

Wordcraft

29 August 2026

Seven lessons and a glossary of 17 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
vertere

02 CONFUSABLE PAIR
affect / effect

03 COLLOCATION
The verbs of rise and fall

04 FROM THE EDITION
syndemic

05 SAY IT SHORTER
Who did it?

06 USAGE WATCH
since · doubt · the same

07 IDIOM IN FORMAL REGISTER
the writing is on the wall

08 PRACTICE LAB
listen · say it · cloze · unscramble



Do it online

ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/

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/2026/08/29/



GLOSSARY FROM THE EDITION

Words in the sentence they came from

17

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/2026/08/29/#glossary

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

syndemic NOUN / sin-DEM-ik /

ESSAY

Two or more epidemics that interact and worsen each other in a population already carrying social or health disadvantage. Greek *syn* "together" + *demos* "people"; the term comes from medical anthropology, where Merrill Singer used it for interacting rather than merely coinciding epidemics.

हिंदी: परस्पर प्रबल करती हुई कई महामारियों का एक साथ चलना

It is a climate-health syndemic, meaning one shock producing several overlapping and mutually reinforcing epidemics, stretched across months rather than days.

When a Glacier Bursts: Reframing Himalayan Floods as a Health Emergency · Today's "from the edition" lesson builds the endemic, epidemic, pandemic, syndemic ladder around this word.

disenfranchisement NOUN

/ dis-in-FRAN-chyz-mənt /

GS-SAFE

The taking away of the right to vote. The verb is *disenfranchise*; *disfranchise* is the older form and still correct, but *disenfranchise* is now the usual spelling in British, American and Indian English.

हिंदी: मताधिकार से वंचित किया जाना

If the old roll was sound, the new one is a mass disenfranchisement.

Unkind Cuts: The SIR and the Vanishing Voter in Telangana and Karnataka · Not a synonym for low turnout. Disenfranchisement removes the entitlement; abstention leaves it intact.

superintendence NOUN / soo-per-in-TEN-dəns /

GS-SAFE

Oversight and control exercised from above. The word is worth knowing in its exact constitutional form: Article 324 vests the *superintendence, direction and control* of elections in the Election Commission, and those three nouns are quoted as a unit.

हिंदी: अधीक्षण; ऊपर से निगरानी और नियंत्रण

Above all of this sits Article 324, which vests the superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls in the Election Commission of India.

Unkind Cuts: The SIR and the Vanishing Voter in Telangana and Karnataka

incarceration NOUN / in-kar-sə-RAY-shən /

GS-SAFE

Imprisonment. Latin *in* + *carcer*, a prison, the same root as the surname element in *incarcerate*. More formal and more neutral than *jailing*, which is why statutes and judgments prefer it.

हिंदी: कारावास; जेल में रखा जाना

India's undertrial population has long formed the majority of its prison population, which means the modal experience of Indian criminal justice is incarceration without conviction.

Luxury Litigation and the Unequal Cost of Delay · Modal in that sentence is the statistician's word: the most frequent case, not the average one.

vexatious ADJECTIVE / vek-SAY-shəs / GS-SAFE

Brought without sufficient grounds and in order to harass. A term of art: a *vexatious litigant* is one a court may restrain from filing further suits. In ordinary use it means merely annoying, but in a legal answer keep the technical sense.

हिंदी: तंग करने के लिए दायर; निराधार और परेशान करने वाला (मुकदमा)

Worse, an indiscriminate costs regime carries a chilling risk: a genuinely aggrieved poor litigant with a weak case is deterred more effectively than a wealthy litigant with a vexatious one, because five lakh rupees means something entirely different to each.

Luxury Litigation and the Unequal Cost of Delay

non-refoulement NOUN / non-rə-F00L-mon / GS-SAFE

The rule that a state must not return a refugee to a territory where their life or freedom would be threatened. A French loanword (*refouler*, to drive back), kept in French form in every language of international law, and pronounced with the French nasal ending.

हिंदी: शरणार्थी को उस देश में वापस न भेजने का सिद्धांत जहाँ उसका जीवन या स्वतंत्रता खतरे में हो

The Convention's foundational obligation is non-refoulement, set out in Article 33: no contracting state shall expel or return a refugee to the frontiers of territories where their life or freedom would be threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Renew, Do Not Renegotiate: The Refugee Convention at 75 and India's Place in It · Keep the hyphen and the French spelling. Non-refoulement and non-refoulment are both misspellings.

restrictionist ADJECTIVE / NOUN

/ ri-STRIK-shə-nist /

ESSAY

Favouring tight limits, especially on immigration. Built like *protectionist* and *isolationist*: a policy stance turned into a label. It describes a position, so it belongs in analysis rather than in a definition.

हिंदी: आब्रजन पर कड़ी रोक का पक्षधर

Reopening a treaty requires the consent of states whose current politics is broadly restrictionist, and the realistic outcome of such a negotiation is narrower obligations dressed as modernisation.

Renew, Do Not Renegotiate: The Refugee Convention at 75 and India's Place in It

discernible ADJECTIVE / di-SER-nə-bəl / GS-SAFE

Able to be seen or made out, especially with effort. Spelling trap: *-ible*, not *-able*. *Discernible* is about what can be perceived; *discerning* is about a person who perceives well.

हिंदी: जो स्पष्ट रूप से पहचाना जा सके

The balance sheets of the top 1,000 listed companies show no discernible pick-up in 2025-26.

Cyclical Cheer, Structural Worry: Reading India's Growth Before the GDP Print · "No discernible X" is a useful hedge: it claims that nothing shows in the data, not that nothing exists.

dispensation NOUN / dis-pen-SAY-shən / GS-SAFE

A system of governance or the regime currently in charge. It also keeps two older senses: an official exemption from a rule, and a divinely ordered arrangement. In Indian political writing the first sense dominates: *the current dispensation* means the government of the day.

हिंदी: शासन-व्यवस्था; सत्ता में बैठी वर्तमान सरकार

The territory long described as the badlands of transnational militancy, from which al-Qaeda planned the attacks of 11 September 2001 and drew two decades of American retribution onto both itself and the first Emirate, has under the current dispensation been formally denied to groups operating against other countries.

Five Years of the Islamic Emirate: Afghanistan Still at a Fork in the Road · Badlands in the same sentence is vivid journalism and belongs in the register list marked "avoid" for a GS answer.

reprisal NOUN / ri-PRY-zəl / GS-SAFE

An act of retaliation, especially one answering an earlier injury. In international law, a *reprisal* is a specific category of countermeasure. Distinguish *retribution*, which is punishment paid back through a lawful process, from *reprisal*, which is answered by the injured party itself.

हिंदी: प्रतिशोध; जवाबी हमला

This is the defining property of reprisal violence: it becomes self-financing, requiring no fresh grievance to continue, only a memory of the last incident.

Breaking Manipur's Cycle of Reprisal: A New Fault Line Opens

impoundment NOUN / im-POWND-mənt / **ESSAY**

Water held back by a barrier, or the body of water so held. From *impound*, to shut up in a pound or enclosure, which is also why a court *impounds* a passport. In hydrology it is the neutral word for a lake behind any dam, natural or built.

हिंदी: जल का रोका जाना; बाँध या अवरोध से बनी झील

A second impoundment, of roughly 2 million cubic metres near the confluence of the Chhochen Khola and Purepu Tsangpo, overflowed on August 28, triggering renewed evacuation orders.

The Rasuwa Disaster: A Rock and Ice Collapse, a Barrier Lake, and Why It Was Not a Classic GLOF

normative ADJECTIVE / NOR-mə-tiv / **GS-SAFE**

Relating to a standard or to what ought to be, as against *positive*, which describes what is. The pairing is examinable in economics and in ethics. In administrative prose it has a narrower sense: fixed by a norm, as in a *normative inventory* laid down by rule.

हिंदी: मानक-निर्धारक; जो होना चाहिए उससे संबंधित

A plant is classified as critical when its coal stock falls below 25 per cent of the required normative inventory, or when it holds fuel for fewer than three days.

Coal Stocks Turn Critical at 45 Thermal Plants as the Monsoon Runs 13 Per Cent Short · The same sentence models fewer with a count noun. It is "fewer than three days", never "less than three days".

deindustrialisation NOUN / dee-in-dus-tree-ə-ly-ZAY-shən / **GS-SAFE**

The shrinking of a country's industrial base, whether by decline or by policy. In Indian economic history it names the destruction of handicraft manufacturing under colonial trade arrangements. British and Indian English spell it *-isation*; American English uses *-ization*.

हिंदी: उद्योगों का हास; औद्योगिक आधार का सिकुड़ना

The critique of this arrangement was already well developed: Dadabhai Naoroji's drain of wealth thesis, set out in Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, and R. C. Dutt's Economic History of India had documented the deindustrialisation of Indian handicrafts and the transfer of surplus.

The Chemist Who Refused to Stay in the Lab: Prafulla Chandra Ray and Swadeshi Science

traverse VERB / trə-VERS / **GS-SAFE**

To cross, to pass through or over. Latin *trans* "across" + *vertere* "to turn". In law it has a second, unrelated-looking sense: to *traverse* an allegation is to deny it formally in a pleading.

हिंदी: पार करना; आर-पार गुज़रना

The centre of gravity is Chinese, decisions require consensus, and India has consistently declined to endorse the Belt and Road Initiative in SCO documents because the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor traverses Indian territory under illegal occupation.

Prime Minister Departs for Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan Ahead of the 26th SCO Summit · One of today's root-lesson words. Stress the verb on the second syllable; the noun (a survey traverse) takes TRAV-ers.

inversion NOUN / in-VER-zhən / **GS-SAFE**

A turning upside down, or a reversal of the normal order. *In* + *vertere*, to turn. An *ethical inversion* is a case where the incentive rewards exactly the behaviour the rule was meant to prevent.

हिंदी: उलटाव; क्रम या संबंध का उलट जाना

For GS4, note the ethical inversion in the metric.

Unkind Cuts: The SIR and the Vanishing Voter in Telangana and Karnataka · Keep it apart from aversion (a turning away, a dislike) and reversion (a return to a former state or owner).

the writing is on the wall NOUN (IDIOM) **ESSAY**

There are unmistakable signs that something is going to fail or end. From the Book of Daniel, where a hand writes on the wall of Belshazzar's palace during a feast and the message is read as the fall of Babylon. Standard in British, American and Indian English.

हिंदी: पतन के स्पष्ट संकेत दिख रहे हैं

The author's phrase, that the AI writing is on the wall, is not decoration; it identifies a structural threat to the specific job category that has driven India's urban consumption.

Cyclical Cheer, Structural Worry: Reading India's Growth Before the GDP Print · Today's idiom lesson. It reads as a prediction of failure, so never use it merely for "the trend is clear".

knee-jerk ADJECTIVE / NEE-jerk /

AVOID

Automatic and unconsidered, from the reflex a tap below the kneecap produces. Vivid and clear, but journalistic: in a GS answer, *reactive*, *unconsidered* or *reflexive* carries the same claim in the examiner's register.

हिंदी: बिना सोचे-समझे दी गई तात्कालिक प्रतिक्रिया

The editorial's verdict, that these were knee-jerk panic actions that added fuel to the fire, is the standard result in commodity economics: interventions that ration existing stock redistribute scarcity without relieving it, and simultaneously signal that scarcity is expected to worsen.

Not Ethanol, But Policy: Reading the Sugar Price Spiral of 2026 ·
Marked avoid for register, not for correctness. It is perfectly good English in an editorial.

LESSON 1 OF 7 · ROOT & FAMILY

01

vertere

Latin · to turn



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#lesson-root

One Latin verb supplies an entire shelf of English. *Vertere* meant simply to turn; its past participle *versus* gave the **-vers-** half of the family, and the present stem gave the **-vert-** half. Every descendant is a turn in some direction, and the prefix tells you which way.

WORD	LITERAL BUILD	WHICH WAY IT TURNS
convert	<i>con</i> "together, wholly"	turned right round, into something else
divert / diversion	<i>dis</i> "apart"	turned aside from its route: <i>ethanol diversion</i> turns cane away from sugar
invert / inversion	<i>in</i> "upon, into"	turned upside down: an <i>ethical inversion</i> rewards what the rule forbade
revert / reversal	<i>re</i> "back"	turned back to a former state
avert	<i>ab</i> "away"	turned away, and so prevented
subvert	<i>sub</i> "from below"	turned over from underneath
controversy	<i>contro</i> "against"	parties turned against each other
traverse	<i>trans</i> "across"	turned across: a corridor that <i>traverses</i> territory
universal	<i>unus</i> "one"	everything turned into one
anniversary	<i>annus</i> "year"	the year has turned once more

THE TRAP IN THE FAMILY: ADVERSE AND AVERSE

Adverse is turned **against** you: unfavourable conditions, adverse weather, adverse effects of a drug. *Averse* is turned **away** by you: unwilling, disinclined, and it takes *to*. A regulator may be risk-averse; the monsoon is adverse. Things are adverse; people are averse.

TWO MORE THAT LOOK ALIKE AND ARE NOT

A *vertex* is a highest point or a corner of a shape; a *vortex* is a whirl. Both come from the same verb, one for the point a thing turns about, one for the turning itself. And *vice versa* is Latin for "the position having been turned": it needs no "and" before it and no hyphen inside it.

PRONUNCIATION ACROSS VARIETIES

Controversy is the one to know: American English says CON-tro-ver-sy; British and Indian speakers use both CON-tro-ver-sy and con-TROV-er-sy, and neither is wrong. *Traverse* as a verb is trə-VERS; as a noun in surveying it is TRAV-ers. Spelling is identical in every variety.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Write one sentence with *adverse* and one with *averse*. If you had to stop and think, write two more before you move on.

Six members of the family are in today's edition: *diversion* in the sugar editorial, *reversal* in the growth editorial, *inversion* and *controversy* in the SIR editorial, *conversely* in the litigation editorial, and *traverses* in the SCO curtain-raiser. The rest of the family is added from the root, not from the edition.

02

LESSON 2 OF 7 · CONFUSABLE PAIR

affect / effect



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#lesson-pair

affect

Latin afficere, "to act upon"

Usually a verb: to influence, to have an effect on. *Corridor notification does affect private interests.*

Rare noun (psychology, AFF-ekt): observable emotion, as in "flat affect".

Second verb sense: to pretend. *He affected indifference.*

effect

Latin efficere, "to bring about"

Usually a noun: the result. *El Nino's suppressing effect on the monsoon.*

Formal verb: to bring about, to cause to happen. *To effect the change within 30 days.*

Never means "to influence".

THE TWO TESTS

Substitution first: if *influence* fits, write **affect**; if *result* fits, write **effect**. Then the memory hook that survives exam pressure: **RAVEN**, Remember Affect Verb, Effect Noun. It is right about nine times in ten, and the lesson above tells you about the tenth.

THE PAIR THAT FOLLOWS FROM IT

WORD	MEANS	EXAMPLE
effective	producing the intended result	an effective warning label
affective	relating to emotion	affective disorders
effectual	capable of producing the result in law	an effectual remedy
affectation	a pretence, an assumed manner	his concern was an affectation

THE ESCAPE ROUTE THAT COSTS MARKS

Writers who fear the pair reach for *impact* as a verb: "the deletions impacted turnout". Many editors on every continent still object to it, it is a syllable longer than *affected*, and it tells the reader you dodged rather than chose. **When in doubt, work out which word you need instead of avoiding both.**

ACROSS VARIETIES

No spelling or usage difference between British, American and Indian English. This pair is confused everywhere, which is exactly why getting it right is noticed everywhere.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Write three sentences: *affect* as a verb, *effect* as a noun, *effect* as a verb. The third is the one that proves you own the pair.

All three uses are in today's edition, each correct: *affect* as a verb in the elephant corridors article ("when it does affect private interests"), *effect* as a noun in the coal article ("El Nino's suppressing effect on the Indian monsoon"), and *effect* as a verb in the roundup ("to effect the change within 30 days").

LESSON 3 OF 7 · COLLOCATION

03

The verbs of rise and fall



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#lesson-collocation

Half of GS3 is quantities moving. English is strict about which verb each quantity takes, and the wrong one ("inflation reduced", "the rupee decreased") is the fastest way to tell an examiner that the economics was learned from a list rather than from reading.

QUANTITY	TAKES	NEVER
prices	rise, surge, spike, spiral, ease, soften	increase high, reduce
inflation	accelerates, moderates, cools, eases	reduces (a government reduces it; it eases)
growth	picks up, slows, decelerates, halves	decreases
a deficit	widens, narrows	grows big, reduces
stocks / reserves	are drawn down, run down, replenished, built up	finished, emptied
output	expands, contracts	goes down in formal prose
a policy rate	is cut, raised, held	decreased, reduced down
a currency	appreciates, depreciates; a government devalues it	increases, falls down
tariffs	are rationalised, lowered, imposed	reduced off
rainfall	is deficient; the season runs short	less rain came

DEPRECIATE OR DEVALUE: THE DISTINCTION IS LEGAL, NOT STYLISTIC

A currency *depreciates* when the market moves it. A government *devalues* it when it deliberately resets an official rate. Writing "the rupee was devalued" about an ordinary market slide states a policy decision that never happened. One verb, one factual claim.

BY OR TO: THE COMMONEST DATA ERROR IN AN ANSWER

Growth *of* 8 per cent is a level. Growth *by* 8 per cent is a change. Growth *to* 8 per cent is a level reached from somewhere else. "Services export growth has halved to about 8 per cent" is exact because it gives the change and the landing point. "Exports increased by 8 per cent to 30 billion dollars" says both in one breath. Get the preposition wrong and the number means something else.

TRANSITIVE AND INTRANSITIVE

The RBI *cuts* the repo rate; the rate *falls*. A government *reduces* inflation; inflation *eases*. The pattern: the agent takes the transitive verb, the quantity takes the intransitive one. Get this right and the passive voice stops being tempting.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Write two sentences about the same fact: one where a policymaker acts on a number, one where the number moves by itself. Different verbs, same event.

Drawn from the day's quantitative prose: "ex-factory prices *surged* in July" and the "2026 sugar price *spiral*" in the sugar editorial; "coal stocks are actually *drawn down*" and a monsoon that "runs 13 per cent short" in the coal article; "GST *rationalisation*",

"household incomes must *accelerate*", "no discernible *pick-up*" and growth that "has *halved* to about 8 per cent" in **the growth editorial**; and a corridor "*slowed* by sanctions" in **the SCO editorial**.

LESSON 4 OF 7 · FROM THE EDITION

04

syndemic

/ sin-DEM-ik /



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#lesson-edition

Found in situ in today's Himalayan flood editorial: a glacial flood is "a climate-health **syndemic**, meaning one shock producing several overlapping and mutually reinforcing epidemics". Not a fancier word for outbreak. A syndemic is a claim about **interaction**: two or more health crises that make each other worse, in a population already carrying disadvantage.

THE LADDER, FROM WEAKEST CLAIM TO STRONGEST

WORD	WHAT IT ASSERTS	EXAMPLE
endemic	constantly present in a population at a baseline level	malaria is endemic in parts of the Northeast
outbreak	a sudden local rise in cases	a cholera outbreak in one camp
epidemic	cases well above the expected level, across a place and time	a dengue epidemic in the city
pandemic	an epidemic that has crossed countries and continents	the influenza pandemic of 1918
syndemic	epidemics that interact and amplify one another in a disadvantaged population	flood, interrupted tuberculosis treatment and water contamination together

WHERE THE WORD COMES FROM

Greek *syn* "together" plus *demos* "the people", the same *demos* that gives *democracy*, *demography*, *demagogue*, *epidemic* and *endemic*. The term comes from medical anthropology, where Merrill Singer used it for epidemics that interact rather than merely coincide. The prefix does the analytical work: **syn- is the claim that the parts are not separable.**

THE MISTAKE WORTH AVOIDING

Endemic is often used loosely to mean rampant: "corruption is endemic". That use is established in general English, but in epidemiology *endemic* means steadily present at a baseline, which may be a low level. If your answer is about disease, keep the technical sense and let the adjective mean what a public health officer means by it.

REGISTER, AND HOW TO EARN THE WORD

Technical and precise, welcome in a GS1 or GS3 answer *because* it names a mechanism. It earns its place only if you then show the interaction: flood damages the clinic, the clinic's closure interrupts treatment, interruption breeds resistance. Use the word and skip the mechanism and you have written jargon.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

In two sentences, describe one disaster as a syndemic. Name three things that interact, and say which one amplifies which. If you cannot name the arrows, use "epidemic" instead.

Harvested from "When a Glacier Bursts: Reframing Himalayan Floods as a Health Emergency", which pairs with the day's Rasuwa flood article. The *-demic* ladder is added from standard epidemiology, not from the edition.

05

LESSON 5 OF 7 · SAY IT SHORTER

Who did it?



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#lesson-concision

After the zombie noun, the second great inflation in aspirant prose is the agentless passive: "*it was decided that*", "*steps are being taken*", "*action will be initiated*". Each is longer than the active version and each hides the one thing an examiner is looking for, which is **who is responsible**. The examples below are constructed in the register of official prose; they are not quotations from today's edition.

BEFORE · 23 WORDS

~~It was decided by the Commission that the elector-to-population ratio would not be published, and it may be mentioned that no reasons were given.~~

AFTER · 12 WORDS

The Commission decided not to publish the elector-to-population ratio, and gave no reasons.

Same facts. Eleven words returned, and the sentence now names who acted.

THE MECHANICAL FIX

Find every *was*, *were*, *is*, *are*, *been*, *being* followed by a past participle. Ask **who did it**. If you can answer, put that answer in front of the verb. If you cannot answer, you have found something worth checking before you write the sentence at all.

THE PADDING THAT HIDES AGENTS

PADDING	REPLACE WITH
it was decided that X would	[who] decided to
steps are being taken to	[who] is doing
action will be initiated against	[who] will prosecute
it may be mentioned that	delete the phrase
it is submitted that	delete, or say "I argue"
concerned authorities should ensure	name the authority, then a verb
needful may be done	say what needs doing, and by whom

WHEN THE PASSIVE IS EXACTLY RIGHT

Three cases, and they are common in good writing. When the agent is *unknown*: "the corridors were surveyed on foot" if you do not know by whom. When the agent is *obvious*: "three corridors were notified" needs no "by the State government". When the object is the *topic* of the paragraph: "The undertrial is held for years before adjudication" keeps the undertrial in front, where the argument wants him. **The crime is the passive that conceals, not the passive that focuses.**

ACROSS VARIETIES

British, American and Indian English agree on the grammar. The habit differs: Indian official English inherits a nineteenth-century civil-service register in which the agentless passive signals deference. It is a real register with a real history, and it is still the wrong register for an answer that has to show judgement.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Take the last paragraph you wrote. Circle every *was* and *were*. For each, write the name of whoever acted. Rewrite the two that improve.

Prompted by the register of the day's administrative coverage: the process prose of the examination reform task force and the SIR editorial, where the whole argument turns on who decided what and refused to say why. Every before-and-after sentence in this lesson is constructed.

06

LESSON 6 OF 7 • USAGE WATCH

since • doubt • the same



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#lesson-usage

Three habits of Indian office and classroom English that read as errors to an examiner and to any reader abroad. No sneering is intended: Indian English is a full variety with its own recorded coinages. But these three are grammar and sense, not coinage, and they cost credibility wherever they appear.

WATCH	THE SLIP	THE REPAIR
since	"He has been an undertrial since three years." <i>Since</i> marks a point in time; a stretch of time needs <i>for</i> .	"since 2023" or "for three years". Both are right; they say different things.
doubt	"Sir, I have a doubt about Article 324." A <i>doubt</i> is uncertainty about something asserted, not a request for information.	"I have a question about Article 324." Keep <i>doubt</i> for "I doubt the figure is accurate."
the same	"Kindly examine the file and revert on the same." <i>The same</i> as a pronoun is legal and commercial boilerplate.	"Please examine the file and reply." Use <i>it</i> , <i>them</i> , or repeat the noun.

THREE MORE FROM THE SAME FAMILY

SLIP	REPAIR	WHY
informations, equipments	information, equipment	uncountable: use "pieces of" if you must count
good in English	good at English	<i>good at</i> a skill; <i>good in</i> a place or a role
one of the reason	one of the reasons	"one of" selects from a plural set

THE PRINCIPLE UNDERNEATH

Two of the three are about **duration against point** (*since* and *for*), and the third is about **register** (*the same* belongs to a contract, not an argument). Neither is a matter of vocabulary. Test the preposition against the noun it governs, and test the phrase against the room you are writing for.

WHAT IS NOT A SLIP

The harvest flagged *for the same* twice today, in "competes for the same rupee" and "competes directly for the same rupee". Both are ordinary English: *same* is an adjective there, modifying *rupee*, and the phrase is doing real work by naming the shared budget. The slip is *the same* standing alone as a pronoun. And *prepone*, *lakh*, *crore* and *batchmate* are Indian English, not errors; the last two are register, so keep them out of an international audience's way, not out of an Indian answer.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Write one sentence with *since* and one with *for* about the same fact. Then rewrite an email sentence of yours that used "the same".

The harvest found no usage slip in the day's own prose. Its only flag, *for the same*, occurred twice, in the **growth** editorial and the **glacier-burst** editorial, and in both places it is standard English (*same* as an adjective before *rupee*), not the pronoun slip. Today's entry therefore draws on the standing watch list.

07

LESSON 7 OF 7 · IDIOM IN FORMAL REGISTER

the writing is on the wall



Drill this lesson online

Marked exercises, then cards
that return by spaced repetition
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#lesson-idiom

From the Book of Daniel: at Belshazzar's feast a disembodied hand writes on the palace wall, and the message is read as the fall of Babylon. In prose it means **there are unmistakable signs that something is going to fail or end**. Today's growth editorial uses it exactly so: "the AI writing is on the wall" for a specific category of white-collar job.

WHY THIS IDIOM IS SAFE IN AN EXAM

Three tests, and it passes all three. It is (a) common in broadsheet English on every continent, (b) transparent even to a reader who does not know its origin, and (c) doing analytical work: it names an inference from evidence, not a mood. Compare it with *a fork in the road*, equally safe, against *the ball is in their court*, which is safe but weaker, and *a storm in a teacup*, which belongs nowhere near a Mains answer.

THE TRAP INSIDE IT

It predicts **failure or an ending**, not merely a clear trend. "The writing is on the wall for coal-fired generation" is a claim that coal is finished; if you only mean the share is falling, say that instead. **An idiom that overstates your claim is worse than no idiom at all.**

FOUR MORE FROM TODAY'S EDITION

IDIOM	WHERE	ONE STEP MORE FORMAL
a fork in the road	the Afghanistan editorial's title	a decision point with divergent paths
on the table	the Afghanistan editorial	currently under negotiation
an alarm bell	the Saptadhara editorial	an early warning signal
added fuel to the fire	the sugar editorial	intensified the pressure it was meant to relieve

THE REGISTER RULE FOR ALL IDIOM

One 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; precis and reports, none. And keep *knee-jerk*, which the sugar editorial uses well, out of an answer: it is clear and vivid journalism, but *reactive* or *unconsidered* is the examiner's register.

DOES IT TRAVEL?

Biblical idioms travel everywhere English does: *the writing on the wall*, *a drop in the ocean*, *the salt of the earth* are understood in London, Chicago, Lagos and Delhi alike. Cricket idioms (*a sticky wicket*, *on the back foot*) do not reach an American reader, and baseball ones (*a ballpark figure*, *touch base*) do not reliably reach an Indian one. When the readership is mixed, the formal sibling is safer than either.

SIXTY-SECOND DRILL

Rewrite "the AI writing is on the wall" twice: once as a claim about failure, once as a claim about a falling share. Notice that only one of them is what the data supports.

Harvested from "Cyclical Cheer, Structural Worry", with *knee-jerk* and *added fuel to the fire* from the sugar editorial, *an alarm bell* and *on the defensive* from the Saptadhara editorial, and *on the table* and *a fork in the road* from the Afghanistan editorial.

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/2026/08/29/#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. ☐ **normative** / NOR-mə-tiv /
2. ☐ **non-refoulement** / non-rə-FOOL-mon /
3. ☐ **knee-jerk** / NEE-jerk /
4. ☐ **discernible** / di-SER-nə-bəl /
5. ☐ **restrictionist** / ri-STRIK-shə-nist /

READING

Cloze

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

1. For GS4, note the ethical **i**_____ in the metric. (63)
2. This is the defining property of **r**_____ violence: it becomes self-financing, requiring no fresh grievance to continue, only a memory of the last incident. (64)
3. The territory long described as the badlands of transnational militancy, from which al-Qaeda planned the attacks of 11 September 2001 and drew two decades of American retribution onto both itself and the first Emirate, has under the current **d**_____ been formally denied to groups operating against other countries. (65)
4. A plant is classified as critical when its coal stock falls below 25 per cent of the required **n**_____ inventory, or when it holds fuel for fewer than three days. (66)
5. If the old roll was sound, the new one is a mass **d**_____. (67)

SENTENCE BUILDING

Unscramble

Rebuild each model sentence. Punctuation stays with its word.

1. will prosecute food the defaulting
FSSAI operators.

(68)

2. was over-deletion an metric
ethical The produced inversion
rewarded.

(69)

3. ratio. the not The publish
decided to Commission

(70)

4. to 4.1 eased cent per July.
in Inflation

(71)

LISTENING

Dictation

Ask someone to read you the five words in the key (numbers 72 to 76), word then sentence. Write each word here. Alone? Scan the code above and the pack reads them to you.

1. (72)

2. (73)

3. (74)

4. (75)

5. (76)

WORKSHEET

Every exercise, on paper

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

62



Do the drill online

Marked as you go, weighted to your misses
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#station-drill

01 · Root & family · vertere

9 items

1 Pair each word with the direction of its turn. MATCH

- | | |
|------------|---------------------------------|
| • divert | • turned aside from its route |
| • invert | • turned across |
| • revert | • turned over from underneath |
| • avert | • turned upside down |
| • subvert | • turned away, and so prevented |
| • traverse | • turned back to a former state |

2 Heavy rain and rail congestion are ___ conditions for coal movement. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|------------|----------------|
| a) adverse | c) aversive |
| b) averse | d) adversarial |

3 The committee is ___ to reopening a settled treaty. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| a) averse | c) adversary |
| b) adverse | d) aversion |

4 Which word literally means "parties turned against each other"? CHOOSE

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| a) controversy | c) convergence |
| b) conversion | d) contravention |

5 Cane sent to ethanol is a ___ of supply away from sugar. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| a) diversion | c) reversion |
| b) inversion | d) aversion |

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

The metric produced an ethical aversion: over-deletion was rewarded.

7 The corridor ___ territory that India regards as its own. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|--------------|--------------|
| a) traverses | c) converses |
| b) reverses | d) averts |

8 "Vice versa" is correctly written as: CHOOSE

- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| a) vice versa | c) visa versa |
| b) vice-versa | d) vice verse |

9 Put these turns in order of how far they go: aside, back, upside down, right round. SEQUENCE

convert revert invert divert

02 · Confusable pair · affect / effect

9 items

- 10 The notification does ___ private interests in the corridor. FILL THE BLANK
 a) affect c) effected
 b) effect d) affectation
- 11 A positive IOD can offset El Nino's suppressing ___ on the monsoon. FILL THE BLANK
 a) effect c) affects
 b) affect d) effective
- 12 The order directs the agency to ___ the change within 30 days. FILL THE BLANK
 a) effect c) affecting
 b) affect d) effective
- 13 Which sentence is correct? CHOOSE
 a) The new rules take effect on Monday. c) The new rules effect on Monday.
 b) The new rules take affect on Monday. d) The new rules affect on Monday.
- 14 Tap the wrong word. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
The deletions had no affect on the final turnout.
- 15 Tap the wrong word. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
Rail congestion effected coal movement through August.
- 16 "Affective disorders" are disorders of: CHOOSE
 a) emotion c) pretence
 b) effectiveness d) influence
- 17 He ___ an indifference he did not feel. FILL THE BLANK
 a) affected c) effective
 b) effected d) affective
- 18 Pair each word with its meaning. MATCH
- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| • affect (verb) | • an assumed manner |
| • effect (noun) | • producing the intended result |
| • effect (verb) | • the result |
| • effective | • to influence |
| • affective | • relating to emotion |
| • affectation | • to bring about |

03 · Collocation · The verbs of rise and fall

10 items

- 19 The current account deficit ___ to 1.2 per cent of GDP in the June quarter. FILL THE BLANK
 a) narrowed c) decreased down
 b) reduced d) lessened

- 20** Ex-factory sugar prices ___ in July, and the government responded with stock limits. FILL THE BLANK
 a) surged c) raised
 b) increased high d) inflated up
- 21** Coal stocks are ___ fastest during the evening peak. FILL THE BLANK
 a) drawn down c) emptied out
 b) finished d) reduced off
- 22** "The rupee was devalued last week" claims that: CHOOSE
 a) the government deliberately reset the official rate c) the rupee gained against the dollar
 b) the market moved the rupee lower d) the RBI cut the repo rate
- 23** Services export growth has halved ___ about 8 per cent. FILL THE BLANK
 a) to c) of
 b) by d) from

- 24** Tap the wrong word. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

Inflation reduced to 4.1 per cent in July.

- 25** Tap the wrong word. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP

The Monetary Policy Committee decreased the repo rate by 25 basis points.

- 26** Pair each quantity with the verb it takes. MATCH

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| • a deficit | • are drawn down |
| • inflation | • widens |
| • a currency in the market | • is held |
| • reserves | • contracts |
| • output | • depreciates |
| • a policy rate | • moderates |

- 27** Order these from the mildest fall in prices to the sharpest. Number them. SEQUENCE

prices soften prices ease prices collapse prices fall

- 28** Tariff and non-tariff barriers should be ___ rather than merely tinkered with. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| a) rationalised | c) rationalized off |
| b) reduced down | d) lessened away |

04 · From the edition · syndemic

8 items

- 29** Pair each word with what it asserts. MATCH

- | | |
|------------|---|
| • endemic | • cases well above the expected level |
| • outbreak | • an epidemic across countries and continents |
| • epidemic | • epidemics that interact and amplify one another |
| • pandemic | • constantly present at a baseline level |
| • syndemic | • a sudden local rise in cases |

- 30** The editorial calls a Himalayan flood a syndemic because: CHOOSE
- a) the flood, treatment collapse and water contamination amplify one another
 - b) it affects more than one country
 - c) it recurs every year
 - d) it produces more deaths than an epidemic
- 31** Malaria is ___ in parts of the Northeast: present every year at a steady level. FILL THE BLANK
- a) endemic
 - b) epidemic
 - c) pandemic
 - d) syndemic
- 32** Tap the wrong word. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
- Cases rose sharply above the expected level: an endemic was declared.*
-
- 33** Which prefix carries the analytical claim in "syndemic"? CHOOSE
- a) syn-, "together"
 - b) sym-, "same"
 - c) syne-, "after"
 - d) sin-, "without"
- 34** Say it in seven words or fewer. REWRITE
- The flood, the collapse of chronic disease care and the contamination of water each made the others worse.*
-
- 35** Which word shares the root demos with syndemic? CHOOSE
- a) demography
 - b) demolition
 - c) demonstrate
 - d) demote
- 36** The 1918 influenza was a ___: an epidemic that crossed continents. FILL THE BLANK
- a) pandemic
 - b) endemic
 - c) syndemic
 - d) outbreak

05 · Say it shorter · Who did it?

8 items

- 37** Deflate to eight words or fewer, and name the agent. REWRITE
- It was decided by the Commission that the ratio would not be published.*
-
- 38** Deflate to nine words or fewer. REWRITE
- Steps are being taken by the Ministry in order to ensure that coal stocks are replenished at the earliest.*
-

39 Deflate to seven words or fewer. REWRITE

It may be mentioned that action will be initiated against the defaulting food business operators.

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

It is submitted that the corridor notification is legally sound.

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

The concerned authorities should ensure that the rolls are audited.

42 Which passive sentence is defensible? CHOOSE

- | | |
|---|--|
| a) Three corridors were notified in August. | c) Steps are being taken in this regard. |
| b) It was decided that the ratio would be withheld. | d) Action will be initiated as deemed fit. |

43 What should you do when you cannot name the agent of your own passive sentence? CHOOSE

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| a) check the fact before writing the sentence | c) add "by the government" and hope |
| b) leave it passive and move on | d) rewrite it as a nominalisation |

44 Replace each formula. MATCH

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • it was decided that | • name the authority, then a verb |
| • steps are being taken to | • [who] is doing |
| • action will be initiated | • [who] will prosecute |
| • it may be mentioned that | • [who] decided to |
| • concerned authorities should ensure | • delete the phrase |

06 · Usage watch · since · doubt · the same

10 items

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

He has been an undertrial since three years.

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

Sir, I have a doubt about Article 324.

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

Kindly examine the file and revert on the same.

48 The Commission has withheld the ratio ____ the revision began. FILL THE BLANK

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| a) since | c) from since |
| b) for | d) during |

- 49 The plants have held under three days of stock ___ a fortnight. FILL THE BLANK
- a) for c) from
b) since d) during since
- 50 "Competes for the same rupee" is: CHOOSE
- a) standard English c) an Indianism to avoid
b) the pronoun slip d) a nominalisation
- 51 Tap the slip. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
- The annexure contains all relevant informations about the scheme.*
-
- 52 Tap the slip. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
- She is good in English and in quantitative aptitude.*
-
- 53 Tap the slip. Underline it and write the repair. SPOT THE SLIP
- Vacancies are one of the reason for pendency.*
-
- 54 "Prepone" is: CHOOSE
- a) Indian English recorded in dictionaries c) an Americanism
b) a grammatical error d) a legal term

07 · Idiom in formal register · the writing is on the wall

8 items

- 55 Pair each idiom with its formal sibling. MATCH
- the writing is on the wall
 - a fork in the road
 - on the table
 - an alarm bell
 - added fuel to the fire
 - on the defensive
 - ceding the initiative
 - the signs of failure are unmistakable
 - currently under negotiation
 - an early warning signal
 - a decision point with divergent paths
 - intensified the pressure it was meant to relieve
- 56 "The writing is on the wall" claims that something: CHOOSE
- a) is going to fail or end c) has been publicly announced
b) is growing quickly d) is under negotiation
- 57 Which idiom is safe in a Mains answer? CHOOSE
- a) a fork in the road c) the last straw
b) a storm in a teacup d) a wild goose chase
- 58 Where must an idiom never appear? CHOOSE
- a) in the introduction c) in the conclusion
b) in the body d) in an example

59 Which idiom would an American reader most likely miss? CHOOSE

- a) on the back foot c) a drop in the ocean
b) the writing is on the wall d) a fork in the road

60 Rewrite with no figure of speech at all. [REWRITE](#)

The AI writing is on the wall for entry-level services jobs.

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

The government, on the defensive since the agitation, now faces a fork in the road.

62 In a GS answer, replace "knee-jerk panic actions" with ____ measures. FILL THE BLANK

- a) reactive c) knee-jerk
b) jumpy d) panicky

ANSWER KEY

Key

With the reason behind every answer

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

Root & family

- 1 **divert**: turned aside from its route; **invert**: turned upside down; **revert**: turned back to a former state; **avert**: turned away, and so prevented; **subvert**: turned over from underneath; **traverse**: turned across. The prefix carries the whole meaning. Learn the six prefixes and you never need to learn these six words separately.
- 2 **a) adverse**. Conditions are unfavourable, so they are adverse. *Averse* describes a person who is unwilling, and it takes "to".
- 3 **a) averse**. A body that is unwilling is averse, and the preposition is "to". Remember: things adverse, people averse.
- 4 **a) controversy**. *Contro* "against" + *versus* "turned". The build is the definition.
- 5 **a) diversion**. *Dis* "apart": turned aside from its route. The sugar editorial uses exactly this word.
- 6 **aversion**: → inversion. The order is turned upside down, so it is an inversion. An *aversion* is a dislike.
- 7 **a) traverses**. *Trans* "across": it crosses the territory. This is the edition's own verb.
- 8 **a) vice versa**. Two words, no hyphen. Latin for "the position having been turned".
- 9 **divert** → **revert** → **invert** → **convert**. Aside, back, over, and wholly into something else. The prefix carries the whole meaning in each case.

Confusable pair

- 10 **a) affect**. Substitute "influence" and it fits, so the verb is affect. This is the edition's own sentence.
- 11 **a) effect**. Substitute "result" and it fits, so the noun is effect.
- 12 **a) effect**. To bring the change about. "Affect the change" would mean only to influence a change already under way.
- 13 **a) The new rules take effect on Monday..** "Take effect" is a fixed phrase built on the noun. There is no phrase "take affect".
- 14 **affect** → effect. After "no" the word is a noun, and the noun is effect.
- 15 **effected** → affected. It influenced coal movement. "Effected coal movement" would mean it brought the movement into being.
- 16 **a) emotion**. Affective relates to affect in its psychological sense: emotion. Effective would be about producing results.
- 17 **a) affected**. The second verb sense of affect: to pretend, to put on. The noun for it is affectation.
- 18 **affect (verb)**: to influence; **effect (noun)**: the result; **effect (verb)**: to bring about; **effective**: producing the intended result; **affective**: relating to emotion; **affectation**: an assumed manner. Two verbs, one noun and three derivatives. Once the parts of speech are fixed, the substitution test (influence or result) settles every case.

Collocation

- 19 **a) narrowed**. A deficit widens or narrows. "Reduced" needs an agent doing the reducing.
- 20 **a) surged**. Prices rise, surge, spike or spiral. "Raised" is transitive: somebody raises something.
- 21 **a) drawn down**. Reserves are drawn down or run down, then replenished. This is the coal article's own phrase.
- 22 **a) the government deliberately reset the official rate**. Devaluation is a policy act. A market slide is depreciation. The wrong verb invents a decision.
- 23 **a) to**. "To" gives the level reached after the change. "By 8 per cent" would describe the size of the fall instead.
- 24 **reduced** → eased. Inflation eases, moderates or cools by itself. A government reduces it; the number does not reduce itself.
- 25 **decreased** → cut. A policy rate is cut, raised or held. "Decreased" is limp and is not the register of monetary policy.

- 26 **a deficit:** widens; **inflation:** moderates; **a currency in the market:** depreciates; **reserves:** are drawn down; **output:** contracts; **a policy rate:** is held. Each quantity has its own small set of verbs. Using another quantity's verb is the tell that the economics was learned from a list.

- 27 **prices soften** → **prices ease** → **prices fall** → **prices collapse**. Soften and ease are gentle and often welcome; fall is neutral; collapse is a claim about disorder. Choose the strength you can defend.
- 28 **a) rationalised**. Tariffs are rationalised, lowered or imposed. The growth editorial uses "rationalisation" for exactly this.

From the edition

- 29 **endemic:** constantly present at a baseline level; **outbreak:** a sudden local rise in cases; **epidemic:** cases well above the expected level; **pandemic:** an epidemic across countries and continents; **syndemic:** epidemics that interact and amplify one another. The ladder runs from baseline presence to interaction. Each rung is a stronger claim, so pick the rung your evidence supports.
- 30 **a) the flood, treatment collapse and water contamination amplify one another**. The claim is interaction, not scale or spread. Without the arrows between the parts, the word is unearned.
- 31 **a) endemic**. Constantly present at a baseline. That is the technical sense, whatever the loose use of "endemic" for "rampant".
- 32 **endemic** → epidemic. A sharp rise above the expected level is an epidemic. Endemic describes the quiet baseline it rose from.
- 33 **a) syn-, "together"**. Greek syn "together". The word asserts that the epidemics cannot be treated separately.
- 34 **The flood produced a climate-health syndemic**. (6 words). Eighteen words to six, and the six name a mechanism the reader can look up. That is what a technical word is for.
- 35 **a) demography**. Demography is the measuring of a people. Demolition, demonstrate and demote come from different Latin roots.
- 36 **a) pandemic**. Greek pan "all": the epidemic has gone everywhere. Scale of spread, not severity, is the test.

Say it shorter

- 37 **The Commission decided not to publish the ratio**. (8 words). Thirteen words to seven, and the sentence now says who decided. The agent was there all along, at the back.
- 38 **The Ministry is replenishing coal stocks by 15 September**. (9 words). "Steps are being taken to ensure that X is done" is "[who] is doing X". "At the earliest" is not a date, so supply one.
- 39 **FSSAI will prosecute the defaulting food operators**. (7 words). The opening phrase carries no information at all. "Action will be initiated against" is "will prosecute".
- 40 **It is submitted that** → (delete). A pleading formula. In an answer, assert the claim and defend it; the reader knows you are the one submitting.
- 41 **concerned** → (name the authority). "Concerned authorities" names nobody. Write "the Chief Electoral Officer should audit the rolls."
- 42 **a) Three corridors were notified in August..** The agent is obvious (the State government) and the corridors are the topic. The other three hide a decision-maker.
- 43 **a) check the fact before writing the sentence**. An unanswerable "who did it" is usually a gap in your knowledge, not a stylistic choice. That is why the test is worth running.
- 44 **it was decided that:** [who] decided to; **steps are being taken to:** [who] is doing; **action will be initiated:** [who] will prosecute; **it may be mentioned that:** delete the phrase; **concerned authorities should ensure:** name the authority, then a verb. Every formula on the left hides an agent. Every repair on the right puts a name in front of the verb, which is what the examiner is marking.

Usage watch

- 45 **since** → for. Three years is a stretch of time, so the preposition is "for". "Since" would need a point: since 2023.
- 46 **doubt** → question. You are asking for information, not disputing a claim. Keep "doubt" for "I doubt the figure is accurate."
- 47 **on the same**. → reply to it. "The same" as a pronoun is commercial boilerplate. Use "it", "them", or repeat the noun.
- 48 **a) since**. The revision beginning is a point in time, so "since" is right. "For" would need a duration after it.
- 49 **a) for**. A fortnight is a stretch, so "for". Swap in a date and "since" becomes correct.

- 50 **a) standard English.** "Same" is an adjective modifying "rupee". The slip is only the bare pronoun: "revert on the same".
- 51 **informations** → information. Information is uncountable in standard English, as are equipment, advice, evidence, machinery and furniture.
- 52 **in** → at. Good at a skill. "Good in" belongs to a place or a role: good in a crisis, good in the field.

Idiom in formal register

- 55 **the writing is on the wall:** the signs of failure are unmistakable; **a fork in the road:** a decision point with divergent paths; **on the table:** currently under negotiation; **an alarm bell:** an early warning signal; **added fuel to the fire:** intensified the pressure it was meant to relieve; **on the defensive:** ceding the initiative. The formal sibling is what the idiom actually asserts. If the sibling overstates your evidence, so does the idiom.
- 56 **a) is going to fail or end.** It is a prediction of failure. Using it for a merely falling share overstates the claim your data supports.
- 57 **a) a fork in the road.** It passes all three tests: broadsheet-common, transparent, and it names a structure (a decision point with divergent paths).
- 58 **a) in the introduction.** The introduction sets the register. Open plainly and earn the figure later.
- 53 **reason** → reasons. "One of" selects a single item out of a plural set, so the noun after it must be plural.
- 54 **a) Indian English recorded in dictionaries.** Coinage is how a language grows. The slips in this lesson are grammar and sense, not coinage. That is the difference.
- 59 **a) on the back foot.** Cricket idioms belong to Indian, British and Australian English. The other three travel everywhere.
- 60 **Artificial intelligence is likely to eliminate entry-level services jobs.** (9 words). The plain version is longer and more exact, and it forces you to say how strong your claim is. Now you can choose the idiom rather than reach for it.
- 61 **a fork in the road.** → must choose between two paths. Keep the one doing analytical work (the posture) and put the second into plain prose. Never two in a row.
- 62 **a) reactive.** Reactive, or unconsidered, carries the same claim in the examiner's register. The editorial's phrase is good journalism, not exam prose.

Practice lab

- 63 **inversion** (inversion).
- 64 **reprisal** (reprisal).
- 65 **dispensation** (dispensation).
- 66 **normative** (normative).
- 67 **disenfranchisement** (disenfranchisement).
- 68 **FSSAI will prosecute the defaulting food operators.**
- 69 **The metric produced an ethical inversion over-deletion was rewarded.**
- 70 **The Commission decided not to publish the ratio.**
- 71 **Inflation eased to 4.1 per cent in July.**
- 72 **discernible** / di-SER-nə-bəl /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *The balance sheets of the top 1,000 listed companies show no discernible pick-up in 2025-26.*
- 73 **syndemic** / sin-DEM-ik /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *It is a climate-health syndemic, meaning one shock producing several overlapping and mutually reinforcing epidemics, stretched across months rather than days.*
- 74 **superintendence** / soo-per-in-TEN-dəns /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *Above all of this sits Article 324, which vests the superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls in the Election Commission of India.*
- 75 **restrictionist** / ri-STRIK-shə-nist /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *Reopening a treaty requires the consent of states whose current politics is broadly restrictionist, and the realistic outcome of such a negotiation is narrower obligations dressed as modernisation.*
- 76 **deindustrialisation** / dee-in-dus-tree-ə-ly-ZAY-shən /. Read it to the learner twice, then the sentence: *The critique of this arrangement was already well developed: Dadabhai Naoroji's drain of wealth thesis, set out in Poverty and Un-British Rule in India, and R. C. Dutt's Economic History of India had documented the deindustrialisation of Indian handicrafts and the transfer of surplus.*

WRITING TASK

Write The vanishing voter,
in 120 words



Write it online

Word count, padding and
zombie nouns checked as you
type
ujiyari.com/wordcraft/2026/08/29/#station-write

In no more than 120 words, argue whether the Election Commission should be required to publish the elector-to-population ratio after every intensive revision. Use *disenfranchisement* or *superintendence* correctly, one verb of rise and fall from today's table (*surged, eased, widened, narrowed, drawn down, moderated, rationalised*), and exactly one idiom, not in the first sentence. Every claim must name who acted: no agentless passives.

SELF-CHECK

- ☐ Within 120 words
- ☐ "disenfranchisement" or "superintendence" used
- ☐ a verb of rise and fall 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?

WEEKLY ANSWER CLINIC · 150 WORDS

The integrity of the electoral roll is the precondition of universal adult franchise, not a clerical detail. In the light of recent intensive revisions, examine the constitutional and statutory safeguards against wrongful deletion of electors, and evaluate whether procedural transparency by the Election Commission is a legal obligation or a matter of administrative discretion. (250 words)

From Unkind Cuts: The SIR and the Vanishing Voter in Telangana and Karnataka. Use at least 5 words from this week's glossaries. Open with the safeguard, not the controversy: Article 324 vests superintendence, direction and control in the Commission, and the Representation of the People Act, 1950 governs the roll. Then give one line on where the burden of proof sits in a rights-extinguishing process, one on the transparency remedy, and close with the ethical inversion in a metric that counts names removed. Online, the clinic shows your week's words and ticks them as you use them.

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).