

Wordcraft

28 August 2026

Seven lessons and a glossary of 18 words, every one harvested from the day's articles and editorials on ujiyari.com. A complete forty-five-minute session, on paper and online.

01 **ROOT & FAMILY**
lex, legis

02 **CONFUSABLE PAIR**
enquiry / inquiry

03 **COLLOCATION**
The verbs of the courtroom

04 **FROM THE EDITION**
retrospective

05 **SAY IT SHORTER**
Clearing the throat

06 **USAGE WATCH**
informations · one of the · fewer

07 **IDIOM IN FORMAL REGISTER**
zero-sum

08 **PRACTICE LAB**
listen · say it · cloze · unscramble



Do it online

ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/

A NOTE FROM THE DESK

Ornament loses marks. Precision wins them.

Ornament loses marks. Precision wins them. That is the whole charter of Wordcraft, and it is the opposite of what most vocabulary material teaches. An examiner reading a Mains answer is not impressed by *utilise*, *plethora* or *myriad*; each is a small tax on a reader who has two hundred scripts to get through. What the examiner rewards is the word that is exactly right, the pair that is never swapped, the verb the noun actually takes, and the fifteen words that were cut.

Every pack is harvested from that day's edition on ujiyari.com, the daily articles and the editorials dated that day. You have just read these sentences; now you learn the words in them. Seven lessons a day, always the same seven kinds, so that the section teaches a system rather than a list: a root and its family, a confusable pair, the collocations of governance, one word from the edition shown in place, a padded sentence made short, a usage watch for Indian English that does not travel, and one idiom with the exact conditions under which it is safe.

Give it forty-five minutes. Read the glossary with the sentence, not the word alone. Do the worksheet before you look at the key. Say the words aloud; write the hundred words at the end, because vocabulary that is not produced is not owned. Where British, American and Indian usage differ, the pack says so: the examiner may come from any of the three habits, and a careful writer knows which one the reader holds.

THE ONE RULE

If an entry ever tempts you to write more grandly instead of more clearly, the entry has failed.

**Bharat Choudhary**

UPSC Educator · ujiyari.com

Wordcraft packs are harvested from that day's edition, checked against standard dictionaries, and note where British, American and Indian usage differ.

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HOW TO USE THIS PACK

1 Glossary first, sentence and all.

Read each word in the sentence it came from. Cover the meaning, say it in your own words, then check.

2 Lessons, two minutes each.

Read once, with a pencil. Do the sixty-second drill at the foot of each before moving on.

3 Lab, then worksheet, then key.

Say the words aloud, fill the cloze, rebuild the sentences, answer every item on the page. The key is at the back for a reason.

4 Write the hundred words.

Then tick the checklist honestly. Vocabulary that is not produced is not owned.

Every activity here is interactive online.

Scan any QR code in this pack, or the one here, to open the same item in the 45-minute session: cards fall due by spaced repetition, exercises are marked, the writing task is checked as you type, and words are read aloud in an Indian English voice.

ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/



GLOSSARY FROM THE EDITION

Words in the sentence they came from

18

Meaning first, then the sentence exactly as it appeared, then the source. Read the sentence aloud.

**Hear every word**

Tap a word online to hear it and mark it known
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#glossary

safe in GS answers essay, technical or editorial register keep out of answers

retrospective ADJECTIVE / RET-rə-SPEK-tiv /

GS-SAFE

Looking back; of a law or a rule, taking effect from a date earlier than the date it was made. Latin *retro* "backwards" + *spicere* "to look". Indian statutes say *with retrospective effect from*; American writing usually prefers *retroactive* for the same idea.

हिंदी: भूतलक्षी; पिछली तिथि से प्रभावी

Fix the retrospective anomaly, since extinguishing unpaid dues while retaining collected ones cannot be defended and is the weakest link in the Act.

Do States Lose From the New Mining Law? The MMDR Amendment, 2026 · Today's "from the edition" lesson grows from this word.

negation NOUN / ni-GAY-shən /

GS-SAFE

The act of denying or cancelling something outright. In constitutional argument, a *negation* of a power is stronger than a *limitation* on it: a limitation leaves the power alive within bounds, a negation empties it.

हिंदी: निषेध; किसी बात का पूर्ण खंडन या रद्दीकरण

The contested question is whether a blanket restriction, delegated to executive prescription and applied retrospectively, is a limitation relating to mineral development or a negation of the entry itself.

Do States Lose From the New Mining Law? The MMDR Amendment, 2026 · The limitation/negation contrast is the whole case in two words. Worth memorising as a pair.

discernible ADJECTIVE / di-SUR-nə-bəl /

ESSAY

Able to be perceived or made out, usually with effort. From Latin *discernere*, to separate, the root also behind *discern* and *discernment*. Spelt *-ible*, not *-able*; *discernable* is a recorded variant that careful editors still reject.

हिंदी: जो स्पष्ट रूप से पहचाना जा सके; दृष्टिगोचर

Compliance is penalised and non-compliance rewarded, on no discernible rational basis.

Do States Lose From the New Mining Law? The MMDR Amendment, 2026

legitimacy NOUN / li-JIT-i-mə-see /

GS-SAFE

The quality of being accepted as rightful. Distinguish it from *legality*: an act can be legal (permitted by the letter of the law) and still lack legitimacy (acceptance as rightful by those it binds). Both descend from Latin *lex*, *legis*.

हिंदी: वैधता; स्वीकार्य और उचित माने जाने का गुण

Strengthen the Delimitation Commission's consultative process, since its orders are immune from judicial review and legitimacy must therefore come from the process itself.

Why 543 Should Remain 543: Delimitation Without Enlargement · Today's root lesson is built on the family this word belongs to.

zero-sum ADJECTIVE / ZEER-oh-SUM /

GS-SAFE

Of a situation in which one side's gain is exactly another side's loss, so the gains and losses sum to zero. A term of art from game theory, standard since von Neumann and Morgenstern's *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* (1944). Its opposite is *positive-sum*.

हिंदी: शून्य-योग; जहाँ एक पक्ष का लाभ ठीक उतना ही दूसरे का नुकसान हो

Redistribution within a fixed total is zero-sum, and a state's share can still fall.

Why 543 Should Remain 543: Delimitation Without Enlargement · Today's idiom lesson turns on why this one is always safe in an answer.

enquiry NOUN / ɪn-KWY-ree /

GS-SAFE

An act of asking, or a formal investigation. British and Indian convention keeps *enquiry* for asking and *inquiry* for a formal investigation, a distinction observed unevenly; American English uses *inquiry* for both. Indian statute fixes the spelling where it names the thing: the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952.

हिंदी: जाँच; पूछताछ

Whether it holds in practice depends on the availability of trained social workers at every magistracy and on magistrates treating the enquiry as substantive rather than formal.

A Victim-Centric Shift: The Prajwala Judgment on Sex Trafficking · Today's confusable pair. Both spellings appear in the edition, each defensible.

cognizance NOUN / KOG-ni-zəns /

GS-SAFE

Judicial notice of a matter: the point at which a court or commission takes a case on to its own file and begins to act. The fixed Indian phrases are *take cognizance* and *take suo motu cognizance*. Also spelt *cognisance* in British prose; Indian statutes and courts use the -z-form.

हिंदी: संज्ञान; किसी मामले पर विचार आरंभ करना

the National Human Rights Commission took suo motu cognizance of reports of 60 newborn deaths at Malda Medical College and Hospital, West Bengal, issuing notice to the Chief Secretary with a two-week reporting deadline.

Current Affairs Today, August 28, 2026 · Cognizance is taken, never given. Today's collocation lesson collects the rest of these.

impersonation NOUN / ɪm-PUR-sə-NAY-shən /

GS-SAFE

Pretending to be another person, usually to obtain something that belongs to them. In law it is a specific ground of challenge, alongside fraud and corruption. Distinguish *personation*, the older statutory term still used in election law.

हिंदी: किसी अन्य व्यक्ति का प्रतिरूपण; झूठी पहचान बताना

a mediated settlement agreement under the 2023 Act may be challenged on limited grounds such as fraud, corruption or impersonation.

Mediation Council of India Notified Three Years After the Act That Created It

accreditation NOUN / ə-KRED-i-TAY-shən /

GS-SAFE

Formal recognition that a person or institution meets a published standard. From Latin *credere*, to believe, the root also behind *credential* and *credible*. A regulator *grants* or *withdraws* accreditation; it does not "give" it.

हिंदी: प्रत्यायन; औपचारिक मान्यता प्रदान करना

The mediator's training and ethics are the only safeguard, which is exactly why the accreditation function that has been dormant for three years matters so much.

Mediation Council of India Notified Three Years After the Act That Created It

dormant ADJECTIVE / DOR-mənt /

GS-SAFE

Inactive but capable of becoming active again. From Latin *dormire*, to sleep, the root behind *dormitory*. A dormant account, a dormant volcano and a dormant statutory body all still exist; they are simply not working.

हिंदी: निष्क्रिय; सुप्त अवस्था में

The standard criticism of PMJDY has been that it produced zero-balance accounts: an impressive count concealing dormant accounts opened to meet targets.

Jan Dhan at Twelve: 59.09 Crore Accounts, and the Constraint Shifts From Access to Depth · Not a synonym for defunct, which means it has ceased to exist or function for good.

deleveraging NOUN / dee-LEV-ə-rij-ing /

ESSAY

Reducing debt, typically by repaying borrowings rather than raising new ones. *Leverage* is the use of borrowed money to enlarge a return; de-leveraging unwinds it. British and Indian speakers say LEE-və-rij, Americans LEV-ə-rij; both are correct.

हिंदी: ऋण-भार में कमी; कर्ज चुकाकर उधारी घटाना

Deleveraging, dividends and buybacks absorbed the improvement instead.

IIP Grows 6.7 Per Cent With Mining in Contraction, as RBI Data Shows Corporate Sales Up 19.4 Per Cent

authorisation NOUN / AW-thə-ry-ZAY-shən /

GS-SAFE

Official permission to do a thing, or the document conferring it. British and Indian English prefer *authorisation*, American English *authorization*; Oxford house style uses the -z- form in Britain too. Pick one and hold it through an answer.

हिंदी: प्राधिकार; औपचारिक अनुमति

An Open General Export Licence is a standing, one-time authorisation that permits an eligible exporter to self-generate authorisations for multiple consignments, within defined limits, without seeking approval for each shipment.

Defence Export Rules Rewritten: OGEL Extended From 41 Countries to Nearly All · Note Licence in the name: British and Indian English spell the noun with a c, the verb license with an s.

untouchable ADJECTIVE / un-TUCH-ə-bəl /

GS-SAFE

Historically, of a person excluded from contact by caste rule. Use it only as a historical description of what a system did, never as a description of a person today. Article 17 abolishes *untouchability* and makes its practice an offence; the constitutional term for the communities concerned is *Scheduled Castes*.

हिंदी: अस्पृश्य (ऐतिहासिक शब्द); छुआछूत का शिकार

Ayyankali was born into the Pulayar community, then classified as untouchable in Travancore and subject to a comprehensive régime of disability: prohibition from using public roads, from entering markets and schools, from wearing certain clothing, and from approaching caste Hindus within a prescribed distance.

Mahatma Ayyankali at 163: The Man Who Told Landlords Weeds Would Grow in Their Fields · Register matters more than meaning here: classified as untouchable names a practice, and that is the safe construction.

spoliation NOUN / SP0H-lee-AY-shən /

ESSAY

The act of plundering or despoiling; ruinous destruction of something valuable. From Latin *spoliare*, to strip of spoils. Formal and heavy; it carries moral weight that *degradation* does not, so use it where the writer means blame.

हिंदी: लूट-खसोट; योजनाबद्ध विनाश और दोहन

It is that he has watched relentless spoliation of a majestic but fragile mountain zone, in which accelerated melting from global warming has been compounded by indiscriminate ecological degradation, and that persistent and alarming warning signs have been met with continued extraction and construction.

The Mountains Are Warning Us: Shyam Saran on Himalayan Fragility

counterproductive ADJECTIVE

/ KOWN-ter-prə-DUK-tiv /

GS-SAFE

Having the opposite of the intended effect. Not merely useless: a counterproductive measure sets the goal back. Written solid in British, American and Indian English; *counter-productive* with a hyphen is an older form still seen.

हिंदी: उल्टा असर करने वाला; अपने ही उद्देश्य को नुकसान पहुँचाने वाला

The editorial makes an argument that deserves attention rather than reflex disagreement: an inaccurate warning can be counterproductive, because it triggers panic among residents who, through habit or through lack of alternatives, will not move out of harm's way.

Danger From Above: What the Nepal Flood Says About Himalayan Risk

irreplaceable ADJECTIVE / ir-i-PLAY-sə-bəl /

GS-SAFE

That cannot be replaced once lost. Spelling trap: two *rs* at the front (*ir-* before *r*) and the *e* of *place* is kept before *-able*, as in *manageable* and *noticeable*, to hold the soft *c*.

हिंदी: अपूरणीय; जिसका कोई विकल्प संभव नहीं

Give the remaining primary forest patches a distinct legal category with a higher protection standard, since Katilekan-type tracts are irreplaceable on any human timescale.

The Dark Forest of Katilekan: Why the Western Ghats Still Matter

endemic ADJECTIVE / NOUN / en-DEM-ik /

GS-SAFE

Native to, and found only in, one defined area. Of a species, restricted to that range; of a disease, constantly present in a population. Keep it apart from *epidemic* (a sharp rise in cases) and *pandemic* (an epidemic across countries). As a noun, an *endemic* is such a species.

हिंदी: स्थानिक; किसी एक क्षेत्र तक सीमित (प्रजाति या रोग)

They are rich in narrow-range endemics: species whose entire global distribution may be a few valleys or a single hill range.

The Dark Forest of Katilekan: Why the Western Ghats Still Matter · Greek en "in" + demos "people", the same demos as in democracy and demography.

compartmentation NOUN

/ kom-PART-men-TAY-shən /

ESSAY

In fire-safety engineering, dividing a building into sealed compartments so that fire and smoke cannot spread beyond one of them. Technical, and distinct from *compartmentalisation*, which is the general act of keeping things in separate mental or organisational boxes.

हिंदी: अग्नि-रोधी खंडों में विभाजन (भवन सुरक्षा)

Fire-safety design accordingly prioritises compartmentation and smoke management over suppression speed.

New-Age Fires: Why ICU Blazes Need a Category of Their Own · Use the technical word only where the technical sense is wanted; otherwise compartmentalisation.

01

LESSON 1 OF 7 · ROOT & FAMILY

lex, legis

Latin · law, the law



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#lesson-root

Today's edition is a legal edition: a Regulation with the force of an Act, a nine-judge Bench, a statutory Council notified three years late. One Latin noun sits under most of its vocabulary. *Lex* (genitive *legis*) meant a law as enacted, and every descendant keeps the idea of a rule laid down and binding.

WORD	LITERAL BUILD	WHAT IT DOES
legal	bare root, <i>legalis</i>	belonging to the law: a legal category
legislate	<i>lex</i> + <i>latum</i> "carried"	to carry a law into being; hence legislation, legislature, legislator
legitimate	<i>legitimus</i> "lawful"	conforming to law or accepted rule; hence legitimacy
delegate	<i>de</i> "down" + <i>legare</i> "to depute"	to hand a power downward under law
privilege	<i>privus</i> "private" + <i>lex</i>	a law for one person or class alone
legacy	<i>legare</i> "to bequeath by will"	what law hands on after a death
colleague	<i>com</i> "with" + <i>legare</i>	one deputed alongside you
loyal	Old French <i>leial</i> , from <i>legalis</i>	faithful to what law and duty require

THE TRAP IN THE FAMILY

Legible, legend, lecture, elect, select, collect, intellect look like relatives and are not. They come from *legere*, "to read, to gather, to choose". So a judge *delegates* (from *legare*, law) but an electorate *elects* (from *legere*, choose). Same three letters, two different Latin verbs.

THE OTHER LATIN LAW-WORD

Latin had a second word for law, *ius* (genitive *iuris*), meaning right or law as a system. It gives justice, jurisdiction, jurisprudence, jurist, judiciary and *de jure*. Rough division of labour: *lex* words are about the enacted rule (legislation, legality), *ius* words about the system that applies it (judiciary, jurisdiction). An answer that keeps the two straight reads as legally literate.

LEGAL VERSUS LEGITIMATE

Two members of the same family that are not synonyms. *Legal* means permitted by the letter of the law. *Legitimate* means accepted as rightful by those it binds. A government may act legally and still lose legitimacy, which is exactly the argument today's delimitation editorial makes about a decision pushed through on a narrow majority.

SPELLING ACROSS VARIETIES

Legalise, legitimise in British and Indian English; *legalize, legitimize* in American English and in Oxford house style. Both are correct. Inconsistency within one answer is what reads as careless.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Write one sentence in which something is *legal* but not *legitimate*. If you can do it in twenty words, you own the distinction that most answers blur.

Harvested from the day's legal spine: "There is no Ladakh legislature to legislate", the delegated power argued over in the MMDR editorial, and *legitimacy* in "Why 543 Should Remain 543". The rest of the family is added from the root, not from the edition.

02

LESSON 2 OF 7 · CONFUSABLE PAIR

enquiry / inquiry



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#lesson-pair

enquiry

Old French *enquerre*, from Latin *inquirere*

Convention: the act of asking a question. A *threshold enquiry* by a magistrate.

Verb: *enquire*. Common in British and Indian usage; almost unused in American writing.

inquiry

Latin *inquirere*, "to seek into"

Convention: a formal investigation. *Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952*.

Verb: *inquire*. Standard in American English for both senses, and increasingly in British English too.

THE HONEST POSITION

This is a **convention, not a rule**. Both spellings are correct English and both descend from the same Latin verb; the ask/investigate division is observed unevenly even by careful British writers. What is not optional is a proper name: when a statute or a body fixes the spelling, you copy it. *Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952* takes an *i* every time, and today's edition keeps both alive in the same day without error: a magistrate's threshold *enquiry* in one piece, "one *inquiry's* finding" in another.

THE FAMILY FROM QUAERERE, "TO SEEK"

WORD	WHAT IT SEEKS
inquest	a judicial inquiry into a death
inquisitive	eager to seek out; of a person, curious
inquisitorial	of a legal system in which the judge investigates, as in France; contrast the <i>adversarial</i> system India inherited
query	a single question put for an answer
quest, request, acquire, require	the same root, worn down by French

WHERE THE EXAM MEETS IT

Four fixed phrases worth holding exactly: a *Commission of Inquiry* under the 1952 Act; a *magisterial enquiry* or *magisterial inquiry* into a custodial death; a *departmental enquiry* in service law; an *inquest* under the criminal procedure code. Only the first is spelt for you by statute.

ACROSS VARIETIES

British and Indian English: both spellings live, with the convention above. American English: *inquiry* and *inquire* throughout, and *enquiry* looks like a mistake. Australian usage follows the British pattern. Whichever you choose, hold it through the answer.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Write two sentences: a citizen making an enquiry at a counter, and a Commission of Inquiry reporting. If the second one made you reach for the *i*, the convention has landed.

Both spellings appear in today's edition, each used correctly: the magistrate's **threshold enquiry** in the Prajwala editorial, and "no institutional mechanism converts the finding of one inquiry into a binding requirement everywhere else" in the ICU fires editorial.

LESSON 3 OF 7 · COLLOCATION

03

The verbs of the courtroom



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards that return by spaced repetition
 ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#lesson-collocation

Court reporting has its own strict pairings, and they are not decoration: each verb names a distinct procedural act. "The Court cancelled the law" and "the judge announced the verdict" are the sentences that mark an answer as written from newspapers rather than from the law.

NOUN	TAKES	NEVER
cognizance	is taken , including suo motu	given , accepted
a petition	is filed , moved , listed , admitted , allowed , dismissed , withdrawn	passed , won
a notice	is issued , then served , then replied to	sent , in legal writing
a judgment	is delivered , pronounced , reserved , upheld , set aside , overruled	cancelled , rejected
an order	is passed , issued , stayed , complied with	given
a statute or provision	is struck down , read down , upheld	cancelled , banned
a bench	is constituted ; a matter is referred to a larger bench	elected , appointed
an award or settlement	is made , enforced , challenged , set aside	appealed (you appeal <i>against</i> it)
directions	are issued ; guidelines are laid down	ordered

JUDGMENT, NOT VERDICT

A **verdict** is a jury's **finding of fact**. India abolished jury trials in the 1960s and the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 made no provision for them, so an Indian judge delivers a *judgment* and records a *conviction* or an *acquittal*. "The Supreme Court announced its verdict" is a headline habit, not legal English.

THREE WAYS A COURT CAN TREAT A BAD LAW

TECHNIQUE	WHAT HAPPENS TO THE PROVISION
struck down	declared void; it ceases to operate
read down	survives, but is given the narrower meaning that keeps it constitutional
read into	survives, with words the court supplies to cure the defect

And three ways a decision dies: an order is *quashed*, a judgment is *set aside* on appeal, a precedent is *overruled* by a larger bench. Three verbs, three different courts doing three different things.

THE LATIN THAT STAYS LATIN

Suo motu ("on its own motion") is the standard Indian form, and the spelling *suo moto* is a common error, since the ablative of *motus* is *motu*. Keep also *prima facie*, *sub judice*, *ratio decidendi* and *obiter dicta*: all four are unitalicised in Indian legal prose and all four are examinable.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

One sentence each for *struck down* and *read down*, using any provision you know. The pair is worth a mark on its own in any GS2 answer on judicial review.

Every verb in the "takes" column was used in today's edition: the NHRC *took suo motu cognizance* and *issued notice (roundup)*, a nine-judge *Bench held* (MMDR), Ladakh was *constituted* a Union Territory (**Article 240**), a settlement agreement is *enforceable* and may be *challenged* (Mediation Council), the Supreme Court has *issued directions* on hospital fire audits (ICU fires).

LESSON 4 OF 7 · FROM THE EDITION

04

retrospective

/ RET-rə-SPEK-tiv /



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#lesson-edition

Found in situ in today's mining editorial, in a recommendation: "Fix the **retrospective** anomaly, since extinguishing unpaid dues while retaining collected ones cannot be defended." Latin *retro* "backwards" + *spicere* "to look". A law is retrospective when it reaches back and changes the legal effect of things already done.

THREE WORDS, THREE TIME DIRECTIONS

WORD	REACHES	TYPICAL USE
prospective	forward only	<i>the amendment applies prospectively</i>
retrospective	back to earlier facts	<i>with retrospective effect from 1 April</i>
retroactive	the same idea, American register	<i>a retroactive tax</i>

THE CONSTITUTIONAL LINE

Article 20(1) forbids conviction for an act that was not an offence when it was done, and forbids a penalty greater than the one in force then. So **retrospective criminal law is barred outright**. Civil and tax legislation is different: it may operate retrospectively, but only if the statute says so expressly or by necessary implication, and the courts read such provisions strictly. That single distinction, criminal versus civil, answers most questions in this area.

REMOVING THE BASIS, NOT ANNULLING THE JUDGMENT

The related idea in today's editorial is the *validating Act*. A legislature may retrospectively cure the defect a court found and thereby change the legal basis on which a judgment rested. What it may not do is simply declare the judgment ineffective, because that is an exercise of judicial power. *Removing the basis* is legislation; *annulling the judgment* is not.

NEAR-NEIGHBOURS TO KEEP APART

WORD	MEANS
retrospective	looking back, and operating backwards in time
retrospection	the act of reviewing one's own past
retrograde	moving backwards, and usually to a worse state
retroactive	the American term for retrospective effect

A SECOND, HARMLESS SENSE

Outside law, *a retrospective* is a noun: an exhibition or a survey covering an artist's whole career. Nothing pejorative attaches to it. Keep the two senses apart and the word is safe in any register.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Write the pair: one sentence with *prospective*, one with *retrospective*, both about the same amendment. The contrast is the lesson.

Harvested from "Do States Lose From the New Mining Law?", where the whole dispute is about a restriction applied backwards in time, and where the editorial names *retrospective validation* among its Mains keywords.

05

LESSON 5 OF 7 · SAY IT SHORTER

Clearing the throat



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#lesson-concision

The second great inflation in aspirant prose, after the zombie noun, is the **throat-clearing opener**: a run of words that announces you are about to say something instead of saying it. It costs nothing to write and eight to twelve words of your limit every time. The examples below are constructed in the register of exam answers; they are not quotations from today's edition.

BEFORE · 27 WORDS

~~It is important to note at the outset that there are~~ a number of factors ~~which are responsible for~~ the recurrence of hospital fires, ~~the most important of which is the fact that~~ no mechanism makes one finding binding elsewhere.

AFTER · 14 WORDS

Hospital fires recur mainly because no mechanism makes one inquiry's finding binding elsewhere.
Same claim, sharper. Thirteen words returned, and the sentence now has a subject doing something.

THE OPENERS TO DELETE ON SIGHT

THROAT-CLEARING	REPLACE WITH
It is important to note that	nothing: start with the point
It may be mentioned here that	nothing
In this regard, it is pertinent to state that	nothing
Needless to say / It goes without saying	nothing, and then do not say it
There are several factors which are responsible for X	X happens because ...
It is the case that / It is a fact that	nothing
When it comes to the question of X	On X

THE TWO EMPTY SUBJECTS

There is / There are and It is ... that put a placeholder where the actor should stand. "There are three reasons why the Council was delayed" becomes "The Council was delayed for three reasons", and the sentence gains an actor and loses two words. Use the empty subject only when the real subject genuinely arrives late for emphasis.

THE DOUBLET TRAP

Legal drafting is full of pairs: *null and void*, *full and final*, *terms and conditions*, *aid and advice*. In statute they are deliberate, a survival of Anglo-Norman drafting that paired a French word with an English one so that both audiences understood. In your answer they are padding, and so are their imitators: *each and every*, *first and foremost*, *various different*, *past history*, *future plans*. Quote a statutory doublet; never invent one.

SPELLING ACROSS VARIETIES

Brevity has no national variant, but its vocabulary does: British and Indian writing prefers *amongst*, *whilst*, *towards*; American prefers *among*, *while*, *toward*. The shorter form is never wrong in either, so when in

doubt, take it.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Deflate this: "It is important to note that there are a number of factors which are responsible for the delay in constituting the Council." Target: eight words.

Prompted by the day's heaviest sentences, which the harvest found in the [skilling editorial](#) and the [MMDR editorial](#): the first carries "the fact that", and both stack abstract nouns four and six deep. The rewrites above are constructed, not quoted.

LESSON 6 OF 7 · USAGE WATCH

06

informations · one of
the · fewer

Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#lesson-usage

Three slips that cluster around one idea: what English treats as countable. All three are common in Indian professional writing and all three are grammar rather than variety, so they cost credibility with any reader. Indian English itself is a legitimate variety: *lakh*, *crore* and *prepone* are not errors. These are.

WATCH	THE SLIP	THE REPAIR
uncountable nouns	"The Council sought further informations and equipments." <i>Information, equipment, furniture, advice, evidence, machinery, luggage</i> take no plural.	"further information and equipment", or count the containers: <i>two pieces of equipment, three items of information</i> .
one of the	"This is one of the reason for the delay." <i>One of</i> selects from a group, so the group must be plural.	"one of the reasons". And the verb agrees with <i>one</i> : "One of the members <i>has</i> resigned."
fewer / less / lesser	"Lesser accounts were opened this year." <i>Lesser</i> means smaller in importance, not smaller in number.	"Fewer accounts" (countable), "less credit" (mass), "the lesser of two evils" (importance).

THREE MORE FROM THE SAME FAMILY

SLIP	REPAIR	WHY
a large amount of accounts	a large number of accounts	<i>amount</i> is for mass, <i>number</i> for things you can count
many furniture	much furniture, or many items of furniture	<i>many</i> counts, <i>much</i> measures
staffs, peoples	staff, people	both are already plural in the ordinary sense; <i>peoples</i> exists only for nations

THE PRINCIPLE UNDERNEATH

English divides nouns into things you count and stuff you measure, and the division is arbitrary: *evidence* is stuff, *facts* are things; *advice* is stuff, *suggestions* are things. Hindi and most Indian languages do not draw the line in the same place, which is exactly why the slip is so consistent. When unsure, try putting "two" in front of the bare noun. If "two informations" sounds wrong, the noun is uncountable, and it needs *much*, *less* or *a piece of*.

WHAT TODAY'S EDITION DID RIGHT

The day's prose keeps the count/mass line correctly on both sides: the mining editorial writes of *amounts already collected*, which is money and therefore mass, and the roundup writes "the second *number* worth holding", which is a count of connections. Neither is a slip, and the contrast between them is the rule in action.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Write two sentences about the same scheme, one with *fewer* and one with *less*. If you had to change the noun to do it, you have understood why.

The harvest found no usage slip in the day's own prose, a clean edition. Today's entry therefore draws on the standing watch list, anchored to the correct count and mass usage in the MMDR editorial and the roundup.

07

LESSON 7 OF 7 · IDIOM IN FORMAL REGISTER

zero-sum



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#lesson-idiom

From game theory: in a zero-sum game, one player's gain is exactly another's loss, so the payoffs sum to zero. The term is standard since von Neumann and Morgenstern's *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* (1944). Today's delimitation editorial uses it precisely: "Redistribution within a fixed total is **zero-sum**, and a state's share can still fall."

WHY THIS ONE IS ALWAYS SAFE

Because it stopped being a figure of speech and became a **term of art**: it names a structural property of a situation, and it is falsifiable. If the total can grow, the situation is not zero-sum, and saying so is an analytical claim, not a flourish. The same is true of *moral hazard*, *path dependence*, *collective action problem* and *opportunity cost*. Terms of art are unlimited in an answer; picture idioms are rationed.

THE OTHER IDIOM IN TODAY'S EDITION, AND HOW IT WAS HANDLED

The ICU fires editorial reaches for the tireddest phrase in Indian public writing, *a wake-up call*, and then does the one thing that redeems it: uses it in the negative. Over fifteen years of ICU fires, it says, have **not** served as a wake-up call. The cliché is quoted in order to be denied, which is the only construction in which a dead metaphor still does work. Do not reuse it straight.

FORMAL SIBLINGS

IDIOM	ONE STEP MORE FORMAL
zero-sum	a fixed total: one party's gain is another's loss
a wake-up call	a warning that should have changed practice
low-hanging fruit	the gains available at least cost
a double-edged sword	a measure with offsetting costs
the elephant in the room	the central issue nobody addresses
move the needle	produce a measurable change

THE REGISTER RULE FOR ALL IDIOM

One picture idiom per answer at most, only where it compresses an idea, never in the introduction, never two in a row. Essays tolerate a little more; GS answers a little less; précis and reports, none. Terms of art are exempt, because they are not decoration.

DOES IT TRAVEL?

Zero-sum travels everywhere: British, American, Indian and academic English all use it identically, and it needs no cultural knowledge to decode. That is the third test a safe idiom passes, alongside being common in broadsheet prose and doing analytical work.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Rewrite "Redistribution within a fixed total is zero-sum" twice: once with the formal sibling, once with no figure at all. Feel what each version gains and loses.

Harvested from "Why 543 Should Remain 543: Delimitation Without Enlargement", with a *wake-up call* from "New-Age Fires", where it appears inside a denial rather than a claim.

PRACTICE LAB

Listen, say it, read it, build it

08

The same four activities as the online lab, on paper. Online, the words are read aloud and the microphone checks your pronunciation.

**Open the lab online**

Dictation with audio, mic-checked pronunciation, marked cloze
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#station-lab

SPEAKING

Say it aloud

Read the stress pattern, say each word three times, then use it in a sentence of your own. Tick when it comes out cleanly.

1. ☐ **authorisation** / AW-thə-ry-ZAY-shən /
2. ☐ **untouchable** / un-TUCH-ə-bəl /
3. ☐ **spoliation** / SPŌH-lee-AY-shən /
4. ☐ **enquiry** / in-KWY-ree /
5. ☐ **negation** / ni-GAY-shən /

READING

Cloze

Each sentence is from the edition with one word removed. Write it from context; the first letter is given.

1. Fix the **r**_____ anomaly, since extinguishing unpaid dues while retaining collected ones cannot be defended and is the weakest link in the Act. (60)
2. Whether it holds in practice depends on the availability of trained social workers at every magistracy and on magistrates treating the **e**_____ as substantive rather than formal. (61)
3. a mediated settlement agreement under the 2023 Act may be challenged on limited grounds such as fraud, corruption or **i**_____. (62)
4. Fire-safety design accordingly prioritises **c**_____ and smoke management over suppression speed. (63)
5. Ayyankali was born into the Pulayar community, then classified as **u**_____ in Travancore and subject to a comprehensive régime of disability: prohibition from using public roads, from entering markets and schools, from wearing certain clothing, and from approaching caste Hindus within a prescribed distance. (64)

SENTENCE BUILDING

Unscramble

Rebuild each model sentence. Punctuation stays with its word.

1. is the This delay. one for
reasons the of

(65)

2. The the petitioner a Court.
High in petition filed writ

(66)

3. to applies levy retrospectively
completed transactions. The

(67)

4. of Commission pieces advice has
The to two State. the issued

(68)

LISTENING

Dictation

Ask someone to read you the five words in the key (numbers 69 to 73), word then sentence. Write each word here. Alone? Scan the code above and the pack reads them to you.

1. (69)

2. (70)

3. (71)

4. (72)

5. (73)

WORKSHEET

Every exercise, on paper

Answer on the page; the key follows. Online, the drill marks each answer and brings back what you missed.

59



Do the drill online

Marked as you go, weighted to your misses
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#station-drill

01 · Root & family · lex, legis

8 items

1 Pair each word with its literal build. MATCH

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------|
| • privilege | • a private law, for one person alone |
| • legislate | • to carry a law into being |
| • delegate | • one deputed alongside you |
| • legacy | • to depute a power downward |
| • colleague | • faithful to what law requires |
| • loyal | • what is bequeathed by will |

2 Which word does NOT come from lex, legis? CHOOSE

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a) legible | c) legitimacy |
| b) legislature | d) privilege |

3 The order was ___, but the process that produced it cost the Commission its authority. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| a) legal | c) legislative |
| b) legitimate | d) legible |

4 Article 105 protects the ___ of Members of Parliament: rules that apply to them and to nobody else. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| a) privileges | c) prerogatives |
| b) legacies | d) immunities |

5 Which set belongs to ius, iuris rather than to lex, legis? CHOOSE

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| a) jurisdiction, jurisprudence, judiciary | c) delegate, legacy, colleague |
| b) legislature, legality, legalise | d) privilege, legitimate, loyal |

6 Tap the wrong word. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

The Governor legislated the Bill to the select committee.

7 A Union Territory without a ___ cannot pass its own Acts. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| a) legislature | c) legislator |
| b) legislation | d) legality |

8 Where does "loyal" come from? CHOOSE

- | | |
|--|---------------------------|
| a) Latin legalis, through Old French leial | c) Old Norse laga, to lie |
| b) Latin ludus, a game | d) Greek logos, word |

02 · Confusable pair · enquiry / inquiry

8 items

- 9 The Government appointed a Commission of ___ under the 1952 Act. FILL THE BLANK
 a) Inquiry b) Enquiry
- 10 She made a brief ___ at the reception desk about the hearing date. FILL THE BLANK
 a) enquiry b) inquest
- 11 A judicial ___ into the cause of a death is called an inquest. FILL THE BLANK
 a) inquiry b) inquisition
- 12 Which statement is true? CHOOSE
 a) Both spellings are correct English from the same Latin verb
 b) Enquiry is an Indian error for inquiry
 c) Inquiry is an American error for enquiry
 d) The two words have unrelated roots
- 13 India's criminal justice system is described as: CHOOSE
 a) adversarial
 b) inquisitorial
 c) inquisitive
 d) interrogative
- 14 Tap the word to change. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
The Commissions of Enquiry Act, 1952 governs such bodies.

- 15 Pair each word with what it seeks. MATCH
- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| • inquest | • to know, out of curiosity |
| • query | • an answer to one question |
| • inquisitive | • the cause of a death |
| • request | • a thing asked for |
| • require | • a thing demanded as necessary |
- 16 You are writing for an American journal. Which do you use? CHOOSE
 a) inquiry throughout
 b) enquiry throughout
 c) enquiry for asking, inquiry for investigating
 d) either, at random

03 · Collocation · The verbs of the courtroom

10 items

- 17 The Commission ___ suo motu cognizance of the newspaper report. FILL THE BLANK
 a) took
 b) gave
 c) passed
 d) issued
- 18 The High Court ___ the provision as unconstitutional. FILL THE BLANK
 a) struck down
 b) cancelled
 c) banned
 d) rejected
- 19 Judgment was ___ on 12 August after four days of argument. FILL THE BLANK
 a) reserved
 b) kept
 c) held back
 d) postponed

- 30 A validating Act may lawfully: CHOOSE
- a) remove retrospectively the basis on which a judgment rested
b) declare the judgment ineffective
c) direct the court to decide again
d) reverse the finding of fact
- 31 Tap the wrong word. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
- The gallery opened a retrograde of her forty years in sculpture.*
- 32 Say it in seven words or fewer. REWRITE
- The levy will apply to transactions that were completed before the amendment was ever enacted.*
- 33 Which pronunciation is right? CHOOSE
- a) RET-rə-SPEK-tiv
b) ri-TROS-pek-tiv
c) ree-troh-SPEE-tiv
d) RET-roh-spekt-EEV

05 · Say it shorter · Clearing the throat

8 items

- 34 Deflate to eight words or fewer. REWRITE
- It is important to note that there are a number of factors which are responsible for the delay in constituting the Council.*
- 35 Deflate to ten words or fewer. REWRITE
- It may be mentioned here that in the case of hospital fires the loss of life is primarily on account of smoke rather than flame.*
- 36 Deflate to ten words or fewer. REWRITE
- There are several reasons which explain why the scheme has not been able to achieve the objective of financial depth.*
- 37 Tap the throat-clearing. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
- It is important to note that the Council was notified three years late.*

38 Tap the padding. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

Each and every accredited mediator must complete the training.

39 Replace each opener. MATCH

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| • It is important to note that | • delete |
| • There are several factors responsible for X | • delete |
| • When it comes to the question of X | • On X |
| • It is a fact that | • delete: start with the point |
| • In this regard, it is pertinent to state that | • X happens because ... |

40 When is "There are ..." the right choice? CHOOSE

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| a) when the real subject arrives late for deliberate emphasis | c) when you are listing things |
| b) when the answer must sound formal | d) never |

41 Why is "null and void" acceptable in a statute but not in your answer? CHOOSE

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| a) in statute it is a deliberate Anglo-Norman doublet; in an answer it is padding | c) because it is Latin |
| b) because statutes may be longer | d) because courts require it |

06 · Usage watch · informations · one of the · fewer

10 items

42 Tap the slip. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

The Council sought further informations from the Ministry.

43 Tap the slip. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

This is one of the reason for the delay.

44 Tap the slip. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

Lesser accounts were opened in the second year.

45 A large ___ of accounts remain dormant. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| a) number | c) quantity |
| b) amount | d) deal |

46 One of the members ___ resigned from the Council. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| a) has | c) are |
| b) have | d) were |

47 The scheme reached more households with ___ paperwork than its predecessor. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| a) less | c) lesser |
| b) fewer | d) few |

48 Tap the slip. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

The hospital has purchased many furniture this year.

49 "Prepone" is: CHOOSE

- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| a) an Indian coinage recorded in the OED | c) an Americanism |
| b) a grammatical error | d) a Latin borrowing |

50 Tap the slip. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

The Commission has issued two advices to the State.

51 Which noun is uncountable in standard English? CHOOSE

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| a) evidence | c) suggestion |
| b) fact | d) document |

07 · Idiom in formal register · zero-sum

8 items

52 A situation is zero-sum when: CHOOSE

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| a) one party's gain is exactly another's loss | c) both parties lose |
| b) nobody gains anything | d) the outcome is uncertain |

53 Why may zero-sum be used freely where "the ball is in their court" may not? CHOOSE

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| a) it is a term of art naming a structural property | c) it comes from economics |
| b) it is shorter | d) it is more recent |

54 Pair each idiom with its formal sibling. MATCH

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • zero-sum • a wake-up call • low-hanging fruit • a double-edged sword • the elephant in the room • move the needle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce a measurable change • the gains available at least cost • a measure with offsetting costs • a warning that should have changed practice • the central issue nobody addresses • a fixed total: one gain is another's loss |
|--|---|

55 If the total can grow, the situation is ___, not zero-sum. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| a) positive-sum | c) non-linear |
| b) negative-sum | d) indeterminate |

56 Which is NOT a term of art? CHOOSE

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| a) the elephant in the room | c) opportunity cost |
| b) moral hazard | d) path dependence |

57 Where must a picture idiom never appear? CHOOSE

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| a) in the introduction | c) in an example |
| b) in the body | d) in the conclusion |

- 58 Rewrite with no figure of speech at all. REWRITE

Delimitation within a fixed House is zero-sum.

- 59 Two idioms in a row. Tap the one to cut. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

The report was a wake-up call that finally moved the needle.

ANSWER KEY

Key

With the reason behind every answer

Read the reason even when you were right; it carries the rule.

Root & family

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 privilege: a private law, for one person alone; legislate: to carry a law into being; delegate: to depute a power downward; legacy: what is bequeathed by will; colleague: one deputed alongside you; loyal: faithful to what law requires. Every one of them is a rule laid down: a law for one person, a law carried into being, a power deputed under law. The build is the meaning.</p> <p>2 a) legible. <i>Legible</i> is from <i>legere</i>, to read. The look-alike root is the commonest etymological trap in this family.</p> <p>3 a) legal. Permitted by the letter of the law, yet not accepted as rightful. That gap is the whole argument.</p> | <p>4 a) privileges. A privilege is literally a private law. Parliamentary privilege is the textbook case of the word meaning exactly what it is built from.</p> <p>5 a) jurisdiction, jurisprudence, judiciary. Latin had two law-words. <i>Ius</i> covers the system that applies the rule; <i>lex</i> covers the rule itself.</p> <p>6 legislated → referred. To <i>legislate</i> is to make law, not to send something onward. A Bill is referred to a committee.</p> <p>7 a) legislature. The body is the legislature; what it makes is legislation; who sits in it is a legislator. Today's Ladakh coverage turns on this.</p> <p>8 a) Latin legalis, through Old French leial. Loyalty began as lawfulness: faithful to what law and duty require. The moral sense grew out of the legal one.</p> |
|--|--|

Confusable pair

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>9 a) Inquiry. The statute names it. A proper name is copied exactly, whatever your house convention.</p> <p>10 a) enquiry. Simple asking, so the British and Indian convention takes <i>enquiry</i>. An American writer would still write <i>inquiry</i>.</p> <p>11 a) inquiry. Inquest is the fixed term, and it belongs on the formal-investigation side of the family.</p> <p>12 a) Both spellings are correct English from the same Latin verb. Both come from Latin <i>inquirere</i>. The division of labour is a convention that grew up later, and it is not universally kept.</p> <p>13 a) adversarial. The parties contest and the judge umpires. In an inquisitorial system, as in France, the judge directs the investigation.</p> | <p>14 Enquiry → Inquiry. The short title of an Act is a proper name. Copy it letter for letter.</p> <p>15 inquest: the cause of a death; query: an answer to one question; inquisitive: to know, out of curiosity; request: a thing asked for; require: a thing demanded as necessary. All five come from Latin <i>quaerere</i>, to seek. Seeing the family makes the enquiry/inquiry spelling look like what it is: one word wearing two coats.</p> <p>16 a) inquiry throughout. Know the reader. American English has effectively one spelling, and the other reads as a slip.</p> |
|---|---|

Collocation

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>17 a) took. Cognizance is always taken. The whole phrase is fixed, and today's NHRC item uses it exactly.</p> <p>18 a) struck down. A court strikes down a provision. Cancelling and banning belong to executives, not to judicial review.</p> <p>19 a) reserved. A court reserves judgment when it will deliver it later. The pair is <i>reserved</i>, then <i>delivered</i> or <i>pronounced</i>.</p> <p>20 a) constituted. Benches are constituted by the Chief Justice. Judges are appointed; benches are constituted.</p> | <p>21 a) delivers a judgment. A verdict is a jury's finding of fact, and India has not tried cases by jury since the 1960s.</p> <p>22 a) it survives with a narrower meaning. Reading down saves a provision by confining it to the interpretation that keeps it constitutional.</p> <p>23 issued → served → replied to → taken on record. Each verb is a separate procedural fact, and a missing step is a ground of challenge.</p> <p>24 cancelled → struck down. Courts strike down; they do not cancel. The verb names the constitutional act.</p> |
|---|---|

25 **passed** → filed. A petition is filed or moved. Bills and resolutions are passed, in a legislature.

26 **cognizance**: is taken; **a petition**: is filed; **an order**: is passed; **a precedent**: is overruled; **guidelines**: are laid down; **a bench**: is constituted. Each verb names a distinct procedural act, so the wrong verb misdescribes what the court actually did.

From the edition

27 **a) retrospective criminal law**. No conviction for an act that was not an offence when done, and no penalty greater than the one then in force.

28 **a) prospectively**. Forward only. The word is the standard opposite of retrospective in statutory drafting.

29 **retrospective**: operating backwards in time; **retrospection**: reviewing one's own past; **retrograde**: moving backwards, to a worse state; **prospective**: applying forward only; **retroactive**: the American term for retrospective effect. Four near-neighbours that share a prefix and share nothing else. Only two of them are about the operation of law in time.

30 **a) remove retrospectively the basis on which a judgment rested**. Curing the defect is legislation. Declaring a judgment ineffective is an exercise of judicial power, which the legislature does not hold.

31 **retrograde** → retrospective. The noun for a career-spanning exhibition is a retrospective. Retrograde means moving backwards, and usually to a worse state.

32 **The levy applies retrospectively to completed transactions**. (7 words). Fifteen words to six, and the six carry the legal characterisation the long version leaves the reader to infer.

33 **a) RET-rə-SPEK-tiv**. Main stress on the third syllable, a secondary stress on the first. The word divides retro + spective.

Say it shorter

34 **Several factors delayed the constitution of the Council**. (8 words). The opener says nothing, "there are" hides the actor, and "responsible for the delay" is one verb: delayed.

35 **In hospital fires, smoke rather than flame kills most victims**. (10 words). Delete the opener, delete "in the case of", and let a verb do the work of "the loss of life is on account of".

36 **The scheme has not achieved financial depth, for several reasons**. (10 words). "Has not been able to achieve" is "has not achieved". The empty subject goes first.

37 **It is important to note that** → (delete). Nothing is lost. The sentence was always ready to begin at "the Council".

38 **Each and every** → Every. An invented doublet. "Every" carries the whole meaning; "each and every" only carries the habit.

39 **It is important to note that**: delete: start with the point; **There are several factors responsible for X**: X happens because ...; **When it comes to the question of X**: On X; **It is a fact that**: delete; **In this regard, it is pertinent to state that**: delete. Three of the five are deleted outright: that is the test of throat-clearing. The other two hide an actor and a verb that were ready to work.

40 **a) when the real subject arrives late for deliberate emphasis**. It is a tool for delaying the subject on purpose, not a default way to begin a sentence.

41 **a) in statute it is a deliberate Anglo-Norman doublet; in an answer it is padding**. The pairing served two language communities. Quoting it is fine; imitating it with new pairs is not.

Usage watch

42 **informations** → information. Information is uncountable and has no plural. If you need to count, count the items: three items of information.

43 **reason** → reasons. "One of" selects from a group, so the group must be plural.

44 **Lesser** → Fewer. Accounts are countable, so the word is fewer. Lesser means smaller in importance.

45 **a) number**. Accounts are counted, so number. Amount belongs to money, water and other mass nouns.

46 **a) has**. The subject is "one", not "members". The verb agrees with one.

47 **a) less**. Paperwork is mass, so less. It would be "fewer forms".

48 **many** → much. Furniture is uncountable: much furniture, or many items of furniture.

49 **a) an Indian coinage recorded in the OED**. Coinage is how a language grows. The three slips in this lesson are grammar, not coinage, and that is the difference.

- 50 **advices** → pieces of advice. Advice is uncountable. Count the containers: two pieces of advice, or two advisories, which is a different word.

- 51 **a) evidence.** Evidence is stuff you measure; facts, suggestions and documents are things you count. The line is arbitrary, which is why it must be learnt.

Idiom in formal register

- 52 **a) one party's gain is exactly another's loss.** The payoffs sum to zero. Today's delimitation editorial applies it to redistribution within a fixed House size.
- 53 **a) it is a term of art naming a structural property.** Terms of art carry analytical content and can be tested against the facts. Picture idioms only decorate, so they are rationed.
- 54 **zero-sum:** a fixed total: one gain is another's loss; **a wake-up call:** a warning that should have changed practice; **low-hanging fruit:** the gains available at least cost; **a double-edged sword:** a measure with offsetting costs; **the elephant in the room:** the central issue nobody addresses; **move the needle:** produce a measurable change. The formal sibling is always available. Choosing the idiom is only a choice once you can write the plain version.

- 55 **a) positive-sum.** Positive-sum is the standard opposite, and naming it is often the sharpest correction an answer can make.
- 56 **a) the elephant in the room.** The other three name testable structural features. The elephant is a picture, and it belongs to the rationed list.
- 57 **a) in the introduction.** The introduction sets register. Open plainly and earn the figure later.
- 58 **In a House of fixed size, one state gains seats only if another loses them.** (15 words). The plain version is longer and just as exact. Now the term of art is a choice, not a reflex.
- 59 **wake-up call** → a warning. Keep the one doing measurable work. Two figures in one sentence cancel each other out.

Practice lab

- 60 **retrospective** (retrospective).
- 61 **enquiry** (enquiry).
- 62 **impersonation** (impersonation).
- 63 **compartmentation** (compartmentation).
- 64 **untouchable** (untouchable).
- 65 **This is one of the reasons for the delay.**
- 66 **The petitioner filed a writ petition in the High Court.**
- 67 **The levy applies retrospectively to completed transactions.**
- 68 **The Commission has issued two pieces of advice to the State.**
- 69 **enquiry** / in-KWY-ree /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *Whether it holds in practice depends on the availability of trained social workers at every magistracy and on magistrates treating the enquiry as substantive rather than formal.*

- 70 **accreditation** / ə-KRED-i-TAY-shən /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *The mediator's training and ethics are the only safeguard, which is exactly why the accreditation function that has been dormant for three years matters so much.*
- 71 **discernible** / di-SUR-nə-bəl /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *Compliance is penalised and non-compliance rewarded, on no discernible rational basis.*
- 72 **compartmentation** / kom-PART-men-TAY-shən /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *Fire-safety design accordingly prioritises compartmentation and smoke management over suppression speed.*
- 73 **dormant** / DOR-mənt /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *The standard criticism of PMJDY has been that it produced zero-balance accounts: an impressive count concealing dormant accounts opened to meet targets.*

WRITING TASK

Write The Ladakh bench, in 120 words



Write it online

Word count, padding and
zombie nouns checked as you
type
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/28/#station-write

In no more than 120 words, argue whether creating a High Court bench for Ladakh by a Presidential Regulation under Article 240 is a net gain for access to justice or an illustration of a representation deficit. Use one word from today's *lex* family (*legal, legislature, legislate, legitimacy, delegated*), one courtroom verb from the table (*constituted, issued, held, filed, struck down, set aside*), and exactly one idiom, not in the first sentence. No throat-clearing openers.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ Within 120 words
 - ☐ a word from the lex family
 - ☐ a courtroom verb from the table
 - ☐ Exactly one idiom, not in the first sentence
 - ☐ No usage slips from today's watch list
 - ☐ No padding phrases (in order to, with regard to, the fact that)
 - ☐ Every -tion / -ment noun checked: could it be a verb?

CONTINUE ONLINE

Tomorrow's pack is harvested from tomorrow's edition.

Every Wordcraft pack comes from that day's articles and editorials on [ujiyari.com](https://www.ujiyari.com). Read the edition, then do the pack: the words arrive in a context you have just read, which is the only way they stay.

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Companion sections: [/vocab/](#) (what a word scores in a GS answer), [/terms/](#) (key concepts), [/editorials/](#) and [/daily/](#) (where these words came from).