casual tone. They are used to communicate with friends and family and contain personal messages.

C. Structure of an E-mail

The e-mail has a specific structure. There are various parts of the e-mail. A well-structured e-mail helps to communicate message clearly and effectively. The competitive examiniory aspirants need to follow the proper structure of the formal e-mail to communicate with the colleagues and authorities. A well-written e-mail typically includes the following parts:

1. Header of the E-mail

To: Recipient's e-mail address.

Cc: Carbon copy (visible to all recipients).

Bcc: Blind carbon copy (hidden from other recipients).

2. **Subject:** A clear and concise line that summarizes the purpose.

3. Body of the E-mail

The most important part of the e-mail is the body of the e-mail. This generally includes salutation, introductory line, the main message/content to be communicated, the closing line/the expectations, sign off and the signature. The following description of the parts of an e-mail will help you while composing a well-structured e-mail.

Part	Description
Salutation	Greetings (e.g., Respected Sir/Madam)
Opening Line	State the purpose of writing (e.g., I apply for the post of...)
Main Content	Detailed information, requests, explanations
Closing Line	Summary, thank you, or expected action (e.g., Looking forward to your response)
Sign-off	Polite ending (e.g., Sincerely, Best regards)
Signature	Name, designation, contact details

D. Guidelines for E-mail Writing

The content of an e-mail needs to be brief and precise. The proper and effective use of language in content writing plays a pivotal role. This skill of using appropriate grammar and correct use of language can be acquired through practice. The following details / points will help you in drafting a well-structured e-mail:

- **Be concise and clear:** Avoid long, complicated sentences.
- **Use proper grammar and spelling:** Proofread before sending.
- **Maintain appropriate tone:** The tone of the language should be respectful and professional.
- Use bullet points for lists or multiple items.
- Avoid slang and abbreviations in formal e-mails.
- Respond promptly to the received messages.
- Attach relevant documents if necessary, and mention them in the body of the e-mail.

E. Examples of E-mails

1. Format of Formal E-mail (Job Application)

To: hamanager@abcltd.in

Subject: Application for the position of Marketing Executive

Dear Hiring Manager,

I hope this message finds you well.

I am writing to express my interest in the position of Marketing Executive at ABC Ltd., as advertised on your website.

I have a Bachelor's degree in Marketing and over three years of experience in digital campaigns and client engagement. I believe my skills and experience align well with the requirements of the role.

Please find my resume attached herewith for your reference. I look forward to the opportunity to discuss my application further.

Sincerely,

Ananya Sharma

Phone: 9876123456

Email: ananya.sharma@email.com

2. Informal E-mail

To: rohan2008@gmail.com

Subject: Weekend Plans

Hi Rohan,

Hope you're doing great!

Are we still on for the movie this Saturday? Let me know the time and place.

Take care,

Priya

F. Common Mistakes to avoid while writing an e-mail

Sometimes the authorities may ask for instant reply to their e-mails seeking different types of information. The overload of the works and the less availability of time as well as poor response of the colleagues in providing information may affect the composition of a well-structured e-mail. The following general mistakes are likely to occur in this situation. To be a good communicator, these mistakes need to be avoided:

- Sending without proofreading
- Using vague subject lines
- Writing in ALL CAPS
- Forgetting attachments
- Using emojis in formal messages
- Being overly casual or too abrupt

G. E-mail Etiquettes

The well-structured and neatly written e-mail creates positive impression which is necessary to avail job opportunities, appreciations from higher authorities, promotions, etc. There are some e-mail etiquettes which the sender has to consider and follow for effective e-mail communication. The aforementioned mistakes can be avoided by adhering to the following etiquettes:

- Always use a professional e-mail address.
- Avoid forwarding unnecessary chain e-mails.
- Be polite and courteous, even when disagreeing.
- Use proper formatting: paragraphs, spacing, and punctuation.
- Do not use reply-all unless necessary.

To sum-up, e-mail writing is an important skill in today's digital world. Whether communicating with employers, authorities, teachers, or friends, your e-

mail should reflect clarity, professionalism, and respect. Anyone can master the art of e-mail writing with regular practice and paying attention to the e-mail etiquettes.

Check your progress 1

A) Choose the correct alternative and complete the following statements:

1.of the following is considered the most vital tool of modern professional and academic communication.

- a) Social media
- b) E-mail
- c) Telephone calls
- d) Instant messaging apps

2.is the main purpose of the subject line in an e-mail.

- a) To greet the recipient
- b) To summarize the purpose of the e-mail
- c) To provide contact details
- d) To list attachments

3.e-mail is commonly used for job applications, complaints, and requests.

- a) Informal
- b) Semi-formal
- c) Formal
- d) Casual

4. is NOT a guideline for writing professional e-mails.

- a) Be concise and clear
- b) Use of slang and abbreviations
- c) Proofread grammar and spelling
- d) Maintain respectful tone

5. of an e-mail contains the recipient's address, carbon copy (Cc), and blind carbon copy (Bcc).

- a) Body
- b) Header
- c) Signature
- d) Subject line

B) Answer the following questions in one word/a phrase or a sentence each.

1. What are the two main tools highlighted in the chapter for professional communication?
2. What does "cc" in an e-mail stand for?
3. Mention one importance of e-mail communication.
4. In which context are semi-formal e-mails mostly used?
5. Give one guideline for writing effective e-mails.

C. Answer the following questions:

1. You are preparing for the Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC) examination. Write an e-mail to the Secretary, MPSC, enquiring about the revised exam schedule, eligibility criteria, and availability of study material.

2. You wish to appear for the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) Civil Services Examination. Write an e-mail to the UPSC Public Relations Officer asking about the age relaxation policy, number of attempts allowed, and guidelines for online application submission.

D. Exercises

Exercise 1: Identify Errors

Read the e-mail below and identify five errors.

Subject: hey

hi,

send me that file ASAP. thx.

-a

Exercise 2:

1. Write an informal e-mail to your friend informing him about your birthday celebration.
2. Your admit card for the upcoming MPSC preliminary examination has not yet been received. Write an e-mail to the Examination Controller, MPSC, making an enquiry about the issue and requesting immediate assistance.
3. You are a first-time aspirant of the UPSC Civil Services Examination. Write an e-mail to the UPSC Commission Office enquiring about the updated syllabus, changes in exam pattern, and recommended reference books.

4.2.2 Section II: CV Writing

The job aspirants or the students preparing for competitive examinations need to prepare their Curriculum Vitae (CV) which includes details regarding individual and academic background, professional experience, skills, achievements and qualifications, etc. Unlike a resume, which is typically brief and tailored for specific job applications, a CV is more detailed and often used for academic, research, or international job opportunities. The well-designed CV incorporates sections such as education, work history, publications, certifications, honors, and sometimes personal interests or references. The basic purpose of a CV is to provide a clear and structured overview of a candidate's career journey, highlighting his/her suitability for a particular job role or field of work.

Key Definitions of a Curriculum Vitae:

1. A Curriculum Vitae is a comprehensive written overview of a person's academic qualifications, professional experiences, and accomplishments.

2. A CV is a detailed document used for academic purposes that includes education, work experience, research, publications, presentations, honors, and affiliations.
3. In many countries outside the U.S. and Canada, a CV is used similarly to a résumé to apply for jobs, often including personal details like age, nationality, and a photo.

Format of a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

1. Personal details

- a. Your Full Name:
- b. Your Address: City, State, PIN Code
- c. Phone Number:
- d. Email Address:
- e. LinkedIn Profile (optional)
- f. Website/Portfolio (optional)

2. Objectitive

A brief summary of your background, goals, and what you bring to the role in two to three sentences.

For example:

Motivated and detail-oriented recent graduate in Computer Science with a strong foundation in software development and data analysis. Seeking a challenging role in a growth-oriented company where I can contribute my technical and problem-solving skills.

3. Education

- Degree Title – (University Name), (City, Country)
- Month Year
- Major: (Your Major Subject)
- GPA: (Your GPA) (if strong or required)
- Relevant Courses: (Course 1), (Course 2), (Course 3)

Repeat for other degrees or educational qualifications, if any. Or you can use tabular format for giving education details as follows:

Sr. No.	Name of Degree	University/Board	City/Country	Year	GPA
1					
2					

Relevant Courses:

Sr. No.	Title of Course	Agency	City/Country	Major Skills acquired
1				
2				

4. Work Experience

- Job Title – (Company/Organization Name), (City, Country)
- Month and Year
- Responsibility or achievement #1
- Responsibility or achievement #2
- Tools/technologies used

Repeat for each job. Or you can use tabular format for giving details of work experience as follows:

Sr. No.	Job Title	Company /Organization	Tenure	Responsibility	Tools used
1					
2					

5. Skills**A. Technical Skills**

- Programming Languages: Python, Java, C++
- Tools & Software: Git, Excel, Tableau
- Operating Systems: Windows, Linux

B. Soft Skills

- Communication
- Problem-solving
- Teamwork

6. Projects (Optional but highly recommended for students or freshers)

- Project Title – (Month & Year)
- Short description of the project
- Tools/technologies used
- Your role and what you achieved

7. Publication / Reserach (If applicable)

- Title of Paper, Journal Name, Year
- Brief description or your contribution

8. Certifications (If applicable)

- (Certification Name) – (Issuing Organization), (Year)
- (Certification Name) – (Issuing Organization), (Year)

9. Languages (If applicable)

- English – Fluent
- Hindi – Intermediate
- Marathi – Basic

10. References (Optional or “Available upon request”)

- Give name, designation, address and contact details of one or two authoritative persons from the same field to whom you are known better and they will be available upon request to the employers.

Sample of a Curriculum Vitae**1. PERSONAL DETAILS**

Full Name : Mr. Rajesh Haribhau Deshpande
Address : 123, Shastri Nagar, Civil Lines
City, State, PIN Code : Pune, Maharashtra – 411001
Phone Number : +91-9876543210
Email Address : rajesh.deshpande@email.com
LinkedIn Profile : linkedin.com/in/rajeshdeshpande
Website/Portfolio : N/A

2. OBJECTIVE

Dedicated and result-oriented professional with a strong background in public administration, law, and governance. Passionate about serving society through transparent administration, efficient land management, and effective implementation

of government policies. Seeking the position of Tehsildar to contribute leadership, problem-solving, and administrative skills for the development of the community.

3. EDUCATION

A. Master of Arts (M.A.) in Public Administration – SavitribaiPhule Pune University, Pune, India

- Month & Year: June 2018 – May 2020
- Major subject: Public Administration
- GPA: 8.5/10

B. Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Political Science – Fergusson College, Pune, India

- Month & Year: June 2015 – May 2018
- Major subject: Political Science
- GPA: 8.2/10

C. Relevant Courses: Governance & Policy, Administrative Law, Public Finance

4. WORK EXPERIENCE

A. Administrative Internship – District Collector’s Office, Pune, India

- January, 2021 – December, 2021
- Assisted in land revenue management and grievance redressal.
- Coordinated with departments for data collection, reporting, and record-keeping.
- Tools Used: MS Excel, Government e-Services Portal.

B. Research Assistant – Centre for Public Policy Studies, Pune, India

- July, 2020 – December, 2020
- Conducted research on local self-government and rural administration.
- Prepared reports on e-governance and citizen participation.

5. SKILLS

A. Technical Skills:

- MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint)
- Digital Record Management Systems (DRMS)
- E-Governance Applications

B. Soft Skills:

- Strong communication and public speaking
- Leadership and decision-making
- Analytical and problem-solving skills
- Teamwork and conflict resolution

6. PROJECTS

- **Project Title:** “Digitization of Land Records for Transparency” – June, 2020
- **Responsibility:** Researched and suggested strategies for digitizing land records in rural Maharashtra.
- **Tools:** MS Excel, GIS basics.
- **Role:** Project Lead – presented findings at a state-level seminar.

7. PUBLICATIONS / RESEARCH

- “E-Governance and Local Administration: A Study in Maharashtra” – Published in Indian Journal of Public Policy, 2021.

8. CERTIFICATIONS

- Certificate in Public Administration – IGNOU, 2020
- Diploma in Computer Applications – NIIT, 2019

9. LANGUAGES KNOWN

- English – Fluent
- Hindi – Fluent
- Marathi – Intermediate

10. REFERENCES

Name: Mr.Durgesh Kumar Sharma, District Collector, Satara

Phone: +91-9820623554

e-Mail: sharmadurgesh@gmail.com

Difference between Curriculum Vitae and Résumé:

Overtly, one does not differentiate a Curriculum Vitae from a Resume. However, there are differences between these two in terms of length, content, use and point of focus. The following table illustrates these differences clearly:

Table 1

Features	Curriculum Vitae (CV)	Résumé
Length	Longer (2+ pages, can be many pages)	Short (usually 1–2 pages)
Content	Detailed and comprehensive	Concise and targeted
Use	Academia, research, fellowships, global jobs	Corporate jobs, especially in U.S.
Focus	Academic achievements and credentials	Skills and work experience

Check your progress 2**A) Choose the correct alternative and complete the following statements:**

1. is the main difference between a CV and a résumé.
 - a) CV is concise, résumé is detailed
 - b) CV is detailed, résumé is concise
 - c) Both are always of the same length
 - d) CV is only for U.S. corporate jobs
2. Which of the following is MOST often included in a CV but not always in a résumé?
 - a) Hobbies
 - b) Academic achievements and publications
 - c) Skills
 - d) Work experience
3. A résumé is most commonly used fortype of jobs.
 - a) Academic and research positions
 - b) Fellowships and scholarships
 - c) Corporate jobs, especially in the U.S.
 - d) International teaching jobs
4. is the usual length of a CV.

a) One page	b) 1–2 pages only
c) 2+ pages, sometimes many pages	d) Half a page
5.is an optional section in a CV.
 - a) Education
 - b) Work Experience
 - c) Projects
 - d) Personal Details

B) Answer the following questions in one word/a phrase or a sentence each.

1. What does CV stand for?
2. Mention one main focus of a CV.
3. In which fields is a CV mostly used?
4. What is included under personal details in a CV?
5. Write one difference between a CV and a résumé.

C) Answer the following question:

1. You are applying for the UPSC Civil Services Examination (IAS/IPS/IFS). Draft a CV highlighting your educational qualifications, leadership experiences, and social initiatives. Ensure the CV reflects qualities suitable for administrative services.

4.2.3 Section III: Resume Writing

The term 'resume' is derived from the French word 'resumer' which means 'to summarize'. The English word comes from the past participle of the French verb and it refers to the summary of a person's qualifications and experience especially for the purpose of seeking employment.

A well-designed resume is a concise document that highlights one's professional background, including work experience, education, skills, and achievements. Its purpose is to present candidate's qualifications clearly to potential employers and demonstrate his/her suitability for a specific role. A strong resume can distinguish you from other applicants and increase your chances of cracking an interview. While drafting a resume you should design it in such a way that it should effectively convey your most relevant and valuable information in a straightforward, easy-to-read format. This will quickly show employers why you are a strong candidate for the job, based on your unique skills and experiences.

Types of Resume

A resume can be drafted with different purposes. Based on the purpose, the resume falls into two major categories: i) Chronological Resume and ii) Functional Resume. Let's have a detailed information about these two categories of resume.

A. Chronological Résumé

As its name suggests, a chronological resume includes information in a chronological order. It lists the work experience and education details in a reverse chronological order. The order begins with the most recent job or an educational achievement followed by the previous ones with reverse order. This format of a resume highlights the candidate's progress in the career reflecting growth in responsibilities and development in skills. This type of resume is a good option for the candidates with a steady career path and a consistent work history.

A standard chronological resume typically includes these key sections:

- Contact information
- Professional title and resume summary/objective
- Work experience and achievements
- Education section

- Your top soft/hard skills
- Include optional sections (languages, certificates, volunteer experience, etc)

This format is preferred in competitive exams because it provides a clear, systematic timeline of growth in academics and/or professional life.

Purpose of Chronological Resume

The chronological resume is preferred by the candidates with the following objectives:

- To give interview boards or selection panels a comprehensive overview of the candidate's background.
- To present academic records, training, internships, and work experience in an organized timeline.
- To highlight consistency, progression, and suitability for administrative, banking, or government posts.

Structure of a Chronological Résumé

Let's discuss the structure of a chronological resume. It is divided into the following parts:

1. Personal Details

Full Name

Address

Contact Number

Email.

- 2. Career Objective / Personal Profile** – 2–3 sentences showing motivation for public service or administrative career.
- 3. Educational Qualifications** – In reverse order (e.g., Post-Graduation '12, Graduation '11, 12th '10, 10th).
- 4. Work Experience (if any)** – Government/Private sector jobs, internships, or training listed from latest to earliest.
- 5. Competitive Exam Credentials (if relevant)** – Mention cleared stages like UPSC Mains qualified, Bank PO Prelims cleared, etc.
- 6. Skills** – Languages, IT skills (MS Office, Data Analysis), soft skills (leadership, communication).
- 7. Achievements / Awards** – Scholarships, fellowships, medals, or state/national-level recognitions.
- 8. Publications / Research (if applicable)** – Useful for academic or administrative roles.

9. Languages Known – English, Hindi, Regional languages.

10. References – Optional, or “Available upon request.”

Advantages of Chronological Resume

Comparatively, a chronological resume has proved more advantageous to the competitive exam aspirants because it provides more clarity, professional look and focus on stability. Its importance can be summarized as follows:

- **Clarity for panels** – Interviewers can quickly trace your journey.
- **Professional look** – Shows discipline, order, and systematic thinking.
- **Focus on stability** – Highlights consistent academic and career growth.

Example of a Chronological Resume

Educational Qualifications

- M.A. (Public Administration), XYZ University, 2022 – 75%
- B.A. (Political Science), ABC College, 2020 – 72%
- Class XII (CBSE), 2017 – 85%
- Class X (CBSE), 2015 – 88%

Work Experience

- Administrative Intern – Collector’s Office, Pune (2022–2023)
- Research Assistant – Public Policy Institute, Delhi (2021–2022)

Skills

- MS Office, e-Governance Applications
- Leadership, Problem-solving, Communication

In short, chronological résumé writing in competitive examinations is a structured way to showcase your educational and professional journey step by step, helping examiners and interviewers evaluate your suitability for government or administrative posts.

Check your progress 3

A. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. What is the primary purpose of a résumé?

- a) To provide detailed research work
- b) To present qualifications clearly to potential employers
- c) To describe personal hobbies
- d) To replace application forms

2. In a chronological résumé, how is information arranged?

- a) From oldest to most recent b) In random order
c) From most recent to earliest d) Based on personal preference

3. Which section is optional in a chronological résumé for competitive exams?

- a) Personal Details b) Educational Qualifications
c) Competitive Exam Credentials d) References

4. Which of the following is an advantage of a chronological résumé?

- a) Hides employment gaps
b) Shows clarity, discipline, and stability
c) Focuses only on skills, not achievements
d) Used mainly in creative arts jobs

5. Which of these is NOT typically included in a résumé?

- a) Career Objective b) Publications / Research
c) Personal Details d) Detailed autobiography

B. Objective Type Questions (One word / phrase / sentence answers)

1. What does a well-designed résumé mainly highlight?
2. What kind of résumé format is preferred in competitive examinations?
3. Mention one purpose of a chronological résumé in competitive exams.
4. Write one key feature of the structure of a chronological résumé.
5. What does a chronological résumé highlight about a candidate?

C) Answer the following question:

1. Prepare a chronological resume for a UPSC Civil Services aspirant. Start with the most recent educational qualification, followed by earlier degrees, and include internships, workshops, and achievements relevant to governance and administration.

B. Functional Résumé

A Functional Resume is also known as a Skills-based Resume. Unlike the chronological resume, the functional resume emphasizes candidate's skills, abilities and accomplishments rather than a chronological work history. The focus of this resume is not on what the candidate did in the past, rather what the candidate is able to do after joining the duties. It groups qualifications under skill categories such as Leadership, Communication, Research, or Technical Expertise.

This format is particularly useful for candidates who have:

- Career gaps,
- Less formal work experience, or
- Experience across diverse fields that may not follow a continuous timeline.

Structure of a Functional Résumé

1. **Personal Details** – Name, Address, Contact Information, Email.
2. **Career Objective / Profile Summary** – Focused on strengths and suitability.
3. **Skills / Competencies** – Grouped into categories (e.g., Communication Skills, Analytical Skills, IT Skills).
4. **Achievements/Projects** – Highlights of academic or professional accomplishments.
5. **Educational Qualifications** – Degrees and marks.
6. **Work Experience** – Listed without much emphasis on dates.
7. **Certifications, Languages, References** – Optional.

Importance of a Functional Résumé in Competitive Examinations

Functional resume is useful to the candidates who are aspiring jobs through competitive exams. These candidates may have a very less work experience or may not have at all. Furthermore, this type of resume focuses more on skills of the candidate rather than the job history. It is also useful to side-line the career gaps if the candidate has in his/her work history. The importance of the functional resume in the competitive exams can be illustrated as below:

a. Highlights Skills Over Job History

The candidates preparing for competitive examinations may not have extensive work experience. A functional résumé allows them to showcase skills like leadership, communication, analytical ability, and IT knowledge which are crucial for administrative or government roles.

a. Useful for Freshers

Many exam aspirants are fresh graduates. This format allows them to emphasize education, projects, internships, and transferable skills instead of a limited work history.

b. Bridges Career Gaps

Some candidates may have gaps due to long exam preparation. A functional résumé downplays gaps and instead stresses competencies relevant to the post.

c. Aligns with Exam Role Requirements

Skills like decision-making, problem-solving, and teamwork can be highlighted to show suitability for administrative or public service posts (e.g., Tehsildar, Collector, Bank Officer).

d. Gives a Professional Look

By focusing on skills and achievements, it presents a structured and confident profile to interview boards.

In short, a functional résumé is skills-based rather than time-based. Its importance in competitive examinations lies in its ability to showcase the core strengths, competencies, and suitability of a candidate, especially when traditional work experience is limited or irregular.

Format of a Functional Resume

Study the following sample format of a Functional Résumé designed for competitive examinations (like UPSC, MPSC, etc.). This type of résumé emphasizes skills, competencies, and achievements rather than just work history.

Résumé

1. Personal Details:

a. Name: (Your Full Name)

b. Contact Information:

Address: (Your Address)

Mobile: (Your Phone Number)

Email: (Your Email Address)

LinkedIn/Portfolio (optional)

2. Career Objective

A focused and motivated candidate aspiring to serve in the civil services. Dedicated to contributing analytical, leadership, and problem-solving skills for public administration and national development. Seeking to leverage strong academic background and competitive examination preparation experience to fulfil administrative responsibilities effectively.

3. Key Skills & Competencies

Skills can be grouped under the following titles:

a. Analytical & Research Skills

- Conducted in-depth study of current affairs, public policies, and socio-economic issues.

- Skilled in collecting, analysing, and interpreting qualitative and quantitative data.
- Developed strong report-writing and summarizing abilities during exam preparation.

b. Communication & Writing Skills

- Excellent drafting, essay writing, and precis writing skills.
- Effective verbal and written communication in English, Hindi, and (Regional Language).
- Presented seminars and group discussions on governance, ethics, and social issues.

c. Leadership & Teamwork

- Coordinated study groups for MPSC/UPSC preparation.
- Guided peers in subject areas like polity, history, and geography.

d. Technical & Digital Skills

- Proficient in MS Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) for documentation and presentations.
- Skilled in online research and use of digital learning platforms.
- Knowledge of data interpretation, charts, and graphs.

4. Educational Qualifications

1. (Postgraduate Degree / Diploma (if any)) – (University/Institution), (Year)
2. (Degree Name) – (University/College), (Year), (Percentage/CGPA)
3. Higher Secondary Education – (School/Board), (Year), (Percentage)
4. Secondary Education – (School/Board), (Year), (Percentage)

Or you can use tabular format for giving education details as follows:

Sr. No.	Name of Degree	University/Board	City/Country	Year	GPA
1					
2					
5.					

5. Achievements

- Cleared (Prelims/Mains of UPSC/MPSC) in (Year) (if applicable).
- Secured top rank in (Any Scholarship/Competitive Exam).
- Published articles in college magazine/journal on socio-political issues.
- Awarded (Any prize) for debate, essay competition, or public speaking.

6. Workshops / Training / Certifications (if applicable)

- Attended workshop on (Public Policy/Leadership/Administration).
- Certification in (Data Analysis/Communication/Research Methodology).

7. Personal Information

- Date of Birth: (DD/MM/YYYY)
- Languages Known: (List)
- Hobbies/Interests: (Reading, Writing, Volunteering, Public Speaking, etc.)

Sample of a Functional Résumé

Study the following sample format of a functional résumé of a candidate who is preparing for competitive examination like UPSC/ MPSC/Banking/Administrative posts. Note the details provided in it.

1. Personal Details

- **Name:** AnanyaB. Deshmukh
- **Address:** 45, Model Colony, Shivaji Nagar, Pune, Maharashtra – 411016
- **Phone:** +91-9876543210
- **Email:** ananya.deshmukh@gmail.com
- **LinkedIn:** linkedin.com/in/ananyadeshmukh

2. Career Objective / Profile Summary

Motivated and detail-oriented postgraduate in Public Administration with strong analytical, communication, and leadership skills. Preparing for competitive examinations with a focus on governance, policy implementation, and public service. Seeking opportunities to apply my knowledge, skills, and problem-solving abilities to administrative responsibilities in government service.

3. Skills and Competencies

A. Analytical and Problem-Solving Skills

- Trained in policy analysis and administrative decision-making.
- Conducted research on governance models and e-governance applications.

B. Communication and Leadership Skills

- Delivered seminars and group presentations during postgraduate studies.
- Coordinated a student volunteer group for a rural literacy campaign.

C. Technical and IT Skills

- Proficient in MS Office Suite (Word, Excel, PowerPoint).
- Knowledge of e-Governance Applications and data handling.

D. Organizational and Interpersonal Skills

- Experience in team-based projects and event management.
- Strong adaptability and time management skills.

4. Achievements / Projects

- **Project:** “E-Governance in Rural India” (2022) – Analysed the impact of digital platforms on local administration.
- **Achievement:** Awarded University Merit Scholarship for securing top rank in M.A. (Public Administration).
- **Volunteer Work:** Participated in state-level NSS camp focusing on rural development and community welfare.

5. Educational Qualifications

Sr. No.	Degree	University/College/Board	City/Country	Year	Percentage
1	M. A.	Savitribai Phule Pune University	Pune, India	2022	78%
2	B.A.	Fergusson College	Pune, India	2020	75%
3	Class XII (CBSE)	Vidya Niketan School	Pune, India	2017	85%
4	Class X (CBSE)	Vidya Niketan School	Pune, India	2015	90%

6. Work Experience

- Intern, Collector’s Office, Pune (2021–2022) – Assisted in drafting reports on land revenue and rural schemes.
- Research Assistant, Public Policy Institute, Delhi (2020–2021) – Supported research on administrative reforms.

7. Certifications

- Certificate in Public Administration – IGNOU, 2021
- Diploma in Computer Applications – NIIT, 2019

8. Languages

- English – Fluent
- Hindi – Fluent
- Marathi – Intermediate

9. References

1. Mr. Abhay Deshpande, District Collector, Pune
Mob. +91-9700971234, e-mail: abhaydesh@gmail.com
2. Mr. Dinesh Shrivastava, Project Manager, Public Policy Institute, Delhi
Mob. +91-9824252601, e-mail: dinshri@gmail.com

This functional résumé highlights skills, achievements, and suitability rather than focusing heavily on job chronology. It is especially useful for competitive exam aspirants where skills + education + projects matter more than long job histories.

Difference between a Chronological Résumé and a Functional Résumé

Table 2

Aspect	Chronological Résumé	Functional Résumé
Focus	Work experience and academic history arranged in reverse order (most recent first).	Skills, competencies, and achievements grouped under categories.
Best For	Candidates with a continuous academic/work history and clear progression.	Freshers, career changers, or candidates with gaps in employment.
Structure	Personal Details '! Career Objective '! Education '! Work Experience '! Skills '! Achievements '! References.	Personal Details '! Career Objective '! Skills & Competencies '! Achievements/Projects '! Education '! Work Experience (brief) '! Certifications/References.
Strengths	- Shows stability and growth. - Easy for interviewers to trace career journey.	- Highlights transferable skills. - Downplays career gaps. - Useful for limited job history.
Weaknesses	- Exposes employment gaps. - Less suitable for candidates with diverse or irregular experience.	- May look less detailed about work history. - Some interviewers prefer chronological clarity.
Use in s Competitive Exam	Suitable for candidates with steady academic and professional journey (e.g., continuous preparation, internships, research, or related jobs).	Suitable for fresh graduates, aspirants with career gaps, or candidates highlighting specific skills relevant to administrative posts.

Check your progress 4**A. Answer the following questions choosing the correct alternative:****1. Which of the following is the main focus of a functional résumé?**

- a) Job history in order of dates
- b) Personal hobbies and interests
- c) Skills, abilities, and achievements
- d) Salary expectations

2. A functional résumé is most useful for which type of candidates?

- a) Those with a long continuous career history
- b) Fresh graduates with limited work experience
- c) Employees with 20+ years in one organization
- d) Candidates applying only for technical jobs

3. In a functional résumé, work experience is generally presented as:

- a) Detailed descriptions with exact dates
- b) Briefly, without much emphasis on dates
- c) Not mentioned at all
- d) Only listed in chronological order

4. Which section of a functional résumé highlights transferable skills like communication and leadership?

- a) Educational qualifications
- b) Career Objective
- c) Skills/Competencies
- d) References

5. Why is a functional résumé important for competitive exam aspirants?

- a) It helps to hide educational qualifications
- b) It emphasizes salary negotiation
- c) It highlights skills over limited work experience
- d) It removes the need for a career objective

B. Answer the following questions in one word, a phrase or a sentence each:

1. Define a functional résumé in one sentence.
2. Name any two groups of skills commonly highlighted in a functional résumé.
3. State one advantage of a functional résumé for candidates with career gaps.
4. Which section in a functional résumé can include projects, awards, or academic achievements?
5. Mention one reason why a functional résumé is suitable for competitive examinations.

C. Answer the following question.

1. Draft a Functional Résumé highlighting your key skills and achievements for appearing in competitive examinations such as UPSC/MPSC, focusing more on competencies rather than job experience.

4.3 Summary

Effective communication and professional presentation tools such as e-mail, CVs, and résumés play a crucial role in showcasing a candidate's suitability. E-mail is important for formal correspondence with commissions, panels, or institutions, as it ensures professionalism, clarity, and proper record-keeping. A CV provides a comprehensive picture of academic achievements, research, and qualifications, which is vital for higher-level academic or international opportunities. A résumé, particularly the chronological type, is widely used in recruitment for government, banking, and administrative posts as it highlights progression and consistency in academics and work experience. Meanwhile, the functional résumé is especially useful for freshers, candidates with career gaps, or diverse experiences, as it emphasizes skills like leadership, communication, and problem-solving over job history. Together, these tools not only reflect a candidate's qualifications but also project a professional image, making them essential for success in competitive examinations and thereby getting jobs.

4.4 Terms to Remember

- Correspondence** : Formal written communication between individuals or organizations, often used in professional or academic contexts.
- Accountability** : The responsibility of being answerable for one's actions or communications, ensuring transparency and reliability.
- Timestamps** : Digital markers that record the exact date and time when an e-mail or document was created, sent, or received.
- Indispensable** : Something absolutely necessary or essential, without which a task or process cannot function effectively.
- Professionalism** : The conduct, behavior, and attitude expected in a professional environment, reflecting competence, respect, and reliability.
- Credentials** : Official qualifications, achievements, or evidence of competence, such as degrees, certifications, or professional recognition.
- Affiliations** : Formal associations or connections with organizations, institutions, or professional bodies, often listed in a CV
- Fellowships** : Special academic or professional positions, grants, or opportunities

usually awarded to individuals for research, teaching, or advanced study.

Distinguish : To set apart or make someone noticeable; a strong résumé helps a candidate stand out from others.

Chronological : Arranged in order of time; in a résumé, it refers to listing experiences from the most recent to the earliest.

Competencies : Specific skills, abilities, or expertise that enable a person to perform tasks effectively; in a résumé, these highlight a candidate's strengths.

4.5 Answers to check your progress

Answers to Check Your Progress 1

A) 1. b) 2. b) 3. c) 4. b) 5. b)

B) 1. E-mail and CV/Resume.

2. Carbon Copy.
3. Provides a written record of communication.
4. Communication with acquaintances, colleagues, or classmates.
5. Be concise and clear.

C. Answer the following:

1. E-mail:

To: secretary@mpsc.gov.in

Subject: Enquiry Regarding Revised Exam Schedule and Eligibility Criteria

Respected Sir/Madam,

I am an aspiring candidate for the upcoming MPSC examination. I request your kind guidance regarding the following points:

1. The revised schedule of the Preliminary and Main examinations for this year.
2. The eligibility criteria, particularly regarding age limit and educational qualifications.
3. Whether any official study material or reference guidance is provided by the Commission.

Your response will help me plan my preparation more effectively.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

2. E-mail:

To: pro@upsc.gov.in

Subject: Enquiry Regarding Age Relaxation and Online Application Guidelines

Respected Sir/Madam,

I am interested in applying for the UPSC Civil Services Examination. I kindly request information on the following:

1. The age relaxation policy for candidates belonging to OBC and SC/ST categories.
2. The maximum number of attempts permitted for candidates under the general and reserved categories.
3. The correct procedure to follow while submitting the online application form.

I shall be grateful if you could provide the necessary details at the earliest.

With regards,

(Your Name)

Answers to Check Your Progress 2

A) 1. b) 2. b) 3. c)4. c) 5. c)

B) 1. Curriculum Vitae.

2. Academic achievements and credentials.
3. Academia, research, fellowships, and international jobs.
4. Full name, address, contact number, email, and optional LinkedIn/website.
5. A CV is detailed and comprehensive, while a résumé is concise and targeted.

C) Answer the following questions:

1. CV for UPSC Interview

Name: Rohan Sharma

Address: 12, Shree Nagar, Pune, Maharashtra – 411001

Email: rohan.sharma@gmail.com

Mobile: +91-9876543210

Career Objective

To contribute meaningfully to public administration and nation-building by utilizing my academic knowledge, leadership abilities, and commitment to social service as a civil servant.

Educational Qualifications

Qualification	Institution	Year	Percentage/ CGPA
M.A. (Political Science)	Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi	2022	8.6 CGPA
B.A. (Economics)	Fergusson College, Pune	2020	74%
HSC (12th)	Maharashtra State Board	2017	82%
SSC (10th)	Maharashtra State Board	2015	88%

Key Skills

- Strong knowledge of Indian Constitution, Governance, and Public Policy
- Leadership and decision-making skills
- Analytical and problem-solving ability
- Proficiency in Marathi, Hindi, and English
- Good communication and drafting skills

Work / Internship Experience

1. Intern – Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi, (June 2021 – September 2021)
2. Assisted in policy analysis for rural employment schemes.
3. Conducted field visits and prepared reports on implementation gaps.
4. Volunteer – NSS (National Service Scheme), Pune, (2018 – 2020)
5. Organized awareness programs on sanitation and literacy.
6. Led a team of 20 volunteers in village adoption project.

Achievements

- Qualified UPSC Civil Services Examination (Prelims & Mains) – 2023
- Awarded University Gold Medal for securing 1st rank in M.A. Political Science.
- Winner of State-level Debate Competition on “Youth in Governance”.

Hobbies and Interests

- Reading biographies of world leaders
- Trekking and nature conservation activities
- Writing articles on social and political issues

References

Name: Mr. Suhas Deshpande (IAS)

Address: District Collector, Sangli

Phone: +91-9845684471

e-Mail: deshsuhas@gmail.com

Answers to Check Your Progress 3

A. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)

1. b) 2. c) 3. d) 4. b) 5. d)

B. Objective Type Questions (One word / phrase / sentence answers)

1. Work experience, education, skills, and achievements.
2. Chronological résumé.
3. To give interview boards a comprehensive overview of the candidate's background.
4. Educational qualifications listed in reverse chronological order.
5. Consistency, progression, and suitability for the role.

C) Chronological Resume

Name: PriyaDeshmukh

Address: 45, Laxmi Nagar, Nagpur, Maharashtra – 440010

Email: priya.deshmukh@email.com

Mobile: +91-9876543210

Career Objective

To serve the nation through efficient governance and dedicated public service by leveraging my academic knowledge, leadership experience, and commitment to social welfare.

Educational Qualifications

1. M.A. (Public Administration) – University of Delhi – 2023 – 8.5 CGPA
2. B.A. (Political Science) – Fergusson College, Pune – 2021 – 76%
3. HSC (12th) – Maharashtra State Board – 2018 – 85%
4. SSC (10th) – Maharashtra State Board – 2016 – 90%

Professional / Work Experience

1. Internship, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, New Delhi (June 2022 – Sept 2022)
2. Assisted in evaluating rural governance programs.
3. Prepared policy briefs on Gram Sabha functioning.
4. Volunteer, National Service Scheme (NSS), Nagpur (2019 – 2021)
5. Led literacy campaigns in rural areas.
6. Organized awareness drives on women empowerment.

Achievements

- Qualified UPSC Civil Services Examination (Prelims – 2023).
- Winner of University Debate Competition on “Role of Youth in Democracy” (2022).
- Awarded Best Volunteer in NSS at State Level (2020).

Skills

- Strong knowledge of Indian Polity, Governance, and Public Administration.
- Proficient in Marathi, Hindi, and English.
- Excellent communication, drafting, and leadership skills.

Hobbies & Interests

- Reading biographies and political literature.
- Trekking and environmental activities.
- Writing articles on governance and social issues.

Answers to Check Your Progress 4

A. 1. c) 2. b) 3. b) 4. c) 5. c)

B. Objective Type Questions

1. A functional résumé is a skills-based résumé that emphasizes a candidate’s abilities, achievements, and competencies rather than their chronological work history.
2. Communication skills and Technical/IT skills.
3. It downplays employment gaps by focusing on skills and competencies instead of timelines.
4. Achievements/Projects section.
5. It allows candidates to highlight core skills like leadership, problem-solving, and teamwork, which are essential for administrative and public service roles.

C. Functional Résumé highlighting skills & achievements for competitive exams

Resume

Name: Riya Sharma

Contact: 9876543210

e-mail: riya.sharma@rediffmail.com

City & State: Pune, Maharashtra

Career Objective

Motivated and disciplined candidate aspiring for civil services. Skilled in analytical thinking, communication, and leadership, with strong academic training and proven ability to adapt and perform under pressure.

Key Skills & Competencies

- **Analytical Skills:** In-depth knowledge of Indian Polity, Economy, and International Relations; skilled in problem analysis and logical reasoning.
- **Communication Skills:** Strong drafting, essay writing, and public speaking abilities; bilingual (English & Hindi).
- **Leadership & Teamwork:** Coordinated peer study groups; mentored juniors in current affairs preparation.
- **Technical Skills:** Proficient in MS Word, Excel, and online research platforms.

Educational Qualifications

1. M.A. Political Science – SavitribaiPhule Pune University – 2022 – 72%
2. B.A. (Economics & Political Science) – Fergusson College – 2020 – 70%
3. HSC (Arts) – Maharashtra Board – 2017 – 82%
4. SSC – Maharashtra Board – 2015 – 86%

Achievements

- Cleared UPSC Prelims in 2023.
- 1st prize in Inter-college Debate Competition on Social Issues.
- Selected for National Essay Writing Competition (2021).

Personal Information

- Date of Birth: 15/07/1999
- Languages: English, Hindi, Marathi
- Hobbies: Reading, Volunteering, Debating

4.6 Exercises

1. You appeared for the MPSC Main Examination but have not received your result notification. Write an e-mail to the MPSC Commission Office enquiring about the declaration date of results and the procedure for checking them online.
2. You have paid the examination fees online for UPSC but the payment confirmation has not been updated on the portal. Write an e-mail to the UPSC Examination Section enquiring about the issue and seeking clarification.
3. You have been allotted an exam centre for the MPSC examination which is far away from your hometown. Write an e-mail to the MPSC Office enquiring whether a change of examination centre is possible.
4. After clearing the UPSC prelims, you have been called for mains. Write an e-mail to the UPSC Commission Office enquiring about the list of documents required for verification and the last date for submission.
5. Prepare a CV for the MPSC State Services Exam interview. Include sections such as academic background, Marathi language proficiency, knowledge of Maharashtra's culture and governance, and relevant achievements that make you fit for state administration.
6. Draft a chronological resume for an MPSC candidate focusing on educational milestones, proficiency in Marathi, participation in state-level competitions, and work or volunteer experiences that show knowledge of Maharashtra's socio-political issues.
7. Some competitive exams (like MPSC/UPSC Engineering Services) consider both academic and professional backgrounds. Draft a chronological resume that highlights recent job experience, technical skills, and academic qualifications in proper order.
8. Write a Functional Résumé for a fresh graduate preparing for competitive examinations, showcasing educational qualifications, skills, and academic achievements instead of professional experience.
9. Prepare a Functional Résumé format suitable for a candidate with a career gap who is now applying for civil services examinations. Emphasize skills like analytical ability, leadership, and communication.

4.7. References for further study

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4. Baron, N. (2000), *Alphabet to E-mail: How Written English Evolved and Where It's Heading*, London: Routledge.
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8. Freeman, J. (2009), *The Tyranny of E-mail: The Four-Thousand Year Journey to Your Inbox*, New York: Scribner.
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