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Spotting the Error & Sentence Correction

How to Spot an Error ?

Words, phrases and sentences are the bases of any language. An error in their use may shake the very foundation of the language and make an expression meaningless or ambiguous in a context. Therefore, an MBA aspirant has to clear those barriers before they begin their voluminous studies; and so sentence correction is one of the verbal problems in MBA entrance examinations. Knowing the common structures and the nuances of the language is crucial to understand the written text and to express accurately and precisely.

We are discussing the problems related to sentence in this chapter whereas the word and phrase are being discussed in later chapters.

Finding an error in a sentence is a step-by-step process. Checking errors randomly is always so confusing that you can never go close to accuracy. Therefore, we have adopted an **EIGHT-POINT STRATEGY** to probe a sentence for an error and pin-point it with accuracy. You have to ask these eight questions while solving a sentence correction problem :

1. "Is the **verb** in accordance with the **subject**?"
This is the rule no. ONE
2. "Is the **tense** of the verb correct?"
This is the rule no. TWO
3. "Is the **subject** or **doer** close to the **participle**?"
This is the rule no. THREE
4. "Are the **nouns** and **verbs** in their **proper forms** confirming the parallelism?"
This is the rule no. FOUR
5. "Are the **articles**, **determiners** and **adjectives** correctly used?"
This is the rule no. FIVE
6. "Are the forms of **pronoun** correct and do they agree with the related nouns and other pronouns?"
This is the rule no. SIX
7. "Are the **prepositions** correctly used?"
This is the rule no. SEVEN
8. "Are the **spelling** and **punctuation** in place?"
This is the rule no. EIGHT

Before you should be able to ask these questions meaningfully, you will have to understand these different grammar usages one by one and do some exercises on each.

At the end of the chapter, you will find mixed exercises in the manner they usually appear in the entrance examinations. These assorted exercises are the test of your understanding the chapter. While doing them you are supposed to identify the kinds of problem you find difficult and go back to the relevant part of the chapter for revision.

A few more problems related to grammar and usages are discussed in some other chapters as the questions related to them are usually other than the sentence correction questions. (Modals, Jumbled sentences, Idioms)

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Type 1 : *Error of Subject-Verb Agreement*

The very first thing that we need to check in a sentence correction exercise is the verb.

Consider the following sentences :

Set I *Taking* her basket she *goes* to the sea shore *to collect* shells.

She *is* happy with what she *earns*.

Set II *Taking* their baskets the women *go* to the sea shore *to collect* shells.

They *are* happy with what they *earn*.

Did you notice how the verbs change with the change in subject in the two sets? If we change the subject 'she' into 'the women' or 'she' into 'they' the verbs lose their 's' and 'es'. **She goes but they go, she is but they are and she earns but they earn.**

Notice what happens when we change these verbs into past :

Taking her basket she *went* to the sea shore *to collect* shells.

They *were* happy with what they *earned*.

While 'go' changes into 'went', 'are' into 'were' and 'earn' into 'earned', **'taking' and 'to collect' remain unchanged.** We need to change these main or finite verbs (go, are, earn) to make the sentence present, past or future while the non-finites (taking, to collect) remain unchanged.

Therefore, we need to check the main verbs in a sentence correction exercise.

- We need to ask, "Is the verb **singular** with a singular subject?" *eg,*
A **boy** *helps* the old woman cross the road.
He *does* not know her.
He *is* quite selfless.
A **boy** and **he** are singular; therefore, they take singular verbs with 's' or 'es' at the end.
- Or, "Is the verb **plural** with a plural subject?" *eg,*
Some **boys** *play* here in the evening.
They *bring* their own bats and balls.
They *are* quite self-sufficient.
A plural subject takes a verb without 's' or 'es' at its end.
You must have noticed that the singular verbs—goes, plays, is, was, has—end with an 's'.
Therefore, the first ever question in a sentence correction exercise to be asked is :
"Is the verb in accordance with the subject?"

This is the rule no. ONE

Target Exercise 1

Directions *Make a choice of the correct verb for the subject in the following sentences.*

1. It is so rainy in this region that it **rain/rains** very frequently even in winters.
2. Whenever he **meet/meets** me he **talk/talks** about his illness.
3. In a mature democracy like India, the voters **know/knows** whom to vote.
4. A good teacher not only **teach/teaches**, but he **is/are** also a good guide.
5. The Rajdhani Express usually **run/runs** on time; and is/are one of the fastest trains in India.

Answers 1. rains 2. meets, talks 3. know 4. teaches, is 5. runs, is

Sometimes the **nouns** used as subject might be confusing. It may be difficult to decide whether they are **singular or plural**. Therefore, identifying such nouns is important before deciding whether the verb is in accordance with the subject.

- **Cattle** is a **plural noun** which can neither be written as 'cattles' nor used as singular. *eg,* **Cattle** are grazing beside the lake.
Other such nouns, that are always used as **plural** without any change in them, are : **People, police, poultry, gentry, peasantry**

- **Scissors, binoculars, spectacles, pincers, pliers, trousers, jeans, oats, outskirts, premises, quarters, stairs, spirits, surroundings, thanks** are used as plural. *eg*, Where are my spectacles? I can't see without them.
- Some nouns are used both ways without any change in them, such as : **A sheep, many sheep, a deer, many deer, a fish, many fish, also many fishes meaning groups or species of fishes, a spacecraft, many spacecraft, an aircraft, many aircraft.**
These are used singular as well as plural without any change in them.
- **All uncountable nouns** like milk, furniture, bread, food, ice, salt, butter, grass, hair, wheat, rubbish, coffee, chalk, paper, sugar, dust, chocolate, soap **are always used as singular.**
- **All abstract nouns** like applause, homework, advice, wealth, happiness, research, money, evidence, hospitality, music, pollution, trash, waste, statistics, AIDS, disease, measles, information, knowledge, refuge, rubbish **are always used as singular.**
- You must also be aware of some agencies such as **jury, committee, government** which are used both ways. A jury or a committee or a government is consisted of some members and these members sometimes **take a unanimous decision and act like one agency**; but at times the members are **divided in their opinion and act separately** and not as one agency. In the **first case**, a jury will be treated as singular while in the **second case**, it will be plural. *eg*,
 - (i) The committee **have been** consulting among **themselves** and **are** now ready to take **their seats**.
 - (ii) A committee **has been** constituted to look into the matter.
 In sentence,
 - (i) 'the committee' refers to the **members and not the organization** as one entity.
 - (ii) '**one agency**'—committee is referred and not a divided committee or its members.
 Other such nouns are : **Association, audience, board, commission, company, council, crew, department, government, jury, party, public, staff, family**
- Words with 'ware' suffix are singular : **Software, hardware, silverware, streetware, chinaware, brassware, glassware, middleware, embeddedware.**
- The following, although appear plural, are used as singular : **Mathematics, economics, measles, apparatus, wages, species, politics.**

Target Exercise 2

Directions Identify the subjects in the following and choose the correct – singular or plural – verb.

1. The committee **is/are** seriously considering the matter.
2. During recession, not even the Mumbai public **has/have** enough money to meet its needs.
3. The public **is/are** dispersing away from the monotonous show.
4. The majority **wins/win** what the minority **loses/lose**.
5. The government **has/have** fallen after the trust vote.
6. The government **wants/want** to keep the plan to themselves.
7. Two **deer/deers** were killed by the poachers.
8. The army **has/have** besieged the city and is poised to launch further attacks.
9. The police **has/have** arrived and are investigating the matter.
10. The issue remained unresolved as the committee **was/were** divided on the subject.
11. The scissors **was/were** there but the tailor could not see them as his spectacles **was/were** not on his nose.
12. Brazil **is/are** the winning team.

Answers 1. are—the members and not the agency 2. has—one entity—its need 3. are—different members of public in different directions 4. wins, loses—one entity 5. has—the entire one government 6. want—to themselves means members of the government 7. deer—no use of deers exists 8. has—army is used as singular—is poised 9. have—police is used as plural—are investigating 10. were—as divided 11. were, were—scissors and spectacles are used as plural—could not see them 12. are—a team here refers to players as in 'India are on the ground'.

Structure Rule

Some **nouns** never change into a **plural form even if used as plural**—apparatus, scenery, jewellery, machinery, offspring, information, stationery, aircraft, dozen, hundred, furniture.

- The pronouns **each** and **one** make the subject **singular**. *eg*,
 - (i) **Each** of the Chief Ministers of the states *was* present in the meeting.
It means **each one** of the ministers of states.
 - (ii) **One** of the boys *is* to be blamed.
Who is to be blamed – one boy or all the boys?
- **Somebody**, **nobody** are singular but **every** and **none** can be used both as singular and plural.
- The conjunction '**and**' makes the subject **plural** when combining two or more nouns or pronouns. *eg*,
 - (i) **Jack, John and Jill** *are* coming to meet me.
 - (ii) **He** and **I** *are* going to welcome them.
- If the conjunction—**or**, **nor**—combines the nouns or pronouns, then the number of the last noun or pronoun is decisive. *eg*,
 - (i) Two bikes or **a car** *is* enough to carry us all.
 - (ii) The coach or **the players** *are* responsible for the defeat.
 - (iii) She, they or **I** *am* supposed to look after the people here.
- Sometimes **the subject is a non-finite verb** which is **always singular**. *eg*,
 - (i) *Smoking* is injurious to health. Non-finite (Gerund)
 - (ii) *To err* is human, *to forgive* is divine. Non-finite (Infinitive)
 Therefore, the subject of a sentence is either a noun or a pronoun or sometimes a non-finite.

Target Exercise 3

Directions Identify the subject whether it is singular or plural and then make a better choice of the given verbs.

1. Each of the candidates **was/were** awarded a certificate for participation.
2. Either of those dresses **is/are** suitable for the party.
3. Either the student or his parents **has/have** to be present in the function.
4. Everybody or anybody **is/are** able to answer these questions.
5. Neither of them **is/are** an expert of the subject.
6. The ones who **is/are** found guilty must be punished.
7. You or she **has/have** to be blamed for the accident.
8. They and I **was/were** present there last night.
9. Jessica is absent, but some of her class **is/are** present.
10. No one **know/knows** what happens after death.

Answers 1. was—means each one 2. is—one of the dresses 3. have—the last noun parents 4. is 5. is—not one of them 6. are—ones is plural 7. has—the last subject she 8. were—and makes the subject plural 9. are—class means classmates here 10. knows—no one is singular.

Type 2 : Error of Tense

Checking the tense of the verb in a sentence is another very important thing in sentence correction exercise.

You need to know, "Is the tense of the verb correct?"

Consider the following sentences :

(i) **Yesterday** I **met** him.

(ii) She **said** she *would* meet him.

Yesterday and **said** fixes the time of the verb to be past. Therefore, we have used the past forms of 'meet' and 'will'.

However, for the present time, we say :

(i) I **always** *meet* him at the station.

(ii) She **says** she *will* meet him.

Always and **says** refer to the present and 'meet' and 'will' are the present forms of the verbs.

- **Is, am** and **are** are the present forms and their past forms are **was** and **were**.
- **Has** and **have** are the present forms and their past form is **had**.
- **Does** and **do** are the present forms and their past form is **did**.

- **Will, shall, can and may** are the present form modals and their past forms are **would, should, could and might** respectively.

It is important to know the correct past and past participle forms of the verbs. Broadly the verbs are conjugated in four different ways :

1. Those **which take ‘ed’** in their past and past participle forms such as **work-worked-worked, enquire-enquired-enquired, lie- lied-lied or try-tried-tried**. Some more such verbs are—play, request, flow, die, please.
2. Those **which remain same** in all their forms such as **cast-cast-cast, burst-burst-burst, cut-cut-cut or shut-shut-shut**. Some more such verbs are—put, hit, spread, let, set.
3. Those **which take same past and past participle forms** such as **buy-bought- bought, say-said-said, hold-held-held or win-won-won**. Some more such verbs are—teach-taught-taught, catch-caught-caught, make-made-made, bleed-bled-bled, keep-kept- kept, dig-dug-dug.
4. Those **which are different in all the three forms** such as **see-saw-seen, sing-sang-sung; bear-bore-borne, write-wrote-written**. Some more such verbs are—eat-ate-eaten, drink-drank- drunk, break-broke-broken, bite-bit-bitten, take-took- taken, begin-began-begun.

The second forms of the verb are the simple past forms and the third forms of the verb (or the past participle) are the past perfect forms used with has, have or had. The third forms are also used in the passive voice sentences.

Perfect Tenses

- The woman **has done** her household work.
- I **have written** five letters to him so far.
- The train **had gone** before we reached the station.

Passive Voice

- All household work in this house **is done** by the servants.
- Five novels **have been written** by the new writer so far.
- The train **will be caught** by us if we hurry.

Table of Tenses

Tense	Present	Past	Future
SIMPLE Active	She + <i>writes</i> (VI) + slogans. I/We/You/They write slogans.	She <i>wrote</i> (V2) slogans.	She <i>will write</i> (VI) slogans.
SIMPLE Passive	Slogans <i>are written</i> (V3) by her.	Slogans <i>were written</i> (V3) by her.	Slogans <i>will be written</i> (V3) by her.
USAGE	For habit, repetitive action and permanent situation; usually with words like daily, always, never, sometimes.	past events unconnected with the Present; or with past-time reference such as yesterday, in 1954, last week, five months ago, in the ancient times.	Information about the Future with or without future reference such as tomorrow, after two days, in fifteen minutes.
CONTINUOUS Active	She <i>is writing</i> slogans.	She <i>was writing</i> slogans.	She <i>will be writing</i> slogans.
CONTINUOUS Passive	Slogans <i>are being written</i> (V3) by her.	Slogans <i>were being written</i> (V3) by her.	Slogans <i>will be being written</i> (V3) by her.
USAGE	Continuing action at the time of speaking, these days in general or changing developments on the earth with or without the use of now, at present, at the moment, these days, look, still	Continuing action at a particular past time with the time words, phrases or clauses such as at this time yesterday, when you came etc. referred or implied.	Continuing situation at a future time with a reference to this time next year/tomorrow.
PERFECT Active	She has written (V3) slogans.	She <i>had written</i> (V3) slogans.	She <i>will have written</i> (V3) slogans.
PERFECT Passive	Slogans <i>have been written</i> (V3) be her.	Slogans <i>had been written</i> (V3) by her.	Slogans <i>will have been written</i> (V3) by her.

Tense	Present	Past	Future
USAGE	Past action with some present connection usually completed in the past with or without the words <i>already, never, yet, just now, till now</i> etc. with the time reference using <i>for</i> or <i>since</i> .	Action before a particular past time usually with <i>before, after, when</i> etc.	completion by a particular future time such as <i>by this time tomorrow/next year/next week</i> .
PERFECT CONTINUOUS Active	She <i>has been writing</i> slogans.	She <i>had been writing</i> slogans.	She <i>will have been writing</i> slogans.
PERFECT CONTINUOUS Passive	Slogans <i>have been being written</i> (V3) by her.	Slogans <i>had been being written</i> (V3) by her.	Slogans <i>will have been being written</i> (V3) by her.
USAGE	Past action continued up to the present (uncompleted) usually with the time reference using <i>for</i> or <i>since</i> .	Continuation up to a particular past time.	Continued up to a particular future time.

Target Exercise 4

Directions Choose the correct forms of the verbs in the following.

1. He was **choose/ chose/chosen** leader of the group.
2. I have **do/did/done** my work.
3. The letter was **write/wrote/written** by the clerk.
4. You have **break/broke/broken** the window pane.
5. Who has **take/took/taken** my pen?
6. The bananas have been **eat/ate/eaten** by the cow.
7. A beautiful song in this movie has been **sing/sang/sung** by the new singer.
8. He has **catch/catched/caught** cough.
9. The magician **cast/casted** a spell and turned the rat into a horse.
10. A lot has been **say/says/said** about life and death.

Answers 1. chosen – passive 2. done 3. written – passive 4. broken 5. taken 6. eaten 7. sung 8. caught 9. cast—the past of cast is cast 10. said

Target Exercise 5

Direction A. Check what is correct—**simple present** or **present continuous**.

Is it **habitually done** or is a **repeated** action? Choose **simple present**.

Is it **longer** or **continued** action? Choose **present continuous**.

1. Look! They **talk and while away/are talking and whiling away** their time.
2. An apple a day **keeps/is keeping** the doctor away.
3. By profession an author **writes/is writing** a book whereas an artist **creates/is creating** a picture.
4. The projects that the government **takes up/is taking up** these days are all dominated by modern technologies.
5. The river **flows/is flowing** down the mountain and **goes/is going** to the ocean.

Answers 1. are talking and whiling away—'look' indicates it is happening before our eyes at the moment 2. keeps—eating healthy diet always keeps diseases away, not just at the moment 3. writes, creates—profession-wise activities are timeless, not temporary, at the moment or time-bound 4. is taking up—these days only, not always 5. flows, goes—not just now they are flowing or going

Structure Rule

The verbs that cannot be used in continuous tense

Some verbs express not actions, or happenings but **sense perceptions** such as *see, hear, smell, taste, feel* or **possession** such as *own, possess, have, hold* or some **insight or idea** such as *believe, realize, obsess* etc. Such verbs are usually **not used in the continuous tense**. Sometimes when they are used in the continuous tense they lose their usual meaning. eg. The judge is hearing the case at the moment.

Direction B. Check what is correct—*simple past or present perfect.*

Is the **past time mentioned** or indicated? Choose **simple past**.

Is the **past time connected or related with the present** time somehow? Choose **present perfect**.

1. I feel proud of my team as it **performed/has performed** quite well.
2. The Prime Minister **observed/has observed** many changes in the rural areas when he last visited the countryside.
3. Since, he changed job he **found/has found** more time to relax and enjoy his hobby.
4. Paul may lose his car because **he did not pay/has not paid** his instalments for three months.
5. The report **was tabled/has been tabled** in the parliament yesterday.

Answers 1. has performed—feel proud is present, therefore the past performance gets related to the present 2. observed—when? When he last visited—it mentions the past time 3. has found—since means from then till now; therefore since/for take perfect tenses only 4. has not paid 5. was tabled—not related with now, but isolated past that is yesterday.

Direction C. Check what is correct—*simple past or past continuous.*

If out of the two actions in the past one is longer than the other, the **shorter** will take **simple past** and the **longer past continuous**. The actions might be either **both short or both long**; and in such a case either **both** will be **simple past** or **both past continuous**.

1. While I **waited/was waiting** for my bus she was running after hers.
2. We saw a bus fallen when we **went/were going** to Haridwar.
3. She **burnt/was burning** her finger while she was cooking.
4. A boy **fell/was falling** from a train when it was moving at full speed.
5. Everyone had already gone but she still **worked/was still working** in the office.

Answers 1. was waiting—waiting and running both longer actions 2. were going—continued, longer action 3. burnt—burning is short and quick 4. fell—falling is relatively very short action 5. was still working—continued action.

Direction D. Check what is correct—*simple past or past perfect.*

What **happened before** the other? The earlier action takes **past perfect** and the **later** action takes **simple past**.

Do you intend to mention two past actions one after the other? If no, use simple past.

If yes, use past perfect.

1. The train **went/had gone** before we reached the station.
2. The rival countries **fretted and fumed/had fretted and fumed** before the war finally broke out.
3. He **went/had gone** out after he had eaten his lunch.
4. The farmer sold the crop after he **harvested/had harvested** it.
5. The Indians had fought a long struggle before they **attained/had attained** independence.

Answers 1. had gone—happened first, then reached station 2. had fretted and fumed—happened first, before the war 3. went—ate lunch first, then went 4. had harvested—harvested first, then sold 5. attained—first fought, then attained independence.

Direction E. Check what is correct—*simple future, future continuous or future perfect.*

1. I **will complete/will have completed** this project tomorrow.
2. I **will be completing/will have completed** this project at this time tomorrow.
3. I **will be completing/will have completed** this project by this time tomorrow.
4. I **will be passing/will have passed** my MBA by the time your return from abroad.
5. She **will repay/will have repaid** her loan by the period for the same expires.

Answers 1. will complete—just future intention 2. will be completing—‘at a particular point of time in future’ is used for continued action in future 3. will have completed—‘till or by a particular time in future’ is used for completion of work 4. will have passed—similar to 3 5. will have repaid—similar to 4.

Type 3 : *Error of Conditional Sentences*

Pattern I

If + Subject + Verb (in the first form) – Subject + Will + Verb (in the first form)

If + you	+ allow	-I	+will	+ go.
If + it	+ rains	-he	+will	+ not come.
If + one	+ promises	-one	+ must	+ keep it.
If + you	+ work hard	-you	+ can	+ succeed.

These sentences express what is **probable to happen** in future under particular conditions. The first parts of the sentences **beginning with 'if'** are the conditions and the second parts are the intentions or the **likely happenings in future**. The first takes the **simple present** form and the second **simple future**.

They can be stated reversing the order :

I **will go** if you **allow**.

He **will not come** if it **rains**.

One **must keep** it if one **promises**.

You **can succeed** if you **work hard**.

Pattern II

If + Subject + Verb (in the second form) –
Subject + Would + Verb (in the first form)

If + I	+ knew	- I	+ would	+ tell you
If + the office	+ had money	- it	+ would	+ give away the salary.
If + I	+ were the President	- I	+ would	+ honour the learned.
If + women	+ had power	- they	+ would	+ rule better.

These sentences express some **hypothetical probability** or supposition or just an assumption. They mean 'I don't know so I can't tell you'; 'the office doesn't have money so it cannot pay salary'; 'I am not the President otherwise I would honour the learned'; 'women don't have power otherwise they would rule better'.

These sentences can also state the second part first.

Pattern III

If + Subject + Verb (had + the third form) –
Subject + Would have + 3rd form of Verb

If + it	+ had rained	- the farmers	+ would have	+ grown crops.
If + they	+ had worked	- they	+ would have	+ succeeded.
If + we	+ had reached on time		+ would have	+ caught the train.
If + the doctor	+ had come on time	- the patient	+ would not have	+ died

These sentences express something that **could not happen in the past because of the lack of some required condition**. It expresses some sort of regret. It did not rain so farmers could not grow crops; they did not work hard so they could not succeed; we did not reach on time and so we could not catch the train; the doctor did not come on time and so the patient could not be saved.

You must have noticed that the verb in

Pattern I is the **first form** (the **present**) and the **first form** of future (**will**) indicating some future intentions.

Pattern II is the **second form** (the **past**) and the **second form** of future (**would**) indicating hypothesis or supposition in present meaning.

Pattern III is had + third form (the **past perfect**) and would have + third form (**future perfect**) some conditional regret about the past.

Target Exercise 6

Direction A. Choose the better option in the following conditional sentences.

1. If the recession continues, the industry **will not grow /would not grow**.
2. The Prime Minister **announces /will announce** the project if the parliament approves it.
3. If the fire-brigade had reached on time, the property **would be saved /would have been saved** from destruction.
4. If I knew the answers, I **would pass /would have passed** the examination.
5. If there **is /will be** a sudden rain, the city drowns under water-logging.

Answers 1. will not grow—continues is present 2. will announce—approves is present, P.M.'s decision depends on approval 3. would have been saved—had reached is past perfect, talks about the past 4. would pass—knew is simple past, second form of the verb 5. is—'if' part of the sentence does not take 'will', 'would' or 'would have'.

Direction B. Wish and the subjunctive case.

I wish I knew. I wish you came.	–	present meaning
I wish I would know. I wish you would come.	–	future meaning
I wish I had known. I wish you had come.	–	past meaning

Choose the better option in the following conditional sentences.

1. They cheated me. I wish I **knew /had known** them.
2. The party was such a fun. I wish you **would come /had come**.
3. The star is in the town and she is entertaining her guests. She wishes she **were free /would be free**.
4. They reached late to the funeral. They wish they **reached /had reached** on time.
5. Tomorrow everybody would enjoy. You wish you **would join /would have joined** the party.

The second most important question that one must ask in the sentence correction exercise is “Is the tense of the verb correct?” This is the rule no. TWO

Answers 1. had known—past meaning because cheated is past 2. had come—past meaning as was is past 3. were free—present meaning as 'is' is present 4. had reached—reached is past 5. would join—future meaning as tomorrow is used.

Direction C. Make a choice of the correct verb form.

1. Thank God! We reached on time. If there had been jam on the highway, we **would be /would have been** late for reception.
2. If you **woke /had woken** me up earlier, we would have gone there together.
3. Last night the residents **assembled /had assembled** to discuss the occurrence of theft in the locality.
4. The students decided to donate blood after they **saw /had seen** the plight of the injured in various accidents in a documentary film.
5. The newspaper **reported /has reported** seven cases of gruesome crime in the city yesterday.
6. An enquiry committee has been formed as devastating poverty and indebtedness **forced /have forced** farmers in the country to commit suicide.
7. Since I changed job I **found /have found** no time to relax and enjoy my hobby.
8. If Dave **doesn't /won't drive** carefully, he will cause an accident.
9. Unless the striking workers and the management **talk /don't talk**, the matter cannot be resolved.
10. The ministers **have sworn /had sworn** that they will maintain the secrecy of their departments.

Answers 1. would have been 2. had woken 3. assembled 4. had seen 5. reported 6. have forced 7. have found 8. doesn't 9. talk—unless means if not 10. have sworn

Structure Rule

'Have' and 'hold' are used in the continuous form as in 'He **is having** bath' or 'She **is holding** a flower'. But **have** here means **take** and **hold** means **wield, take or keep in hand**. We, however, **CANNOT** say 'They **are having or holding** some property in this town'. We should, instead, say, 'They **have or hold** some property in this town'. The verb 'have' is **used in three different ways** :

1. I am **having my lunch** at the moment. It means 'I am **taking**'.
2. He **has** some industry in this town. It means 'He **possess or own**'.
3. We **have done** our work. It means 'work is completed' and 'have' denotes the **perfect tense**.

Type 4 : *Error of Participles*

What function do the –ing verbs do in the following sentences?

- (i) **Smoking** is injurious to health.
- (ii) **Swimming** is a good exercise.
- (iii) He has given up **smoking**.
- (iv) She has started **swimming**.
- (v) They are taking lesson in **swimming**.

They function as the subject or object in the sentence. If you ask the question ‘what is injurious or a good exercise’ or ‘what has he given up or started or is taking lesson in’ you will get the –ing words as answer.

You should ask ‘what’ questions before the verb to know the subject and after the verb to know the object in the sentence.

Now look at the following sentences. How are the –ing word different from those used above?

- (i) **Smoking** he entered the hall.
- (ii) **Swimming** they crossed the flooded river.

In the sentences above the words **smoking** and **swimming** don’t answer the question ‘what entered or who crossed’ but tell how he entered or how they crossed.

We can also say :

- (i) **While smoking** he entered the hall.
- (ii) **While he was smoking** he entered the hall.
- (iii) He entered the hall **when he was smoking**.

These are different ways of combining two sentences.

Smoking is a participle and the **main function of a participle is to combine two sentences**.

The two sentences, in this case, are :

He was smoking. At that very same time he entered the hall. Or,

He entered the hall. At that very same time he was smoking.

Consider the other sentence :

Swimming they crossed the flooded river.

If we split the same, we can say :

They swam. This is how they crossed the river. Or,

They crossed they river by swimming. Or,

By swimming they crossed the river.

However, we can’t say the above sentences in the following manner :

Smoking the hall was entered by him. Or,

Swimming the flooded river was crossed by them.

Why? Because the one who smoke was he and not the hall; or, those who swam were they and not the flooded river.

Consider the following sentences :

- (i) Writing a novel, his name became famous.
- (ii) Having been a very good scientist, they made him the president.

Ask ‘who wrote the novel his name or some person?’ It was some person. The sentence, therefore, should be ‘Writing a novel, he became famous’.

In the second sentence, who was a scientist–they or the president? It was the president. Therefore, the sentence should be ‘Having been a very good scientist, he was made president by them’.

It is clear from the above discussion that the doer of the participle verb should not be distanced from it or interrupted by any other subject, noun or verb.

If a sentence starts with a participle, ask : “Is the subject or doer close to the participle?”

This is the rule no. THREE

Target Exercise 7

Directions *Underline the subjects that are misplaced.*

1. Being a great king, people respected Akbar.
2. Taking all his bag and baggage, a distant relative was visited by him.
3. Making some beautiful movies, the Filmfare awarded him with the most prestigious honour.
4. Having checked the engine and petrol in their car, their journey was resumed.
5. Looking through the view-finder, some strangers were seen standing at the door.
6. Calling him on phone, he was informed of the news by me.
7. Singing sweetly and walking smoothly, the bride was taken home by the palanquin bearers.
8. Eating too much his health was spoiled.
9. Being a famous actor, the school invited him to be the chief guest on the Annual Day function.
10. Finding some talent in him, they employed him in the key position of the organization.

Answers 1. Akbar was respected by people 2. he visited a distant relative 3. he bagged the Filmfare award 4. they resumed their journey 5. I/he/she saw some strangers 6. I informed him 7. the palanquin bearers took the bride 8. he spoilt his health 9. he was invited 10. he was employed.

Type 5 : Error of Nouns

In a sentence when a few nouns or verbs occur in a group or list, they are supposed to be in the same form—either all infinitive (to go), all participle (going) or all noun (gait).

Look at this :

- (i) Measures have been taken **to generate** energy, **to conserve** it and **for its equitable distribution**.

The above sentence can be corrected in the following possible ways :

Measures have been taken **to generate** energy, **to conserve** it and **to distribute** it equitably.

Measures have been taken **for generating** energy, **conserving** it and **distributing** it equitably.

Measures have been taken **for the generation** of energy, **its conservation** and **equitable distribution**.

Consider the following :

- (ii) **Infant** is the first stage of life, **boyhood** the second and **adolescent** the third.

The stages are **infancy**, **boyhood** and **adolescence**; infant and adolescent are persons in these stages.

Therefore, the sentence should read :

Infancy is the first stage, **boyhood** the second and **adolescence** is the third.

- (iii) The **breadth** was five centimetre, the **length** ten and it was three centimetre **high**.

The breadth and **length** are alright but instead of 'it was three centimetre high' it should be 'the **height** was three centimetre'.

In order to be able to check this kind of error in a sentence, knowing different forms of the same word is useful. Look at a few formations of words here.

Structure Rule

There is big list of such words. Therefore, a higher proficiency word-formation is advisable. Refer to the relevant word-formation chapter in this book.

A few of the nouns and adjectives are given here :

Mother, motherhood, maternity; poor, poverty; patriot, patriotism; hero, heroism; bankrupt, bankruptcy; vacant, vacancy; diligent, diligence; garrulous, garrulity.

Target Exercise 8

Directions *Choose the correct noun form.*

1. What **apparatus/apparatuses** do you use for performing this experiment?
2. There are no **machinery/machineries** to resolve the matter.
3. The two **hundred/hundreds** of hens lay about thirty **dozen/dozens** of eggs every week.
4. The **scenery/sceneries** of the Himalayas keep beckoning us.
5. The **offspring/offsprings** of this species leave their parents as soon as they mature.
6. These pieces of **jewellery/jewelleries** are designed by a highly acclaimed expert.

7. All kinds of **stationary/stationeries** are sold here.
8. We get a lot of **information /informations** from the internet.
9. Beautiful **furniture /funitures** made the house elegant.
10. Many sophisticated **aircraft /aircrafts** have been purchased by the Indian Air Force recently.

After checking the subject-verb agreement, tense and participle, you need to ask,
"Are the nouns and verbs in their proper forms confirming the parallelism?"

This is the rule no. FOUR

Answers 1. apparatus 2. machinery 3. hundred, dozen 4. scenery 5. offspring 6. jewellery
7. stationary 8. information 9. furniture 10. aircraft

Type 6 : Error of Articles

There is **a man** waiting for you outside the gate. **The man** is holding some files.

In the first time reference, we say 'a man' that is 'any man' and when we refer to the same man again we use 'the' before man. 'The' makes it a definite or particular man.

eg, **The girl** whom we met yesterday has come again.

In the above sentence also we talk about a definite girl, the one *whom we met yesterday*; therefore, we use 'the' before 'girl'.

Consider this :

Please give me **a pen** to write; not **the one** you gave me earlier but **another**.

'**A pen**' means any pen; '**the one**' is for a particular pen or the earlier one; and '**another**' means any other.

When we mean **any**, we use '**a**' or '**an**'; but when we mean a **particular one**, we use '**the**'.

Target Exercise 9

Directions Choose the right article in the following sentences.

1. Have your seen **a/the** movie playing at Satyam?
2. Is this **a/the** book that you gave me last week?
3. **A/The** good leader leads the country to prosperity.
4. **A/The** people of America are more liberal than **a/the** people of Europe.
5. Where is Mother? She is working in **a/the** kitchen.

Answers 1. the 2. the 3. a 4. the, the 5. the

Structure Rule

Sometimes **this, that, these or those** can be used in place of '**the**' and so can help in making sure whether the use of '**the**' is required or not.

'Give me the pen' can be also said as 'Give me this/that pen'.

'The candidates interested can apply soon' can also be said as 'Those candidates who are interested can apply soon'.

Many a time replacing '**the**' with one of the four words can prove to be a litmus test for the correctness of **the** in the sentence.

But **No** article is used with **man, nature or God**.

Man proposes, God disposes.

What man has done to nature!

BUT

The gods of pantheons were worshipped by the Greeks.

For **genetic** or **class** references :

The dog (kind of animal) **is** a faithful animal.

Dogs are faithful animals.

The elephant is a sensible creature.

Elephants are sensible creatures.

NOT

Dog is a faithful creature.

The dogs are faithful creatures.

Elephant is a sensible creature.

The elephants are sensible creatures.

When we mean the entire **species** or the **community** or the **group** and **not** any **specific** dog or dogs and elephant or elephants we don't use 'the' with their plural forms.

These also indicate groups or community of people:

The poor (people) are the most neglected lot.

The rich in this city are quite arrogant.

The injured are taken to the hospital.

Target Exercise 10

Directions Choose the correct option.

1. **Elephants/the** elephants can swim very well.
2. She is very fond of **horses/the** horses.
3. **Man /the** man is mortal.
4. **Injured /the** injured were taken to the hospital.
5. **Rich /the** rich have always ridiculed poor/the poor.
6. **Nature/the** nature has bestowed with opulence.
7. **Gods/the** gods the Hindus worship are not the same the Greeks used to worship.
8. There has always been a fight between **devil/the** devil and divine/the divine.
9. The reformers have come forward for the emancipation of **down-trodden/the down-trodden**.
10. **Unemployed /the** unemployed are more concerned to get an employment than to know the number of the unemployed in the country.

Answers 1. elephants 2. horses 3. man 4. the injured 5. the rich, the poor 6. nature 7. the gods 8. the devil, the divine 9. the down-trodden 10. the unemployed

Some Conventional Usage of *the*

- Before a geographical entity—**The continent** but **NOT** the Asia, the Europe
- The ocean—**the Indian Ocean**, the Atlantic, the Pacific
- The river—**the Yamuna**, the Thames, the Tiber, the Nile
- The island—**the Andman** and Nicobar, the Lakshdweep
- The mountain—**the Himalayas**, the Andes
- The bay or gulf—**the Bay of Bengal**, the Persian Gulf
- The archipelago—**the Indonesian Archipelago**
- The deserts—**the Sahara**, the Kalahari, the Arabian Sands
- But **NOT** with
- Mountain peaks—**Mt Everest**, **Mt Kilimanjaro**
- Lakes—**Dal Lake**, **Chilka Lake**, **Lake Michigan**
- Names of places beginning with proper nouns—**Delhi University**, **Indira Gandhi International Airport**, **Mahatma Gandhi Road**
- Before the celestial bodies—**the planet**—the earth; the **star**—the sun; the **satellite**—the moon, the titan.
- But **NOT** with the remaining planets such as **Mars**, **Jupiter**.
- Before the names of religious groups and religious and famous books—**the Hindu**, the Christian, **the Quran**, the Bible, the Iliad, the Mahabharat, the Ramayan
- But **NOT** with the names of religions—**Hinduism**, Christianity, Islam
- The republic, the kingdom, the union—**The People's Republic of China**, the United Kingdom, **the United States of America**
- The nationalities—**the British**, the Indian, the American, the Japanese
- With superlative— **the best**, the rich
- The ordinals—**the first**, the last, the next
- Some comparatives—**the better of the two**; the more you try, the more you succeed
- For the head of a group—**the President**, the Prime Minister, the Head Boy.
- But he was **elected President**, **appointed Head Boy**

- The President of the country but just **President Pratibha Patil**.
- Time expressions—**in the morning**, in the afternoon, in the evening but at noon, at night, by day etc
- When names used as adjective—Kalidas is **the Shakespeare** of India. Mumbai is the Manchester of India.

Target Exercise 11

Directions Insert 'the' where required.

1. Who is considered Bradman of India?
2. Martin Luther King, who led Gandhian Movement against racial discrimination, brought considerable amount of justice and equality for the blacks in the US.
3. The government failed because of its lack of understanding of economics of the situation.
4. The Christians who go to church everyday are rather more pious than those who go occasionally.
5. Nilgiris are the most productive mountains of the south.
6. Obama has been elected President of United States of America.
7. What kind of person he is?
8. Great poet and writer, K. Abraham, is no more.
9. He is not comfortable in eating the dish with knife and fork.
10. He left school when he was thirteen and started going to college.

Answers 1. the Bradman 2. the Gandhian 3. the economics 4. not required 5. the Nilgiris 6. the United States 7. not required 8. the great 9. not required 10. not required

The usage of indefinite article—a/an

The countable singular noun takes 'a' or 'an'.

eg, **A man** is waiting for you. **A sovereign state** needs **a government** of its own. **An apple a day** keeps the doctor away.

The only difference between **a** and **an** is that a noun or adjective beginning with a vowel sound—the sound of **a, ai, aa, e, ei, ee, ai, ia, o, ou** etc—such as **apple, iodine, end, air, heir, exact, eye, oriental, owl** takes 'an' in order to keep the two vowel sounds (a and the first sound of the word) from getting mingled.

For example, if we say a orange, a office, a umbrella, a honest man, a MP, it may create a phonetic problem in speaking and listening. Therefore, we should say an orange, an office, an umbrella, an honest man, an MP, an NRI, an heir, an hour.

However, a university, a one eyed man, a one rupee note are correct although the start with a vowel but produce a consonant sound—yu, wa, etc.

Target Exercise 12

Directions Correct the following sentences :

1. Is there the post office near here?
2. An stitch on time saves nine.
3. It requires an energy.
4. She has got a cold and cough.
5. You need very good knowledge of the subject and deep understanding of the problem to get through this examination.
6. He helped a honest one eyed man.
7. He is a doctor but his wife is a MLA.
8. There is a time to work and the time to play.
9. Where there is the will, there is the way.
10. A umbrella is useless in a stormy weather.

Answers 1. a post office 2. a stitch 3. requires energy 4. got cold and 5. a very good knowledge, a deep understanding 6. an honest 7. an MLA 8. and a time 9. a will, a way 10. an umbrella.

Type 7 : *Error of Determiners*

I. **Some, any = indefinite number or quantity**

- Some is used with **positive sentences** and **any** with **negative sentences and questions**.

eg,

- There is **some good news** for you. Uncountable positive
- **Some books** are lying on the table. Countable positive
- There is not **any water** left in the bottle. Uncountable negative
- Are there **any letters** in the letter-box? Countable question
- **Some** is sometimes used **in questions**.

eg,

Could you lend me **some money**? Are there **some boys** in the next room? Where is the noise coming from?

Here some stress is on the positive quantity and number.

II. **Much, many = big quantity (uncountable) or big number (countable)**

eg,

- (i) There is not **much water** left in the pond.
- (ii) There are not **many followers** of Gandhiji these days.
- (iii) Too **much milk** will be required to make these sweets.
- (iv) **Many parliamentarians** were absent on the first day of the session.
- (v) How **much money** do you want?
- (vi) You can take as **many currency notes** as you want.

III. **A little = small quantity—uncountable**

A few = small number—countable

eg,

- (i) Only **a little rice** is left. We will have to manage with it.—small amount
- (ii) Only **a few people** came in the party.—small number

eg,

- **Little** (without 'a') hardly any or not any—uncountable
- **Few** (without 'a') hardly any or not any—countable
- (i) There is **little sense** in crying over the spilt milk.—no sense
- (ii) **Few know** what happens after death.—nobody

IV. **More** comparative of much and many

Less comparative of little;

- Both **more** and **less** are used with 'than'.

eg,

- (i) I don't have **more money** today. It is incorrect. More than what or whom?
It should be **much money or enough money**.
- (ii) I want **more money** than what I have.
- (iii) I want **more money** than you have.
- (iv) There is **less sense** in talking with such a rude person. Less than what?
It should be **little sense or no sense**.
- (v) An idle talk is much **less important than** work.
- (vi) He earns **less than** a peon.

V. **Several** several is small number (countable) but more definite than some or a few

Enough sufficient number and quantity

eg,

- (i) Don't worry. There are **several policemen** to guard the place.
- (ii) Don't give me more. I have eaten **enough**.

Target Exercise 13

Directions Choose the correct determiner.

1. Could you lend me **some/any** of your books today?
2. You cannot buy anything with such **a little/less** amount of money.
3. He has **much/more** sense than you have.
4. There is not **much/more** scope in the conventional jobs these days.
5. Did you see **some/any** good movies during your visit to the town?
6. Very **few/a few** people true to their intentions.
7. **Little/a little** elegance is left in those arrogant youth.
8. An average Indian earns **much/enough** to maintain an honourable life.
9. If you are looking for some nice magazines, there are already **some/several** in the stall.
10. Help came but too late and too **little/less**.

Answers 1. some 2. a little 3. more 4. much 5. any 6. few 7. little 8. enough 9. several
10. little

Type 8 : Error of Adjectives

- **Earlier-later** : on an **earlier date** or a **later date**; used for **time**.
- **Former-latter** : out of two **names or things** mentioned, the **first** is **former** and the **second** is **later**.
- **Farther-further** :
 - (i) What will be his **further** strategy? Further means **next** in sequence here.
 - (ii) He mended his ways without any **further** delays. Further here means **additional**.
 - (iii) I come from a **farther place** than you do.
 - (iv) The USA is **further** from here than the UK.

In both (iii) & (iv) farther and further indicate **longer distances**. Both the words can be used for distance. For **addition or next**, only **further** can be used.
- **Older-elder** : There are two brothers **elder to** me; the second one is two years **older than** me. **Elder** indicates **seniority in relation, older seniority in age**. eg,
 - (i) How can I use insulting words for him? He is an **elder to** me. Senior in relation.
Persons not in relation cannot be compared by using 'elder'. Only their ages can be compared :
 - (ii) The Prime Minister of the country is much **older than** the President.

The order of the adverb

- MPT = Manner-Place-Time
 - Manner = slowly, steadily
 - Place = here, there, up, down
 - Time = before, ago, now, today

The next question to be asked is

"Are the articles, determiners and adjectives correctly used?"

This is the rule no. FIVE

Target Exercise 14

Directions Choose the correct adjective and adverb.

1. After killing Caesar, the conspirators **farther/further** wanted to kill Antony.
2. The enemy attacked **many places in the night aggressively/aggressively many places in the night**.
3. Out of Milton and Byron, the **earlier/former** is the better poet.
4. Although he studies in my class, he is three years **older/elder** than me.
5. **Later/latter** when he grew older, he realized his mistake.

Answers 1. further 2. aggressively many places in the night 3. former 4. older 5. later

Type 9 : *Error of Pronouns*

The forms of pronoun

Subjective forms : I, we, you, he, she, they, it.

Objective forms : me, us, you, him, her, them, it.

Possessive forms : my/of mine, our/of ours, your/of yours, his/of his, her/of hers, their/of theirs, its/of it.

- (i) His accomplishments are greater than my accomplishments.
- (ii) His accomplishments are greater **than mine**. Accomplishments are compared.
- (iii) He is greater **than me**. He and I are compared.
- (iv) He did it better **than I**. (than I did) The two subjects' doings are compared.

Notice the difference the above sentences. The first two mean same. Third and fourth compare two different things and so use different forms of personal pronoun.

The usage of it, its, it's, there, their

- **It** is used for a *thing, idea, animal, baby, child, kid* etc. Sometimes I, we, you, he, she, they are also used for them.
- **It** and **there** as *dummy subject or object*.

eg,

- (i) **It** is true. I knew **it**. Damn **it**. **It** rains. **It's** late. What time is **it** by your watch? **It's** useless to try once again. **It's** O.K. Is **it** you? **It** was I who was knocking on the door. **It** is foolish to talk in that way.
In the above sentences '**it**' does not mean anything but just fill the gap of a subject or an object.
- (ii) **There** was a king. Where **there** is a will, **there** is a way. How many friends of ours were **there** in the party? What time is **there** by your watch?
'**There**' does the same function as 'it' does. It fills the gap.
- (iii) The dog wags **its** tail on seeing its master.
Its tail means dog's tail or *the tail of the dog*.
- (iv) Let's hurry. **It's** getting late.
It's is the short or *contracted form of it is*. It is getting late.
- (v) They did **their** work and we ours.
Give **their** money back to them.
Their means belonging to them or possessed by them.
- (vi) It's **they** who know all about this.
It's **she** who needs your help.
It's **I** who prefer to listen to your music.

After it's or it is the subjective form of the personal pronoun is used and not the objective—them, her or me.

Target Exercise 15

Directions Choose the correct pronoun in the context.

1. One of the students did not submit **his/their/one's** assignment as per the instruction.
2. The baby flung **his/its** toy and lost **him/it** somewhere.
3. Passengers are advised to look after **there/their** luggage **himself/themselves**.
4. **There/their** were thousands of new articles **there/their**.
5. The elephant salutes by using **its/it's** trunk.
6. Please hurry. **Its/it's** getting late.
7. It is **I/me** who is knocking at the door.
8. What is **there/their** that shines?
9. I have done the painting better than **she/her**.
10. He is a very good friend of **my/mine**.

Answers 1. his—one student 2. its, it—used for baby and toy respectively 3. their, themselves—belonging to them; he—himself but they or passengers—themselves 4. there, there—used for place 5. its—belonging to it and not 'it is' 6. it's— it is 7. I—subjective form for the doer of the action—knocking 8. there—used for place 9. she—'better than she did' is curtailed here 10. mine—my friend but friend of mine.

Structure Rule

The Order of the Personal Pronoun

'You first' is a good manner in all cultures, and so it is in English.

Say 'you, he and I' for the good things these three do; and say 'I, you and he' for all the bad things they do. Credit should be given to others first and blame should be taken on oneself first. Therefore, the correct order of the Personal Pronoun is :

For all good things :

You, he and I have achieved remarkable *success*.

You, he and I; You and I or He and I

For all bad things :

I, you and he are responsible for the failure of the project.

I, you and he; I and you or I and he

Emphatic and Reflexive Pronouns

I did this work **myself**. *Who did? I myself*. I **myself** did this work. In both case 'myself' emphasizes only 'I' and nobody else did it. Therefore, myself is emphatic pronoun.

Notice its position. An emphatic pronoun can either be used soon after the subject or at the end of the sentence.

I saw **myself** in the mirror. 'Myself' answers 'I saw what or whom'. Therefore, 'myself' is used as the object of the verb 'saw'. It comes soon after the verb. Here 'myself' is reflexive pronoun. It reflects the action on the doer on himself.

The forms of emphatic and reflexive pronouns are :

I–myself; we–ourselves; you–yourself (singular)/yourselves (plural); she–herself; he–himself; it–itself; they–themselves.

Target Exercise 16

Directions Choose the correct pronoun in the context.

- Soliloquy is supposed to be in plays; one cannot to be talking to **oneself/himself** in real life.
- The dog stretched **himself/itself** after a long day's sleep.
- The baby laughed on seeing **herself/itself** in the mirror.
- The dictator **himself declared/declared himself** all powerful.
- The aging woman **herself was searching /was searching herself** in the young daughter.
- They **themselves were responsible/were responsible themselves** for their defeat.
- The leader told the people, "You **yourself/yourselves** have to build your nation; and no neighbour or a powerful county will come for your help."
- God helps those who help **himself/themselves**.
- "You **yourselves have to do/have to do yourselves** this assignment", the teacher remarked.
- She walked in a very arrogant manner presumably **to give herself/to herself give** some extra pride.

Answers 1. oneself 2. itself 3. itself 4. declared himself 5. was searching herself 6. themselves were responsible 7. yourselves 8. themselves 9. yourselves have to do 10. to give herself.

The usage of this, these, that, those

Read the following sentences :

The son of my boss and **the son of my neighbour** go to the same school.

The **job of my father** and **the job of my mother** are not same.

The **employees of this office** are as hard working as **that office**.

The culture of India is similar to **the culture of the south** Asian countries.

The feature of the Chinese people is similar to **the features of the Mongolians**.

Don't you feel they sound awkward or improper? What's wrong?

There is unnecessary and clumsy repetition of nouns. It should be avoided. The second time a suitable pronoun that matches with the noun should be used.

These sentences would be better said if we say them like these :

The son of my boss and **that of** my neighbour go to the same school.

The job of my father and **that of** my mother are not same.

The employees of this office are as hard working as **those of** that office.

The culture of India is similar to **that of** the south Asian countries.

The feature of the Chinese people is similar to **those of** the Mongolians.

It's **NOT** correct to say, '**One** should do **his or her** duty' but it should be, '**One** should do **one's** duty'.

Divya and Devika went to market to buy **her** dress. To buy who's dress—Divya's or Devika's? It **should be** to buy '**Divya's dress**' or '**Devika's dress**' or even '**their dress**'. The noun cannot be left ambiguous in a sentence.

Target Exercise 17

Directions Check the use of *this, that, these, those* in the given sentences and correct them.

1. The culture of our country is richer than any other country in the world.
2. The animals in this sanctuary are better off than that sanctuary.
3. The instructions came that one should be punctual in submitting his/her work.
4. Ravi, Sanchit and Arif have gone to by his guitar.
5. He, you and I are to be blamed for all the mess in the last evening's programme.

Answers 1. richer than that of any other country 2. are better off than those in that sanctuary 3. in submitting one's 4. to buy their guitar or Ravi's guitar or Sanchit's or Arif's—a pronoun should not be left ambiguous about the person it mentions 5. I, you and he are to be blamed.

Structure Rule

One, Ones, One's and Once

The various meanings of *one* :

A single, a particular but unspecified, with unknown person's name—one Ms Radhika, the same—one and the same, only—one and only, everyone—one and all, unknown somebody.

Ones as in 'those ones', 'these ones', 'the ones I am looking for'—plural of one.

One's means 'of somebody'.

Once as in 'give me a chance once'—for one time, as in 'once upon a time'—at some time in the past, all at once—suddenly.

The usage of *who, whom, who's, whose, that* and *which*

- Note the difference in the following sentences :
 - (i) My friend **who** owes me money is not seen these days.
 - (ii) My friend **whom** I owe money is not seen these days.
 - The big difference in the two sentences is that in the first, he has to give me money and in the second I have to give him money.
 - In place of 'who owes' we can say 'my friend owes' or 'he owes'. **Who**, my friend and he are all **subjective forms**.
 - In place of 'whom I owe' we can say 'I owe to my friend' or 'I owe him'. **Whom**, my friend and him are all **objective forms** here.
 - (iii) Do you know whose bicycle is this?
 - (iv) Tell me who's who in the new cabinet.
 - Whose means 'of whom' or 'belonging to whom'. The sentence can be restated as 'Do you know whom does the bicycle belong to?'
 - Who's is the contracted form of 'who is'. The sentence can be restated as 'Tell me who is who in the new cabinet'.
 - (v) The book **which you gave** me has been lost.
 - (vi) You can read the books **that are available** in the library.
 - 'Which you gave' emphasizes a particular book.
 - 'That are available' talks generally about all the books.
 - (vii) Name **the colour which you like** the most.
 - (viii) VIBGYOR represents **those seven colours which are** in the sun.
 - (ix) **These** are the **colours that are available** now.

- The first two sentences talk about a particular colour or colours whereas the last one talks about colours in general without emphasizing.
- **That and which** are usually used for animals, things, ideas, babies etc. Exceptionally, that and which can be used for people sometimes.
- **The people that dwelt** this earth before us were wise enough to preserve the environment.
- **Which of the people** are you talking about—the ones who were before the modern age or the ones a generation before us?

The sixth crucial question that you are supposed to ask is

“Are the forms of pronoun correct and do they agree with the related nouns and other pronouns?”

This is the rule no. SIX

Target Exercise 18

Directions Choose the correct form of the pronoun in the given sentences.

1. I met a man **who/whom** told me about my award.
2. I met a man **who/whom** I told about his award.
3. **Who's/whose** book is this?
4. This is not the doctor **who/whom** he referred to.
5. These are the holes in **which/that** those snakes live.
6. All **which/that** glitters is not gold.
7. All **which/that** know the truth don't always utter it.
8. There is hardly anyone **who/that** doesn't know about her.
9. Shakespeare was the most prolific writer **which/that** time has ever seen.
10. What is there in your hand **which/that** you have brought for me?

Answers. 1. who 2. whom 3. whose 4. whom 5. which 6. that 7. that 8. who 9. that 10. that

Type 10 : Error of Prepositions

Prepositions fix the position of a noun or verb in relation to another noun.

Place (point)

- **to, at, from**—to a point, at a point, from a point

eg,

- (i) She **went to** the hotel.
- (ii) I **met her at** the door.
- (iii) She **came from** Canada.

The hotel, the door and Canada are used as a point of arrival, meeting and departure.

Place (line)

- **on, off, across, over, along**—on the line, off the line, across the line, over the line, along the line

eg,

- (i) It was a foul as the ball **fell on** the line.
- (ii) **The fielder fell off** the line holding the ball and so it was a six.
- (iii) The ball **rolled across** the line. It was four.
- (iv) It was a clear six as **the ball went over** the line.
- (v) **The fielder ran along** the line towards the ball to save it from crossing the line.

Place (surface)

- **on, off, across, over, through**—on the surface, off the surface, across the surface, over the surface, through the surface

eg,

- (i) The passengers were **waiting on** the platform.
- (ii) A crowd pushed and **one of them fell off** the platform on the track.

- (iii) A vendor was **prowling across the platform** selling his newspaper.
- (iv) A crow **flew over the platform** snatching a piece of bread from a child.
- (v) Some trolleys were **piercing their way through the platform**.

Place (area)

- **in, into, out of, through**—was in the playground, came into the playground, came out of the playground, went through the playground
eg,
 - (i) The first team was **already in the playground**.
 - (ii) After five minutes the second team **came into the playground**.
 - (iii) After ten minutes one of the players **was sent out of the playground**.
 - (iv) The game was stopped and the refry went **through the playground to check** what was wrong.

Target Exercise 19

Directions Choose the correct preposition in the context.

1. During her visit to Mumbai, she stayed **in/at** her friend's home.
2. A dog ran **in/on** the middle of the road.
3. We were walking **on/along** the road when we saw an accident.
4. A crowd poured **in/into** the compartments of the train.
5. All through his journey, he kept looking **from/through** the window.
6. The car was standing **at/in** the farmhouse.
7. She is **at/in** the post office at the moment.
8. When the accident took place, the train really came **at/on** the platform instead of coming **at/on** the platform.
9. This chapter is consisted **of/off** eight vital segments.
10. The boy fell **of/off** the bus as it started moving.

Answers 1. at 2. in 3. along 4. into 5. through 6. at 7. in 8. on, at 9. of 10. off

Position

- **over, above**—A beautiful **carpet** was there all **over the floor**, a blue shining floor **under** the carpet, a ball thrown **over** the table, a shuttle shot **over** the net, a plane/helicopter hovering **over** the town, the sun shined vertically **over/above** head in mid summer, millions of poor have not roof **over/above** their head, an exquisite fan handing **over/above** the table, star shining like a diamond in the sky which is up **above** the world so high, **above** average marks/student, 40% people living **above** poverty line, the flooded river went **above** the danger mark
- **under, below**—a small child standing **below** the table, lived **under/below** the same roof, no man **under/below** the sky knows, ground hollow **below** the surface, **below** average, **below** the danger mark, **below** poverty line
- **under, underneath, beneath**—a carpet **underneath** the table, a cat sitting **under/beneath** the table, **underneath** the carpet polished and shimmering tiles seen here and there
- **in front of, behind, by, beside**—one chair **in front of** the table, another **behind** it, a small stool **in front of** a dressing table, wall **behind** the dressing table, the bed, the windows and doors hidden **behind** the curtains, two mongoose hiding **behind** the bushes, train came **behind** time means came late, before time is early
- **by, beside**—a side table **by/beside** the bed, sit **beside** me, a tower standing **by** the river, passed **by** me
- **round, around**—a shop **round** the corner (nearby), a car moved **around** the building/roundabout, turned **round and round**, the earth moving **round** the sun, the periphery **around** the shrine
- **in front of (just next in the row/line), opposite (facing), next (adjacent)**—sitting **in front of** me, sitting **opposite** facing each other, a building **opposite** the school across the road, a building **next** to it or **in front of** it, the girl **next** door
- **between, among**—stuffing **between** two slices of bread, no grudge **between** you and me, **between** 6 P.M. and 9 P.M., a woman sitting **between** two men, river flows **between** its banks, an orange in the bowl **among** many apples, a man sitting **among** many women

Target Exercise 20

Directions Choose the correct preposition in the context.

1. I was sitting behind him and he was **in front of/opposite** me.
2. Cross your finger; the good news is **round/around** the corner.
3. The number of people living **under/below** the poverty line has decreased in India.
4. Children **under/below** 18 years are not allowed in the movies having A-certificate.
5. Many personnel work **under/below** him.
6. The Commonwealth Games committee is unhappy as the preparations for the 2010 games are **in front of/behind** schedule.
7. He stood **by/beside** his friend in all his difficulties.
8. The house which was standing **between/among** the trees was well canopied from all sides.
9. The man was standing **by/on** the river and looking **at/around** the evening sky.
10. The area was evacuated as the level of water in the river went **over/above** the danger mark.

Answers 1. in front of 2. round 3. below 4. below 5. under 6. behind 7. by 8. among 9. by, at
10. above

Means and Instrument

- **by, in, from, with**—by hand, by air, by writing, cooked from oil/butter, with knife/screw-driver/hammer
eg,
 - (i) The money was delivered **by hand**.
 - (ii) The handicraft shop sells things made **by hand**.
 - (iii) Travelling **by air** is faster than travelling **by train or by car**.
 - (iv) We informed them **by writing** a message.
 - (v) Food is **cooked** here **from** pure butter.
 - (vi) He drove a nail in the wall **with a hammer**.

Time

- **at, on, in**—at 4 o'clock, on Monday, in March
- **for** (summed up time), **since** (beginning time)—**for** two hours, **since** morning
- **before, after**—woke **before** the day break, slept **after** the night fall
- **from-to, between-and**—**from** 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., **between** 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- **during, within, till**—**during** the entire day, **within** three days, **till** the day after tomorrow, **till** yesterday
eg,
 - (i) This happened at 5 **in** the morning **on** a Monday **in** January **in** 1992.
 - (ii) It has been raining **since** last week and it has already rained **for** seven days.
 - (iii) She worshipped **before** eating and she worshipped **after** eating.
 - (iv) The show runs **from** 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
 - (v) You can see the doctor **between** 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.
 - (vi) We went to Nainital **during** the holidays.
 - (vii) You will have to complete the test **within** the time provided.
 - (viii) I was quite unaware of this fact **till** yesterday.
 - (ix) They will keep the decision on hold **till** next week.

Cause, Purpose

- **of, from, for**—died **of** cholera, suffering **from** fever, worked **for** social welfare

Rate

- **at, by**—at the speed of 140 km/h, sugar sells **by** the kilogram, cloth **by** the metre and milk **by** the litre

Target Exercise 21

Directions Choose the correct preposition in the context.

1. The poacher killed the animal in one shot **from/with** his AK 47 gun.
2. Sugarcane should be better supplied **on/by** truck than **by/through** a train.
3. The news was first conveyed **on/by** a post card, then **through/by** a telegram.
4. The food cooked **in/from** ghee is preferred over the one cooked **by/from** oil.
5. Many people last year dies **from/of** swine flue.
6. The renowned agrarian leader stood **before/for** the cause of the farmers.
7. Apply **in/within** ten days or visit between Monday to/and Wednesday.
8. Sugar sells **at/by** Rs 40 a kilo these days.
9. In this strange part of the world they sell cloth **at/by** the kilogram.
10. The thief opened the lock **by/with** a hair-pin.

Answers 1. with 2. by, by 3. by, by 4. from, from 5. of 6. for 7. within, and 8. at 9. by 10. with

The usage of preposition with some words is fixed

Some of the most common ones are given below.

- Accustomed of = He was **accustomed of** working hard in his youth. (used to)
- Accused of = The man **accused of** stealing was sent to jail. (blamed of)
- Acquainted with = Please introduce him to me if you are **acquainted with** him. (know)
- Afraid of = Don't get **afraid of** that dog. It won't bite. (fear from)
- Agree to (idea) = The president **agreed to** the resolution and passed it. (accept)
- Agree with (person) = If you **agree with** me please support me. (have same opinion)
- According to = He was acquitted as he was innocent **according to** the jury. (in the opinion of)
- Adapted to = Man easily gets **adapted to** new environments. (change)
- Along with = The Prime Minister **along with** his retinue entered the hall. (together with)
- Associated with = He had long been **associated with** the organization before he retired. (worked with)
- Averse to = Initially people are **averse to** accepting their weakness, but with the passage of time they start realizing and correcting themselves. (unwilling to)
- Believe in (faith) = I **believe in** God. (have faith in)
- Belong to = As this country **belongs to** us, we **belong to** this country. (have a right over)
- Clever at = She is **clever at** painting and playing music, but I am **at** music. (skilled at)
- Congratulate on = I **congratulated** her **on** her great success. (greeted)
- Cure for = As man conquers a disease and find a **cure** for it, another pops up. (remedy for)
- Depend on = High rate of employment depends on **growth of** economy. (is related with)
- Derived from = Many English words are **derived from** Greek and Latin. (came/originate from)
- Details of = This new book contains **details of** her extensive journey. (description of)
- Different from = Village life is quite **different from** city life. (not same)
- Divide into = The property was **divided into** two parts and given to the two sons. (break into)
- Dream of = The henpeck husband could never **dream of** opposing his wife. (think of)
- Frightened of = Those **frightened of** obstacles never proceed ahead for success. (having fear of)
- Famous for = The city of Benaras is **famous for** its teeming ghats. (known for)
- Good at = He is quite **good at** convincing people in his favour. (skilled at)
- Ignorant of = Being **ignorant of** the consequences, the naives easily fall into bad habits. (not knowing)
- Increase in = There has been a tremendous **increase in** the multi-nationals in our country. (rise in)
- Insist on = The shopkeeper could not deny when she **insisted on** paying later. (said forcefully)
- Interested in = Work hard if you are **interested in** your progress. (want to)
- Lack of = **Lack of** money brings poverty and **lack of** knowledge ignorance. (devoid of, not having)

- Fond of = The mother was very **fond of** her youngest child. (loved/liked very much)
- Aim at = The shooter **aimed at** the target and shot accurately. (fix at the target)
- Laugh at = Don't **laugh at** those who are deprived of God's blessings. (ridicule, make fun of)
- Listen to = Hello! Please **listen to** me. (lend your ear, heed, pay attention to)
- Look at = What are you **looking at?** (see)
- Look after = The nurse **looked after** the child better than the mother. (to take care of, to rear)
- Look for = Have you lost anything? What are you **looking for** under the table. (to search for)
- Look into = I have requested the police commissioner **to look into** the matter of increasing crime in our locality. (investigate, to probe, examine)
- Married to = Sita was **married to** Ram and Ram **to** Sita after a Swayambar.
- Operate on = The doctors **operated on** the patient and transplanted his heart. (to cut to cure)
- Pay for = We need to **pay for** everything that we take in our lifetime. (return in money or kind)
- Pleased with = He is looking too **pleased with** himself. (amused, happy with)
- Prevent from = The strict administration **prevented** the riot **from** taking place. (avoided, stopped)
- Proof of = Many accused get punishment as they cannot produce **proof of** their innocence. (evidence of)
- Reason for = There cannot be a good **reason for** lethargy. (cause, excuse)
- Respond to = People **responded to** the call of the president and contributed generously for the cause of the flood victims. (acted positively, acted in favour)
- Remind of = This alluring smell of the flowers **remind me of** my childhood days in a garden. (reminiscent of, bring to memory)
- Shout at = Scolding or **shouting at** children does not help their cause in any way. (to be angry loudly, scold loudly)
- Sorry for = Should we feel **sorry at** the end of the day **for** what did during the day? (regret, feel remorse)
- Speak to/with = I wanted to **speak to** you, but you were not available.
- Unless the countries **speak with** one another they cannot resolve their disputes. (talk, communicate)
- Suffer from = The businessman **suffered from** great losses and was soon declared bankrupt. (incurred, troubled by)
- Surprised at = The scientists were **surprised at** the remarkable discovery.
- Take part in = **Taking part in** extra-curricular activities is equally important as excelling in academics. (to participate, to be a part of)
- Thank for = Before leaving the participants **thanked** the organizers **for** giving them the opportunity. (be grateful for)
- Tolerant of = In a multi-lingual and multi-cultural country like India people need to be **tolerant of** the diversity and differences. (to be considerate, thoughtful of)
- Translate into = Volumes of works of Sanskrit have been **translated into** English and many other European languages. (change in language)

Target Exercise 22

Directions Choose the correct preposition in the context.

1. Only till few years ago people could not dream **about/of** the facilities and comforts that they enjoy now.
2. The girl was quite frightened **from/of** the ghost stories.
3. Which subject are good **in/at?**
4. He smiled in the way as if he was acquainted **about/with** me.
5. The minister now-a-days are quite averse **to/from** coming out of their comfort zone.
6. People clever **in/at** deceiving get away easy without being reprimanded.
7. The majority of Hindi words are **derived of/from** Sanskrit.
8. If a country progresses the masses should not remain deprived **from/of** the fruits.
9. The quick arrival of the fire-brigade prevented the fire **for/from** spreading further.
10. If one has a problem one should sit down and speak **to/with** the parties involved.

Answers 1. of 2. of 3. at 4. with 5. to 6. at 7. from 8. of 9. from 10. with

Structure Rule

The idiomatic nature of preposition

Convention rules the use of preposition. As we have seen above, there is some collocation between some word and their fixed preposition. At the same time, there phrasal verbs or prepositional verbs which mean different from the words used in them. Therefore, they are idiomatic by nature. See a few :

To look after = to take care of

To look for = to search

To look into = to enquire about

To take after = to resemble

To take to heart = to feel bad

We will discuss these in detail in the chapter Idioms and Phrases.

The seventh question that you have to ask is

“Are the prepositions correctly used?”

This is the rule no. SEVEN

Target Exercise 23

Directions One of the words is incorrectly spelt in each group. Encircle that word.

1. grammar summer summerise hammer
2. author interior governer organiser
3. theatre kilometre kilolitre metre
4. important impotent ignorent obedient
5. licence lens sense influence
6. negligable valuable possible resistible
7. dangerous mystereous superstitious courteous
8. official presidential crucial substancial
9. expense expanse expansion expulstion
10. anxious conscious consentious pretentious

Answers 1. summarise 2. governor 3. kilometre 4. ignorant 5. license 6. negligible
7. mysterious 8. substantial 9. expulsion 10. conscientious

Target Exercise 24

Directions One of the words is correctly spelt in each group. Encircle that word.

1. accomodate accomodate accommodate ecommodate
2. begger beggar beggery beggerly
3. cocoon cucoon cacoon cocun
4. quarrelling quarreling quarelling querrelling
5. residencial recidential reasidential residential
6. apology appology apolosy epology
7. sinsere sincere sinceer sincier
8. restorent restaurent restaurant restaurant
9. profession proffesion profetion profeson
10. posesson possession posession possession

Answers 1. accommodate 2. beggar 3. cocoon 4. quarrelling 5. residential 6. apology
7. sincere 8. restaurant 9. profession 10. possession

Type 11 : Error of Punctuation

Apostrophe with Possessives Nouns

Consider the following :

(i) A boy's bag

(iii) My father's house

(ii) The boys' school

(iv) My parents' place

- (v) Men's saloon (vi) Women's parlour
 (vii) Children's park (viii) Socrates' disciple
 (ix) Dickens' novels (x) Levis' jeans

The nouns ending with 's' do not usually require another 's' after the apostrophe.

Consider the following :

- (i) Jack and Jill's house—**one house** belonging to both
 (ii) Sita and Ram's journey—**same journey** covered together

But

- (i) Jack's and Jill's houses—**two different possessions** or ownerships
 (ii) Sita's and Ram's destinations—**two different destinations** of the two

Structure Rule

Apostrophe is also used to make contracted forms :

It is = it's

There is = there's

Here is = here's

I will = I'll

I will not = I won't

He has = he's

He is = he's

We have = we've

She had = she'd

She would = she'd

Do not = don't

Cannot = can't and so on

Target Exercise 25

Directions Rewrite the sentences after applying proper punctuation marks.

- Keats and Shelley's poems adore nature with deep sensuous passion.
- You can get your car repaired at Salim's and Karim's garage which is only a furlong away.
- R.K. Narayan's, the famous Indian English authors, stories are known for deep insight into their characters.
- The boy's and the girl's school were standing face to face flanking the road.
- Childrens magazines are hardly to be seen anywhere these days.

Answers 1. Keats's and Shelley's poems—two different poets' poems 2. Salim and Karim's—one garage owned by two 3. R.K. Narayan, the famous Indian English author's 4. the boys' and girls' school 5. children's

Punctuation

Use of comma (,), semi-colon (;), colon (:), and quotation marks ("")

Comma

- To mention a list of things : *eg*,
 - You, he and I are friends.
 - She bought mango, apple, guava and orange.
 - Industrialization, urbanization and globalization are the process to bring about modernization
- To separate two clauses : *eg*,
 - When I was there, I did not go out for a day.
 - If you work hard, you will succeed.
- Before and, or, but, if the clauses are long enough: *eg*,
 - I offer her tea but she declined.
 - Some of the boys joined the course, but the girls were not interested.
- After connective like however, therefore, on the other hand, similarly: *eg*,
 - He is sincere. However, he is not successful.
 - They criticized the man. On the other hand, they honoured him.
- When some words intrude the sentence especially between the subject and its verb: *eg*,
 - We were, believe it or not, on the cloud nine last night.
 - He, however, did not do as he had promised.
 - Mr. Victor, the principal of the college, did not agree to our proposal.
 - People, who follow nature, get blessed.

Semi-colon

- To show closeness of two independent sentences where otherwise full stop can be used: *eg*,
 - Idea disseminated; and this is how civilization grew.
 - She invited me; but I was not interest.
 - Some people like summers; others like winter.

Colon

- For writing dialogues: *eg*,
A: What's that? B: Guess.
- For presenting explanations, lists etc: *eg*,
 - Answer the following questions:
 - What's true? 2. What's not true?
 - Her explanation was like this:
- In headings and titles: *eg*,
 - Video wills acceptable: Supreme Court (ii) Punctuation: Apostrophe
 - Chapter One: Sentence Correction

Quotation marks

- Direct speech *eg*,
 - She said, "I'll come tomorrow."
- Quotations
 - The famous proverb goes, "Don't count your chickens before they hatch."
- To make the word stand out: *eg*,
 - He was the "wisest" fool of all times. (ii) I like 'Alice in the Wonderland'.

Target Exercise 26

Directions Rewrite the sentences after applying proper punctuations marks.

- An angry humiliated and wounded A.Q. Khan has finally made the secret of nuclear proliferation public.
- Narayanan reinforced the official position saying We have thermonuclear capabilities.
- What about the drunk customers nuisance.
- Shakuntala Devi the famous numerologists latest book has hit the book-stalls.
- Im going to barge in for the evening worship she insisted.

The eighth important question to be asked is

"Are the spelling and punctuation in place?"

This is the rule no. EIGHT

Answers 1. an angry, humiliated and wounded 2. saying, "We have" 3. customers'
4. numerologist's 5. "I'm Worship", she insisted.

Type 1 : *Error of Subject-Verb Agreement*

The very first thing that we need to check in a sentence correction exercise is the verb.

Consider the following sentences :

Set I *Taking* her basket she *goes* to the sea shore *to collect* shells.

She *is* happy with what she *earns*.

Set II *Taking* their baskets the women *go* to the sea shore *to collect* shells.

They *are* happy with what they *earn*.

Did you notice how the verbs change with the change in subject in the two sets? If we change the subject 'she' into 'the women' or 'she' into 'they' the verbs lose their 's' and 'es'. **She goes but they go, she is but they are and she earns but they earn.**

Notice what happens when we change these verbs into past :

Taking her basket she *went* to the sea shore *to collect* shells.

They *were* happy with what they *earned*.

While 'go' changes into 'went', 'are' into 'were' and 'earn' into 'earned', **'taking' and 'to collect' remain unchanged.** We need to change these main or finite verbs (go, are, earn) to make the sentence present, past or future while the non-finites (taking, to collect) remain unchanged.

Therefore, we need to check the main verbs in a sentence correction exercise.

- We need to ask, "Is the verb **singular** with a singular subject?" *eg,*
A **boy** *helps* the old woman cross the road.
He *does* not know her.
He *is* quite selfless.
A **boy** and **he** are singular; therefore, they **take** singular verbs with 's' or 'es' at the end.
- Or, "Is the verb **plural** with a plural subject?" *eg,*
Some **boys** *play* here in the evening.
They *bring* their own bats and balls.
They *are* quite self-sufficient.
A plural subject takes a verb without 's' or 'es' at its end.
You must have noticed that the singular verbs—goes, plays, is, was, has—end with an 's'.
Therefore, the first ever question in a sentence correction exercise to be asked is :
"Is the verb in accordance with the subject?"

This is the rule no. ONE

Target Exercise 1

Directions *Make a choice of the correct verb for the subject in the following sentences.*

1. It is so rainy in this region that it **rain/rains** very frequently even in winters.
2. Whenever he **meet/meets** me he **talk/talks** about his illness.
3. In a mature democracy like India, the voters **know/knows** whom to vote.
4. A good teacher not only **teach/teaches**, but he **is/are** also a good guide.
5. The Rajdhani Express usually **run/runs** on time; and is/are one of the fastest trains in India.

Answers 1. rains 2. meets, talks 3. know 4. teaches, is 5. runs, is

Sometimes the nouns used as subject might be confusing. It may be difficult to decide whether they are **singular or plural**. Therefore, identifying such nouns is important before deciding whether the verb is in accordance with the subject.

- **Cattle** is a plural noun which can neither be written as 'cattles' nor used as singular. *eg,* **Cattle** are grazing beside the lake.
Other such nouns, that are always used as plural without any change in them, are : **People, police, poultry, gentry, peasantry**

- **Scissors, binoculars, spectacles, pincers, pliers, trousers, jeans, oats, outskirts, premises, quarters, stairs, spirits, surroundings, thanks** are used as plural. *eg*, Where are my spectacles? I can't see without them.
- Some nouns are used both ways without any change in them, such as : **A sheep, many sheep, a deer, many deer, a fish, many fish, also many fishes meaning groups or species of fishes, a spacecraft, many spacecraft, an aircraft, many aircraft.**
These are used singular as well as plural without any change in them.
- **All uncountable nouns** like milk, furniture, bread, food, ice, salt, butter, grass, hair, wheat, rubbish, coffee, chalk, paper, sugar, dust, chocolate, soap **are always used as singular.**
- **All abstract nouns** like applause, homework, advice, wealth, happiness, research, money, evidence, hospitality, music, pollution, trash, waste, statistics, AIDS, disease, measles, information, knowledge, refuge, rubbish **are always used as singular.**
- You must also be aware of some agencies such as **jury, committee, government** which are used both ways. A jury or a committee or a government is consisted of some members and these members sometimes take a **unanimous decision and act like one agency**; but at times the members are **divided in their opinion and act separately** and not as one agency. In the **first case**, a jury will be treated as singular while in the **second case**, it will be plural. *eg*,
 - (i) The committee **have been** consulting among themselves and **are now** ready to take their seats.
 - (ii) A committee **has been** constituted to look into the matter.
 In sentence,
 - (i) 'the committee' refers to the **members and not the organization** as one entity.
 - (ii) '**one agency**'—committee is referred and not a **divided committee** or its members.
 Other such nouns are : **Association, audience, board, commission, company, council, crew, department, government, jury, party, public, staff, family**
- Words with 'ware' suffix are singular : **Software, hardware, silverware, streetware, chinaware, brassware, glassware, middleware, embeddedware.**
- The following, although appear plural, are used as singular : **Mathematics, economics, measles, apparatus, wages, species, politics.**

Target Exercise 2

Directions Identify the subjects in the following and choose the correct – singular or plural – verb.

1. The committee **is/are** seriously considering the matter.
2. During recession, not even the Mumbai public **has/have** enough money to meet its needs.
3. The public **is/are** dispersing away from the monotonous show.
4. The majority **wins/win** what the minority **loses/lose**.
5. The government **has/have** fallen after the trust vote.
6. The government **wants/want** to keep the plan to themselves.
7. Two **deer/deers** were killed by the poachers.
8. The army **has/have** besieged the city and is poised to launch further attacks.
9. The police **has/have** arrived and are investigating the matter.
10. The issue remained unresolved as the committee **was/were** divided on the subject.
11. The scissors **was/were** there but the tailor could not see them as his spectacles **was/were** not on his nose.
12. Brazil **is/are** the winning team.

Answers 1. are—the members and not the agency 2. has—one entity—its need 3. are—different members of public in different directions 4. wins, loses—one entity 5. has—the entire one government 6. want—to themselves means members of the government 7. deer—no use of deers exists 8. has—army is used as singular—is poised 9. have—police is used as plural—are investigating 10. were—as divided 11. were, were—scissors and spectacles are used as plural—could not see them 12. are—a team here refers to players as in 'India are on the ground'.

Structure Rule

Some **nouns** never change into a **plural form** even if used as plural—apparatus, scenery, jewellery, machinery, offspring, information, stationery, aircraft, dozen, hundred, furniture.

- The pronouns **each** and **one** make the subject **singular**. *eg*,
 - (i) **Each** of the Chief Ministers of the states *was* present in the meeting.
It means **each one** of the ministers of states.
 - (ii) **One** of the boys *is* to be blamed.
Who is to be blamed – one boy or all the boys?
- **Somebody**, **nobody** are singular but **every** and **none** can be used both as singular and plural.
- The conjunction '**and**' makes the subject **plural** when combining two or more nouns or pronouns. *eg*,
 - (i) **Jack, John and Jill** *are* coming to meet me.
 - (ii) **He** and **I** *are* going to welcome them.
- If the conjunction—**or**, **nor**—combines the nouns or pronouns, then the number of the last noun or pronoun is decisive. *eg*,
 - (i) Two bikes or a car *is* enough to carry us all.
 - (ii) The coach or **the players** *are* responsible for the defeat.
 - (iii) She, they or **I** *am* supposed to look after the people here.
- Sometimes the subject is a **non-finite verb** which is **always singular**. *eg*,
 - (i) *Smoking* is injurious to health. Non-finite (Gerund)
 - (ii) *To err* is human, *to forgive* is divine. Non-finite (Infinitive)
 Therefore, the subject of a sentence is either a noun or a pronoun or sometimes a non-finite.

Target Exercise 3

Directions Identify the subject whether it is singular or plural and then make a better choice of the given verbs.

1. Each of the candidates **was/were** awarded a certificate for participation.
2. Either of those dresses **is/are** suitable for the party.
3. Either the student or his parents **has/have to** be present in the function.
4. Everybody or anybody **is/are** able to answer these questions.
5. Neither of them **is/are** an expert of the subject.
6. The ones who **is/are** found guilty must be punished.
7. You or she **has/have to** be blamed for the accident.
8. They and I **was/were** present there last night.
9. Jessica is absent, but some of her class **is/are** present.
10. No one **know/knows** what happens after death.

Answers 1. was—means each one 2. is—one of the dresses 3. have—the last noun parents 4. is 5. is—not one of them 6. are—ones is plural 7. has—the last subject she 8. were—and makes the subject plural 9. are—class means classmates here 10. knows—no one is singular.

Type 2 : Error of Tense

Checking the tense of the verb in a sentence is another very important thing in sentence correction exercise.

You need to know, "Is the tense of the verb correct?"

Consider the following sentences :

(i) **Yesterday** I **met** him.

(ii) She **said** she *would* meet him.

Yesterday and **said** fixes the time of the verb to be past. Therefore, we have used the past forms of 'meet' and 'will'.

However, for the present time, we say :

(i) I **always** *meet* him at the station.

(ii) She **says** she *will* meet him.

Always and **says** refer to the present and 'meet' and 'will' are the present forms of the verbs.

- **Is**, **am** and **are** are the present forms and their past forms are **was** and **were**.
- **Has** and **have** are the present forms and their past form is **had**.
- **Does** and **do** are the present forms and their past form is **did**.

- **Will, shall, can and may** are the present form modals and their past forms are **would, should, could and might** respectively.

It is important to know the correct past and past participle forms of the verbs. Broadly the verbs are conjugated in four different ways :

1. Those **which take ‘ed’** in their past and past participle forms such as **work-worked-worked, enquire-enquired-enquired, lie- lied-lied or try-tried-tried**. Some more such verbs are—play, request, flow, die, please.
2. Those **which remain same** in all their forms such as **cast-cast-cast, burst-burst-burst, cut-cut-cut or shut-shut-shut**. Some more such verbs are—put, hit, spread, let, set.
3. Those **which take same past and past participle forms** such as **buy-bought- bought, say-said-said, hold-held-held or win-won-won**. Some more such verbs are—teach-taught-taught, catch-caught-caught, make-made-made, bleed-bled-bled, keep-kept- kept, dig-dug-dug.
4. Those **which are different in all the three forms** such as **see-saw-seen, sing-sang-sung; bear-bore-borne, write-wrote-written**. Some more such verbs are—eat-ate-eaten, drink-drank- drunk, break-broke-broken, bite-bit-bitten, take-took- taken, begin-began-begun.

The second forms of the verb are the simple past forms and the third forms of the verb (or the past participle) are the past perfect forms used with has, have or had. The third forms are also used in the passive voice sentences.

Perfect Tenses

- The woman **has done** her household work.
- I **have written** five letters to him so far.
- The train **had gone** before we reached the station.

Passive Voice

- All household work in this house **is done** by the servants.
- Five novels **have been written** by the new writer so far.
- The train **will be caught** by us if we hurry.

Table of Tenses

Tense	Present	Past	Future
SIMPLE Active	She + <i>writes</i> (VI) + slogans. I/We/You/They write slogans.	She + <i>wrote</i> (V2) + slogans.	She + <i>will write</i> (VI) + slogans.
SIMPLE Passive	Slogans + <i>are written</i> (V3) + by + her.	Slogans + <i>were written</i> (V3) + by + her.	Slogans + <i>will be written</i> (V3) + by her.
USAGE	For habit, repetitive action and permanent situation; usually with words like daily, always, never, sometimes.	past events unconnected with the Present; or with past-time reference such as yesterday, in 1954, last week, five months ago, in the ancient times.	Information about the Future with or without future reference such as tomorrow, after two days, in fifteen minutes.
CONTINUOUS Active	She + <i>is writing</i> + slogans.	She + <i>was writing</i> + slogans.	She + <i>will be writing</i> + slogans.
CONTINUOUS Passive	Slogans + are being written (V3) + by her.	Slogans + were being written (V3) + by her.	Slogans + <i>will be being written</i> (V3) + by her.
USAGE	Continuing action at the time of speaking, these days in general or changing developments on the earth with or without the use of now, at present, at the moment, these days, look, still	Continuing action at a particular past time with the time words, phrases or clauses such as at this time yesterday, when you came etc. referred or implied.	Continuing situation at a future time with a reference to this time next year/tomorrow.
PERFECT Active	She + has written (V3) + slogans.	She + <i>had written</i> (V3) + slogans.	She + <i>will have written</i> (V3) + slogans.
PERFECT Passive	Slogans + <i>have been written</i> (V3) + be her.	Slogans + <i>had been written</i> (V3) + by her.	Slogans + <i>will have been written</i> (V3) + by her.

Tense	Present	Past	Future
USAGE	Past action with some present connection usually completed in the past with or without the words <i>already, never, yet, just now, till now</i> etc. with the time reference using <i>for</i> or <i>since</i> .	Action before a particular past time usually with <i>before, after, when</i> etc.	completion by a particular future time such as <i>by this time tomorrow/next year/next week</i> .
PERFECT CONTINUOUS Active	She + <i>has been writing</i> + slogans.	She + <i>had been writing</i> + slogans.	She + <i>will have been writing</i> + slogans.
PERFECT CONTINUOUS Passive	Slogans + <i>have been being writing</i> (V3) + by her.	Slogans + <i>had been being written</i> (V3) by her.	Slogans + <i>will have been being written</i> (V3) by her.
USAGE	Past action continued up to the present (uncompleted) usually with the time reference using <i>for</i> or <i>since</i> .	Continuation up to a particular past time.	Continued up to a particular future time.

Target Exercise 4

Directions Choose the correct forms of the verbs in the following.

1. He was **choose/ chose/chosen** leader of the group.
2. I have **do/did/done** my work.
3. The letter was **write/wrote/written** by the clerk.
4. You have **break/broke/broken** the window pane.
5. Who has **take/took/taken** my pen?
6. The bananas have been **eat/ate/eaten** by the cow.
7. A beautiful song in this movie has been **sing/sang/sung** by the new singer.
8. He has **catch/catched/caught** cough.
9. The magician **cast/casted** a spell and turned the rat into a horse.
10. A lot has been **say/says/said** about life and death.

Answers 1. chosen – passive 2. done 3. written – passive 4. broken 5. taken 6. eaten 7. sung 8. caught 9. cast—the past of cast is cast 10. said

Target Exercise 5

Direction A. Check what is correct—*simple present* or *present continuous*.

Is it **habitually done** or is a **repeated** action? Choose **simple present**.

Is it **longer** or **continued** action? Choose **present continuous**.

1. Look! They **talk and while away/are talking and whiling away** their time.
2. An apple a day **keeps/is keeping** the doctor away.
3. By profession an author **writes/is writing** a book whereas an artist **creates/is creating** a picture.
4. The projects that the government **takes up/is taking up** these days are all dominated by modern technologies.
5. The river **flows/is flowing** down the mountain and **goes/is going** to the ocean.

Answers 1. are talking and whiling away—'look' indicates it is happening before our eyes at the moment 2. keeps—eating healthy diet always keeps diseases away, not just at the moment 3. writes, creates—profession-wise activities are timeless, not temporary, at the moment or time-bound 4. is taking up—these days only, not always 5. flows, goes—not just now they are flowing or going

Structure Rule

The verbs that cannot be used in continuous tense

Some verbs express not actions, or happenings but **sense perceptions** such as *see, hear, smell, taste, feel* or **possession** such as *own, possess, have, hold* or some **insight or idea** such as *believe, realize, obsess* etc. Such verbs are usually **not used in the continuous tense**. Sometimes when they are used in the continuous tense they lose their usual meaning. eg. The judge is hearing the case at the moment.

Direction B. Check what is correct—*simple past or present perfect.*

Is the **past time mentioned** or indicated? Choose **simple past**.

Is the **past time connected or related with the present** time somehow? Choose **present perfect**.

1. I feel proud of my team as it **performed/has performed** quite well.
2. The Prime Minister **observed/has observed** many changes in the rural areas when he last visited the countryside.
3. Since, he changed job he **found/has found** more time to relax and enjoy his hobby.
4. Paul may lose his car because **he did not pay/has not paid** his instalments for three months.
5. The report **was tabled/has been tabled** in the parliament yesterday.

Answers 1. has performed—feel proud is present, therefore the past performance gets related to the present 2. observed—when? When he last visited—it mentions the past time 3. has found—since means from then till now; therefore since/for take perfect tenses only 4. has not paid 5. was tabled—not related with now, but isolated past that is yesterday.

Direction C. Check what is correct—*simple past or past continuous.*

If out of the two actions in the past one is longer than the other, the **shorter** will take **simple past** and the **longer past continuous**. The actions might be either **both short or both long**; and in such a case either **both** will be **simple past** or **both past continuous**.

1. While I **waited/was waiting** for my bus she **was running** after hers.
2. We saw a bus fallen when we **went/were going** to Haridwar.
3. She **burnt/was burning** her finger while she was cooking.
4. A boy **fell/was falling** from a train when it was moving at full speed.
5. Everyone had already gone but she still **worked/was still working** in the office.

Answers 1. was waiting—waiting and running both longer actions 2. were going—continued, longer action 3. burnt—burning is short and quick 4. fell—falling is relatively very short action 5. was still working—continued action.

Direction D. Check what is correct—*simple past or past perfect.*

What **happened before** the other? The earlier action takes **past perfect** and the **later** action takes **simple past**.

Do you intend to mention two past actions one after the other? If no, use simple past.

If yes, use past perfect.

1. The train **went/had gone** before we reached the station.
2. The rival countries **fretted and fumed/had fretted and fumed** before the war finally broke out.
3. He **went/had gone** out after he had eaten his lunch.
4. The farmer sold the crop after he **harvested/had harvested** it.
5. The Indians had fought a long struggle before they **attained/had attained** independence.

Answers 1. had gone—happened first, then reached station 2. had fretted and fumed—happened first, before the war 3. went—ate lunch first, then went 4. had harvested—harvested first, then sold 5. attained—first fought, then attained independence.

Direction E. Check what is correct—*simple future, future continuous or future perfect.*

1. I **will complete/will have completed** this project tomorrow.
2. I **will be completing/will have completed** this project at this time tomorrow.
3. I **will be completing/will have completed** this project by this time tomorrow.
4. I **will be passing/will have passed** my MBA by the time your return from abroad.
5. She **will repay/will have repaid** her loan by the period for the same expires.

Answers 1. will complete—just future intention 2. will be completing—'at a particular point of time in future' is used for continued action in future 3. will have completed—'till or by a particular time in future' is used for completion of work 4. will have passed—similar to 3 5. will have repaid—similar to 4.

Type 3 : *Error of Conditional Sentences*

Pattern I

If + Subject + Verb (in the first form) – Subject + Will + Verb (in the first form)

If + you	+ allow	-I	+will	+ go.
If + it	+ rains	-he	+will	+ not come.
If + one	+ promises	-one	+ must	+ keep it.
If + you	+ work hard	-you	+ can	+ succeed.

These sentences express what is **probable to happen** in future under particular conditions. The first parts of the sentences **beginning with 'if'** are the conditions and the second parts are the intentions or the **likely happenings in future**. The first takes the **simple present** form and the second **simple future**.

They can be stated reversing the order :

I **will go** *if* you allow.

He **will not come** *if* it rains.

One **must keep** it *if* one promises.

You **can succeed** *if* you work hard.

Pattern II

If + Subject + Verb (in the second form) –

Subject + Would + Verb (in the first form)

If + I	+ knew	- I	+ would	+ tell you
If + the office	+ had money	- it	+ would	+ give away the salary.
If + I	+ were the President	- I	+ would	+ honour the learned.
If + women	+ had power	- they	+ would	+ rule better.

These sentences express some **hypothetical probability** or supposition or just an assumption. They mean 'I don't know so I can't tell you'; 'the office doesn't have money so it cannot pay salary'; 'I am not the President otherwise I would honour the learned'; 'women don't have power otherwise they would rule better'.

These sentences can also state the second part first.

Pattern III

If + Subject + Verb (had + the third form) –

Subject + Would have + 3rd form of Verb

If + it	+ had rained	- the farmers	+ would have	+ grown crops.
If + they	+ had worked	- they	+ would have	+ succeeded.
If + we	+ had reached on time		+ would have	+ caught the train.
If + the doctor	+ had come on time	- the patient	+ would not have	+ died

These sentences express something that **could not happen in the past because of the lack of some required condition**. It expresses some sort of regret. It did not rain so farmers could not grow crops; they did not work hard so they could not succeed; we did not reach on time and so we could not catch the train; the doctor did not come on time and so the patient could not be saved.

You **must have** noticed that the verb in

Pattern I is the **first form** (the **present**) and the **first form** of future (**will**) indicating some future intentions.

Pattern II is the **second form** (the **past**) and the **second form** of future (**would**) indicating hypothesis or supposition in present meaning.

Pattern III is had + third form (the **past perfect**) and would have + third form (**future perfect**) some conditional regret about the past.

Target Exercise 6

Direction A. Choose the better option in the following conditional sentences.

1. If the recession continues, the industry **will not grow /would not grow**.
2. The Prime Minister **announces /will announce** the project if the parliament approves it.
3. If the fire-brigade had reached on time, the property **would be saved /would have been saved** from destruction.
4. If I knew the answers, I **would pass /would have passed** the examination.
5. If there **is /will be** a sudden rain, the city drowns under water-logging.

Answers 1. will not grow—continues is present 2. will announce—approves is present, P.M.'s decision depends on approval 3. would have been saved—had reached is past perfect, talks about the past 4. would pass—knew is simple past, second form of the verb 5. is—'if' part of the sentence does not take 'will', 'would' or 'would have'.

Direction B. Wish and the subjunctive case.

I wish I knew. I wish you came.	–	present meaning
I wish I would know. I wish you would come.	–	future meaning
I wish I had known. I wish you had come.	–	past meaning

Choose the better option in the following conditional sentences.

1. They cheated me. I wish I **knew /had known** them.
2. The party was such a fun. I wish you **would come /had come**.
3. The star is in the town and she is entertaining her guests. She wishes she **were free /would be free**.
4. They reached late to the funeral. They wish they **reached /had reached** on time.
5. Tomorrow everybody would enjoy. You wish you **would join /would have joined** the party.

The second most important question that one must ask in the sentence correction exercise is “Is the tense of the verb correct?” This is the rule no. TWO

Answers 1. had known—past meaning because cheated is past 2. had come—past meaning as was is past 3. were free—present meaning as 'is' is present 4. had reached—reached is past 5. would join—future meaning as tomorrow is used.

Direction C. Make a choice of the correct verb form.

1. Thank God! We reached on time. If there had been jam on the highway, we **would be /would have been** late for reception.
2. If you **woke /had woken** me up earlier, we would have gone there together.
3. Last night the residents **assembled /had assembled** to discuss the occurrence of theft in the locality.
4. The students decided to donate blood after they **saw /had seen** the plight of the injured in various accidents in a documentary film.
5. The newspaper **reported /has reported** seven cases of gruesome crime in the city yesterday.
6. An enquiry committee has been formed as devastating poverty and indebtedness **forced /have forced** farmers in the country to commit suicide.
7. Since I changed job I **found /have found** no time to relax and enjoy my hobby.
8. If Dave **doesn't /won't drive** carefully, he will cause an accident.
9. Unless the striking workers and the management **talk /don't talk**, the matter cannot be resolved.
10. The ministers **have sworn /had sworn** that they will maintain the secrecy of their departments.

Answers 1. would have been 2. had woken 3. assembled 4. had seen 5. reported 6. have forced 7. have found 8. doesn't 9. talk—unless means if not 10. have sworn

Structure Rule

'Have' and 'hold' are used in the continuous form as in 'He is **having** bath' or 'She is **holding** a flower'. But **have** here means **take** and **hold** means **wield, take or keep in hand**. We, however, **CANNOT** say 'They are **having or holding** some property in this town'. We should, instead, say, 'They have or hold some property in this town'. The verb 'have' is used in three different ways :

1. I am **having my lunch** at the moment. It means 'I am **taking**'.
2. He **has** some industry in this town. It means 'He **possess or own**'.
3. We **have done** our work. It means 'work is completed' and 'have' denotes the **perfect tense**.

Type 4 : *Error of Participles*

What function do the –ing verbs do in the following sentences?

- (i) **Smoking** is injurious to health.
- (ii) **Swimming** is a good exercise.
- (iii) He has given up **smoking**.
- (iv) She has started **swimming**.
- (v) They are taking lesson in **swimming**.

They function as the subject or object in the sentence. If you ask the question ‘what is injurious or a good exercise’ or ‘what has he given up or started or is taking lesson in’ you will get the –ing words as answer.

You should ask ‘what’ questions before the verb to know the subject and after the verb to know the object in the sentence.

Now look at the following sentences. How are the –ing word different from those used above?

- (i) **Smoking** he entered the hall.
- (ii) **Swimming** they crossed the flooded river.

In the sentences above the words **smoking** and **swimming** don’t answer the question ‘what entered or who crossed’ but tell how he entered or how they crossed.

We can also say :

- (i) **While smoking** he entered the hall.
- (ii) **While he was smoking** he entered the hall.
- (iii) He entered the hall **when he was smoking**.

These are different ways of combining two sentences.

Smoking is a participle and the **main function of a participle is to combine two sentences**.

The two sentences, in this case, are :

He was smoking. At that very same time he entered the hall. Or,

He entered the hall. At that very same time he was smoking.

Consider the other sentence :

Swimming they crossed the flooded river.

If we split the same, we can say :

They swam. This is how they crossed the river. Or,

They crossed they river by **swimming**. Or,

By **swimming** they crossed the river.

However, we can’t say the above sentences in the following manner :

Smoking the hall was entered by him. Or,

Swimming the flooded river was crossed by them.

Why? Because the one who smoke was he and not the hall; or, those who swam were they and not the flooded river.

Consider the following sentences :

- (i) **Writing** a novel, his name became famous.
- (ii) **Having been** a very good scientist, they made him the president.

Ask ‘who wrote the novel his name or some person?’ It was some person. The sentence, therefore, should be ‘Writing a novel, he became famous’.

In the second sentence, who was a scientist—they or the president? It was the president. Therefore, the sentence should be ‘Having been a very good scientist, he was made president by them’.

It is clear from the above discussion that the doer of the participle verb should not be distanced from it or interrupted by any other subject, noun or verb.

If a sentence starts with a participle, ask : “Is the subject or doer close to the participle?”

This is the rule no. THREE

Target Exercise 7

Directions *Underline the subjects that are misplaced.*

1. Being a great king, people respected Akbar.
2. Taking all his bag and baggage, a distant relative was visited by him.
3. Making some beautiful movies, the Filmfare awarded him with the most prestigious honour.
4. Having checked the engine and petrol in their car, their journey was resumed.
5. Looking through the view-finder, some strangers were seen standing at the door.
6. Calling him on phone, he was informed of the news by me.
7. Singing sweetly and walking smoothly, the bride was taken home by the palanquin bearers.
8. Eating too much his health was spoiled.
9. Being a famous actor, the school invited him to be the chief guest on the Annual Day function.
10. Finding some talent in him, they employed him in the key position of the organization.

Answers 1. Akbar was respected by people 2. he visited a distant relative 3. he bagged the Filmfare award 4. they resumed their journey 5. I/he/she saw some strangers 6. I informed him 7. the palanquin bearers took the bride 8. he spoilt his health 9. he was invited 10. he was employed.

Type 5 : Error of Nouns

In a sentence when a few nouns or verbs occur in a group or list, they are supposed to be in the same form—either all infinitive (to go), all participle (going) or all noun (gait).

Look at this :

- (i) Measures have been taken **to generate energy, to conserve it and for its equitable distribution.**

The above sentence can be corrected in the following possible ways :

Measures have been taken **to generate energy, to conserve it and to distribute it equitably.**

Measures have been taken for **generating energy, conserving it and distributing it equitably.**

Measures have been taken for the **generation of energy, its conservation and equitable distribution.**

Consider the following :

- (ii) **Infant** is the first stage of life, **boyhood** the second and **adolescent** the third.

The stages are **infancy, boyhood and adolescence**; infant and adolescent are persons in these stages.

Therefore, the sentence should read :

Infancy is the first stage, **boyhood** the second and **adolescence** is the third.

- (iii) The **breadth** was five centimetre, the **length** ten and it was three centimetre **high**.

The **breadth** and **length** are alright but instead of 'it was three centimetre high' it should be 'the **height** was three centimetre'.

In order to be able to check this kind of error in a sentence, knowing different forms of the same word is useful. Look at a few formations of words here.

Structure Rule

There is big list of such words. Therefore, a higher proficiency word-formation is advisable. Refer to the relevant word-formation chapter in this book.

A few of the nouns and adjectives are given here :

Mother, motherhood, maternity; poor, poverty; patriot, patriotism; hero, heroism;
bankrupt, bankruptcy; vacant, vacancy; diligent, diligence; garrulous, garrulity.

Target Exercise 8

Directions *Choose the correct noun form.*

1. What **apparatus/apparatuses** do you use for performing this experiment?
2. There are no **machinery/machineries** to resolve the matter.
3. The two **hundred/hundreds** of hens lay about thirty **dozen/dozens** of eggs every week.
4. The **scenery/sceneries** of the Himalayas keep beckoning us.
5. The **offspring/offsprings** of this species leave their parents as soon as they mature.
6. These pieces of **jewellery/jewelleries** are designed by a highly acclaimed expert.

7. All kinds of **stationary/stationeries** are sold here.
8. We get a lot of **information /informations** from the internet.
9. Beautiful **furniture /funitures** made the house elegant.
10. Many sophisticated **aircraft /aircrafts** have been purchased by the Indian Air Force recently.

After checking the subject-verb agreement, tense and participle, you need to ask, "Are the nouns and verbs in their proper forms confirming the parallelism?"

This is the rule no. FOUR

Answers 1. apparatus 2. machinery 3. hundred, dozen 4. scenery 5. offspring 6. jewellery
7. stationary 8. information 9. furniture 10. aircraft

Type 6 : Error of Articles

There is **a man** waiting for you outside the gate. **The man** is holding some files.

In the first time reference, we say 'a man' that is 'any man' and when we refer to **the same** man again we use 'the' before man. 'The' makes it a definite or particular man.

eg, **The girl** whom we met yesterday has come again.

In the above sentence also we talk about a definite girl, **the one** whom we met yesterday; therefore, we use 'the' before 'girl'.

Consider this :

Please give me **a pen** to write; not **the one** you gave me earlier but **another**.

'**A pen**' means any pen; '**the one**' is for a particular pen or the earlier one; and '**another**' means any other.

When we mean **any**, we use 'a' or 'an'; but when we mean **a particular** one, we use '**the**'.

Target Exercise 9

Directions Choose the right article in the following sentences.

1. Have you seen **a/the** movie playing at Satyam?
2. Is this **a/the** book that you gave me last week?
3. **A/The** good leader leads the country to prosperity.
4. **A/The** people of America are more liberal than **a/the** people of Europe.
5. Where is Mother? She is working in **a/the** kitchen.

Answers 1. the 2. the 3. a 4. the, the 5. the

Structure Rule

Sometimes **this, that, these** or **those** can be used in place of '**the**' and so can help in making sure whether the use of '**the**' is required or not.

'Give me the pen' can be also said as 'Give me this/that pen'.

'The candidates interested can apply soon' can also be said as 'Those candidates who are interested can apply soon'.

Many a time replacing '**the**' with one of the four words can prove to be a litmus test for the correctness of **the** in the sentence.

But **No** article is used with **man, nature** or **God**.

Man proposes, God disposes.

What man has done to nature!

BUT

The gods of pantheons were worshipped by the Greeks.

For **genetic** or **class** references :

The dog (kind of animal) **is** a faithful animal.

Dogs are faithful animals.

The elephant is a sensible creature.

Elephants are sensible creatures.

NOT

Dog is a faithful creature.

The dogs are faithful creatures.

Elephant is a sensible creature.

The elephants are sensible creatures.

When we mean the entire **species** or the **community** or the **group** and **not** any **specific** dog or dogs and elephant or elephants we don't use 'the' with their plural forms.

These also indicate groups or community of people:

The poor (people) are the most neglected lot.

The rich in this city are quite arrogant.

The injured are taken to the hospital.

Target Exercise 10

Directions Choose the correct option.

1. **Elephants/the** elephants can swim very well.
2. She is very fond of **horses/the** horses.
3. **Man /the** man is mortal.
4. **Injured /the** injured were taken to the hospital.
5. **Rich /the** rich have always ridiculed poor/the poor.
6. **Nature/the** nature has bestowed with opulence.
7. **Gods/the** gods the Hindus worship are not the same the Greeks used to worship.
8. There has always been a fight between **devil/the devil and divine/the divine**.
9. The reformers have come forward for the emancipation of **down-trodden/the down-trodden**.
10. **Unemployed /the** unemployed are more concerned to get an employment than to know the number of the unemployed in the country.

Answers 1. elephants 2. horses 3. man 4. the injured 5. the rich, the poor 6. nature 7. the gods 8. the devil, the divine 9. the down-trodden 10. the unemployed

Some Conventional Usage of *the*

- Before a geographical entity—**The continent** but **NOT** the Asia, the Europe
- The ocean—**the Indian Ocean**, the Atlantic, the Pacific
- The river—**the Yamuna**, the Thames, the Tiber, the Nile
- The island—**the Andman** and Nicobar, the Lakshdweep
- The mountain—**the Himalayas**, the Andes
- The bay or gulf—**the Bay of Bengal**, the Persian Gulf
- The archipelago—**the Indonesian Archipelago**
- The deserts—**the Sahara**, the Kalahari, the Arabian Sands
- But **NOT** with
- Mountain peaks—**Mt Everest**, Mt Kilimanjaro
- Lakes—**Dal Lake**, Chilka Lake, Lake Michigan
- Names of places beginning with proper nouns—**Delhi University**, Indira Gandhi International Airport, Mahatma Gandhi Road
- Before the celestial bodies—**the planet**—the earth; the **star**—the sun; the **satellite**—the moon, the titan.
- But **NOT** with the remaining planets such as **Mars**, Jupiter.
- Before the names of religious groups and religious and famous books—**the Hindu**, the Christian, **the Quran**, the Bible, the Iliad, the Mahabharat, the Ramayan
- But **NOT** with the names of religions—**Hinduism**, Christianity, Islam
- The republic, the kingdom, the union—The People's Republic of China, the United Kingdom, **the United States of America**
- The nationalities—**the British**, the Indian, the American, the Japanese
- With superlative— **the best**, the rich
- The ordinals—**the first**, the last, the next
- Some comparatives—**the better of the two**; the more you try, the more you succeed
- For the head of a group—**the President**, the Prime Minister, the Head Boy.
- But he was **elected President**, **appointed Head Boy**

- The President of the country but just **President Pratibha Patil**.
- Time expressions—**in the morning**, in the afternoon, in the evening but at noon, at night, by day etc
- When names used as adjective—Kalidas is **the Shakespeare** of India. Mumbai is the Manchester of India.

Target Exercise 11

Directions Insert 'the' where required.

1. Who is considered Bradman of India?
2. Martin Luther King, who led Gandhian Movement against racial discrimination, brought considerable amount of justice and equality for the blacks in the US.
3. The government failed because of its lack of understanding of economics of the situation.
4. The Christians who go to church everyday are rather more pious than those who go occasionally.
5. Nilgiris are the most productive mountains of the south.
6. Obama has been elected President of United States of America.
7. What kind of person he is?
8. Great poet and writer, K. Abraham, is no more.
9. He is not comfortable in eating the dish with knife and fork.
10. He left school when he was thirteen and started going to college.

Answers 1. the Bradman 2. the Gandhian 3. the economics 4. not required 5. the Nilgiris 6. the United States 7. not required 8. the great 9. not required 10. not required

The usage of indefinite article—a/an

The countable singular noun takes 'a' or 'an'.

eg, **A man** is waiting for you. **A sovereign state** needs **a government** of its own. **An apple a day** keeps the doctor away.

The only difference between **a** and **an** is that a noun or adjective beginning with a vowel sound—the sound of **a, ai, aa, e, ei, ee, ai, ia, o, ou** etc—such as **apple, iodine, end, air, heir, exact, eye, oriental, owl** takes 'an' in order to keep the two vowel sounds (a and the first sound of the word) from getting mingled.

For example, if we say a orange, a office, a umbrella, a honest man, a MP, it may create a phonetic problem in speaking and listening. Therefore, we should say an orange, an office, an umbrella, an honest man, an MP, an NRI, an heir, an hour.

However, a university, a one eyed man, a one rupee note are correct although the start with a vowel but produce a consonant sound—yu, wa, etc.

Target Exercise 12

Directions Correct the following sentences :

1. Is there the post office near here?
2. An stitch on time saves nine.
3. It requires an energy.
4. She has got a cold and cough.
5. You need very good knowledge of the subject and deep understanding of the problem to get through this examination.
6. He helped a honest one eyed man.
7. He is a doctor but his wife is a MLA.
8. There is a time to work and the time to play.
9. Where there is the will, there is the way.
10. A umbrella is useless in a stormy weather.

Answers 1. a post office 2. a stitch 3. requires energy 4. got cold and 5. a very good knowledge, a deep understanding 6. an honest 7. an MLA 8. and a time 9. a will, a way 10. an umbrella.

Type 7 : *Error of Determiners*

I. **Some, any = indefinite number or quantity**

- Some is used with **positive sentences** and **any** with **negative sentences and questions**.

eg,

- There is **some good news** for you. Uncountable positive
- **Some books** are lying on the table. Countable positive
- There is not **any water** left in the bottle. Uncountable negative
- Are there **any letters** in the letter-box? Countable question
- **Some** is sometimes used **in questions**.

eg,

Could you lend me **some money**? Are there **some boys** in the next room? Where is the noise coming from?

Here some stress is on the positive quantity and number.

II. **Much, many = big quantity (uncountable) or big number (countable)**

eg,

- (i) There is not **much water** left in the pond.
- (ii) There are not **many followers** of Gandhiji these days.
- (iii) Too **much milk** will be required to make these sweets.
- (iv) **Many parliamentarians** were absent on the first day of the session.
- (v) How **much money** do you want?
- (vi) You can take as **many currency notes** as you want.

III. **A little = small quantity—uncountable**

A few = small number—countable

eg,

- (i) Only **a little rice** is left. We will have to manage with it.—small amount
- (ii) Only **a few people** came in the party.—small number

eg,

- **Little** = (without 'a') hardly any or not any—uncountable
- **Few** = (without 'a') hardly any or not any—countable
- (i) There is **little sense** in crying over the spilt milk.—no sense
- (ii) **Few know** what happens after death.—nobody

IV. **More = comparative of much and many**

Less = comparative of little;

- Both **more and less** are used with 'than'.

eg,

- (i) I don't have **more money** today. It is incorrect. More than what or whom?
It should be **much money or enough money**.
- (ii) I want **more money** than what I have.
- (iii) I want **more money** than you have.
- (iv) There is **less sense** in talking with such a rude person. Less than what?
It should be **little sense or no sense**.
- (v) An idle talk is much **less important than** work.
- (vi) He earns **less than** a peon.

V. **Several = several is small number (countable) but more definite than some or a few**

Enough = sufficient number and quantity

eg,

- (i) Don't worry. There are **several policemen** to guard the place.
- (ii) Don't give me more. I have eaten **enough**.

Target Exercise 13

Directions Choose the correct determiner.

1. Could you lend me **some/any** of your books today?
2. You cannot buy anything with such **a little/less** amount of money.
3. He has **much/more** sense than you have.
4. There is not **much/more** scope in the conventional jobs these days.
5. Did you see **some/any** good movies during your visit to the town?
6. Very **few/a few** people true to their intentions.
7. **Little/a little** elegance is left in those arrogant youth.
8. An average Indian earns **much/enough** to maintain an honourable life.
9. If you are looking for some nice magazines, there are already **some/several** in the stall.
10. Help came but too late and too **little/less**.

Answers 1. some 2. a little 3. more 4. much 5. any 6. few 7. little 8. enough 9. several
10. little

Type 8 : Error of Adjectives

- **Earlier-later** : on an **earlier date** or a **later date**; used for **time**.
- **Former-latter** : out of two **names or things** mentioned, the **first is former** and the **second is later**.
- **Farther-further** :
 - (i) What will be his **further** strategy? **Further** means **next** in sequence here.
 - (ii) He mended his ways without any **further** delays. **Further** here means **additional**.
 - (iii) I come from a **farther** place than you do.
 - (iv) The USA is **further** from here than the UK.

In both (iii) & (iv) farther and further indicate **longer distances**. Both the words can be used for distance. For **addition or next**, only **further** can be used.
- **Older-elder** : There are two brothers **elder to me**; the second one is two years **older than me**. **Elder** indicates **seniority in relation, older seniority in age**. eg,
 - (i) How can I use insulting words for him? He is an **elder to me**. Senior in relation.
Persons not in relation **cannot be compared** by using 'elder'. Only their ages can be compared :
 - (ii) The Prime Minister of the country is much **older than** the President.

The order of the adverb

- MPT = Manner-Place-Time
 - Manner = slowly, steadily
 - Place = here, there, up, down
 - Time = before, ago, now, today

The next question to be asked is

"Are the articles, determiners and adjectives correctly used?"

This is the rule no. FIVE

Target Exercise 14

Directions Choose the correct adjective and adverb.

1. After killing Caesar, the conspirators **farther/further** wanted to kill Antony.
2. The enemy attacked **many places in the night aggressively/aggressively many places in the night**.
3. Out of Milton and Byron, the **earlier/former** is the better poet.
4. Although he studies in my class, he is three years **older/elder** than me.
5. **Later/latter** when he grew older, he realized his mistake.

Answers 1. further 2. aggressively many places in the night 3. former 4. older 5. later

Type 9 : *Error of Pronouns*

The forms of pronoun

Subjective forms : I, we, you, he, she, they, it.

Objective forms : me, us, you, him, her, them, it.

Possessive forms : my/of mine, our/of ours, your/of yours, his/of his, her/of hers, their/of theirs, its/of it.

- (i) His accomplishments are greater than my accomplishments.
- (ii) His accomplishments are greater **than mine**. Accomplishments are compared.
- (iii) He is greater **than me**. He and I are compared.
- (iv) He did it better **than I**. (than I did) The two subjects' doings are compared.

Notice the difference the above sentences. The first two mean same. Third and fourth compare two different things and so use different forms of personal pronoun.

The usage of it, its, it's, there, their

- **It** is used for a *thing, idea, animal, baby, child, kid* etc. Sometimes I, we, you, he, she, they are also used for them.
- **It** and **there** as *dummy subject or object*.

eg,

- (i) **It** is true. I knew **it**. Damn **it**. **It** rains. **It's** late. What time is **it** by your watch? **It's** useless to try once again. **It's** O.K. Is **it** you? **It** was I who was knocking on the door. **It** is foolish to talk in that way.
In the above sentences '**it**' does not mean anything but just fill the gap of a subject or an object.
- (ii) **There** was a king. Where **there** is a will, **there** is a way. How many friends of ours were **there** in the party? What time is **there** by your watch?
'**There**' does the same function as '**it**' does. **It** fills the gap.
- (iii) The dog wags **its** tail on seeing its master.
Its tail means dog's tail or *the tail of the dog*.
- (iv) Let's hurry. **It's** getting late.
It's is the short or *contracted form of it is*. It is getting late.
- (v) They did **their** work and we ours.
Give **their** money back to them.
Their means belonging to them or possessed by them.
- (vi) It's **they** who know all about this.
It's **she** who needs your help.
It's **I** who prefer to listen to your music.

After it's or it is the subjective form of the personal pronoun is used and not the objective—them, her or me.

Target Exercise 15

Directions Choose the correct pronoun in the context.

1. One of the students did not submit **his/their/one's** assignment as per the instruction.
2. The baby flung **his/its** toy and lost **him/it** somewhere.
3. Passengers are advised to look after **there/their** luggage **himself/themselves**.
4. **There/their** were thousands of new articles **there/their**.
5. The elephant salutes by using **its/it's** trunk.
6. Please hurry. **Its/it's** getting late.
7. It is **I/me** who is knocking at the door.
8. What is **there/their** that shines?
9. I have done the painting better than **she/her**.
10. He is a very good friend of **my/mine**.

Answers 1. his—one student 2. its, it—used for baby and toy respectively 3. their, themselves—belonging to them; he—himself but they or passengers—themselves 4. there, there—used for place 5. its—belonging to it and not 'it is' 6. it's— it is 7. I—subjective form for the doer of the action—knocking 8. there—used for place 9. she—'better than she did' is curtailed here 10. mine—my friend but friend of mine.

Structure Rule

The Order of the Personal Pronoun

'You first' is a good manner in all cultures, and so it is in English.

Say 'you, he and I' for the good things these three do; and say 'I, you and he' for all the bad things they do. Credit should be given to others first and blame should be taken on oneself first. Therefore, the correct order of the Personal Pronoun is :

For all good things :

You, he and I have achieved remarkable *success*.

You, he and I; You and I or He and I

For all bad things :

I, you and he are responsible for the failure of the project.

I, you and he; I and you or I and he

Emphatic and Reflexive Pronouns

I did this work **myself**. *Who did? I myself*. I **myself** did this work. In both case 'myself' emphasizes only 'I' and nobody else did it. Therefore, myself is emphatic pronoun.

Notice its position. An emphatic pronoun can either be used soon after the subject or at the end of the sentence.

I saw **myself** in the mirror. 'Myself' answers 'I saw what or whom'. Therefore, 'myself' is used as the object of the verb 'saw'. It comes soon after the verb. Here 'myself' is reflexive pronoun. It reflects the action on the doer on himself.

The forms of emphatic and reflexive pronouns are :

I–myself; we–ourselves; you–yourself (singular)/yourselves (plural); she–herself; he–himself; it–itself; they–themselves.

Target Exercise 16

Directions Choose the correct pronoun in the context.

- Soliloquy is supposed to be in plays; one cannot to be talking to **oneself/himself** in real life.
- The dog stretched **himself/itself** after a long day's sleep.
- The baby laughed on seeing **herself/itself** in the mirror.
- The dictator **himself declared/declared himself** all powerful.
- The aging woman **herself was searching /was searching herself** in the young daughter.
- They themselves were responsible/were responsible themselves** for their defeat.
- The leader told the people, "You **yourself/yourselves** have to build your nation; and no neighbour or a powerful county will come for your help."
- God helps those who help **himself/themselves**.
- "You **yourselves have to do/have to do yourselves** this assignment", the teacher remarked.
- She walked in a very arrogant manner presumably **to give herself/to herself give** some extra pride.

Answers 1. oneself 2. itself 3. itself 4. declared himself 5. was searching herself 6. themselves were responsible 7. yourselves 8. themselves 9. yourselves have to do 10. to give herself.

The usage of this, these, that, those

Read the following sentences :

The son of my boss and **the son of my neighbour** go to the same school.

The **job of my father** and **the job of my mother** are not same.

The **employees of this office** are as hard working as **that office**.

The culture of India is similar to **the culture of the south** Asian countries.

The feature of the Chinese people is similar to **the features of the Mongolians**.

Don't you feel they sound awkward or improper? What's wrong?

There is unnecessary and clumsy repetition of nouns. It should be avoided. The second time a suitable pronoun that matches with the noun should be used.

These sentences would be better said if we say them like these :

The son of my boss and **that of** my neighbour go to the same school.

The job of my father and **that of** my mother are not same.

The employees of this office are as hard working as **those of** that office.

The culture of India is similar to **that of** the south Asian countries.

The feature of the Chinese people is similar to **those of** the Mongolians.

It's **NOT** correct to say, '**One** should do **his or her** duty' but it should be, '**One** should do **one's** duty'.

Divya and Devika went to market to buy **her** dress. To buy who's dress—Divya's or Devika's? It **should be** to buy '**Divya's dress**' or '**Devika's dress**' or even '**their dress**'. The noun cannot be left ambiguous in a sentence.

Target Exercise 17

Directions Check the use of *this, that, these, those* in the given sentences and correct them.

1. The culture of our country is richer than any other country in the world.
2. The animals in this sanctuary are better off than that sanctuary.
3. The instructions came that one should be punctual in submitting his/her work.
4. Ravi, Sanchit and Arif have gone to by his guitar.
5. He, you and I are to be blamed for all the mess in the last evening's programme.

Answers 1. richer than that of any other country 2. are better off than those in that sanctuary 3. in submitting one's 4. to buy their guitar or Ravi's guitar or Sanchit's or Arif's—a pronoun should not be left ambiguous about the person it mentions 5. I, you and he are to be blamed.

Structure Rule

One, Ones, One's and Once

The various meanings of *one* :

A single, a particular but unspecified, with unknown person's name—one Ms Radhika, the same—one and the same, only—one and only, everyone—one and all, unknown somebody.

Ones as in 'those ones', 'these ones', 'the ones I am looking for'—plural of one.

One's means 'of somebody'.

Once as in 'give me a chance once'—for one time, as in 'once upon a time'—at some time in the past, all at once—suddenly.

The usage of *who, whom, who's, whose, that* and *which*

- Note the difference in the following sentences :
 - (i) My friend **who** owes me money is not seen these days.
 - (ii) My friend **whom** I owe money is not seen these days.
 - The big difference in the two sentences is that in the first, he has to give me money and in the second I have to give him money.
 - In place of 'who owes' we can say 'my friend owes' or 'he owes'. **Who**, my friend and he are all **subjective forms**.
 - In place of 'whom I owe' we can say 'I owe to my friend' or 'I owe him'. **Whom**, my friend and him are all **objective forms** here.
 - (iii) Do you know whose bicycle is this?
 - (iv) Tell me who's who in the new cabinet.
 - **Whose** means 'of whom' or 'belonging to whom'. The sentence can be restated as 'Do you know whom does the bicycle belong to?'
 - **Who's** is the contracted form of 'who is'. The sentence can be restated as 'Tell me who is who in the new cabinet'.
 - (v) The book **which** you gave me has been lost.
 - (vi) You can read the books **that are available** in the library.
 - 'Which you gave' emphasizes a particular book.
 - 'That are available' talks generally about all the books.
 - (vii) Name **the colour which you like** the most.
 - (viii) VIBGYOR represents **those seven colours which are** in the sun.
 - (ix) **These** are the **colours that are available** now.

- The first two sentences talk about a particular colour or colours whereas the last one talks about colours in general without emphasizing.
- **That and which** are usually used for animals, things, ideas, babies etc. Exceptionally, that and which can be used for people sometimes.
- **The people that dwelt** this earth before us were wise enough to preserve the environment.
- **Which of the people** are you talking about—the ones who were before the modern age or the ones a generation before us?

The sixth crucial question that you are supposed to ask is

“Are the forms of pronoun correct and do they agree with the related nouns and other pronouns?”

This is the rule no. SIX

Target Exercise 18

Directions Choose the correct form of the pronoun in the given sentences.

1. I met a man **who/whom** told me about my award.
2. I met a man **who/whom** I told about his award.
3. **Who's/whose** book is this?
4. This is not the doctor **who/whom** he referred to.
5. These are the holes in **which/that** those snakes live.
6. All **which/that** glitters is not gold.
7. All **which/that** know the truth don't always utter it.
8. There is hardly anyone **who/that** doesn't know about her.
9. Shakespeare was the most prolific writer **which/that** time has ever seen.
10. What is there in your hand **which/that** your have brought for me?

Answers. 1. who 2. whom 3. whose 4. whom 5. which 6. that 7. that 8. who 9. that 10. that

Type 10 : Error of Prepositions

Prepositions fix the position of a noun or verb in relation to another noun.

Place (point)

- **to, at, from**—to a point, at a point, from a point

eg,

- (i) She went **to the hotel**.
- (ii) I met her **at the door**.
- (iii) She came **from Canada**.

The hotel, the door and Canada are used as a point of arrival, meeting and departure.

Place (line)

- **on, off, across, over, along**—on the line, off the line, across the line, over the line, along the line

eg,

- (i) It was a foul as the ball **fell on the line**.
- (ii) **The fielder fell off the line** holding the ball and so it was a six.
- (iii) **The ball rolled across the line**. It was four.
- (iv) It was a clear six as **the ball went over the line**.
- (v) **The fielder ran along the line** towards the ball to save it from crossing the line.

Place (surface)

- **on, off, across, over, through**—on the surface, off the surface, across the surface, over the surface, through the surface

eg,

- (i) The passengers were **waiting on the platform**.
- (ii) A crowd pushed and **one of them fell off the platform** on the track.

- (iii) A vendor was **prowling across the platform** selling his newspaper.
- (iv) A crow **flew over the platform** snatching a piece of bread from a child.
- (v) Some trolleys were **piercing their way through the platform**.

Place (area)

- **in, into, out of, through**—was in the playground, came into the playground, came out of the playground, went through the playground
eg,
 - (i) The first team was **already in the playground**.
 - (ii) After five minutes the second team **came into the playground**.
 - (iii) After ten minutes one of the players **was sent out of the playground**.
 - (iv) The game was stopped and the refry went **through the playground to check** what was wrong.

Target Exercise 19

Directions Choose the correct preposition in the context.

1. During her visit to Mumbai, she stayed **in/at** her friend's home.
2. A dog ran **in/on** the middle of the road.
3. We were walking **on/along** the road when we saw an accident.
4. A crowd poured **in/into** the compartments of the train.
5. All through his journey, he kept looking **from/through** the window.
6. The car was standing **at/in** the farmhouse.
7. She is **at/in** the post office at the moment.
8. When the accident took place, the train really came **at/on** the platform instead of coming **at/on** the platform.
9. This chapter is consisted **of/off** eight vital segments.
10. The boy fell **of/off** the bus as it started moving.

Answers 1. at 2. in 3. along 4. into 5. through 6. at 7. in 8. on, at 9. of 10. off

Position

- **over, above**—A beautiful **carpet** was there all **over the floor**, a blue shining floor **under** the carpet, a ball thrown **over** the table, a shuttle shot **over** the net, a plane/helicopter hovering **over** the town, the sun shined vertically **over/above** head in mid summer, millions of poor have not roof **over/above** their head, an exquisite fan handing **over/above** the table, star shining like a diamond in the sky which is up **above** the world so high, **above** average marks/student, 40% people living **above** poverty line, the flooded river went **above** the danger mark
- **under, below**—a small child standing **below** the table, lived **under/below** the same roof, no man **under/below** the sky knows, ground hollow **below** the surface, **below** average, **below** the danger mark, **below** poverty line
- **under, underneath, beneath**—a carpet **underneath** the table, a cat sitting **under/beneath** the table, **underneath** the carpet polished and shimmering tiles seen here and there
- **in front of, behind, by, beside**—one chair **in front of** the table, another **behind** it, a small stool **in front of** a dressing table, wall **behind** the dressing table, the bed, the windows and doors hidden **behind** the curtains, two mongoose hiding **behind** the bushes, train came **behind** time means came late, before time is early
- **by, beside**—a side table **by/beside** the bed, sit **beside** me, a tower standing **by** the river, passed **by** me
- **round, around**—a shop **round** the corner (nearby), a car moved **around** the building/roundabout, turned **round and round**, the earth moving **round** the sun, the periphery **around** the shrine
- **in front of (just next in the row/line), opposite (facing), next (adjacent)**—sitting **in front of** me, sitting **opposite** facing each other, a building **opposite** the school across the road, a building **next** to it or **in front of** it, the girl **next** door
- **between, among**—stuffing **between** two slices of bread, no grudge **between** you and me, **between** 6 P.M. and 9 P.M., a woman sitting **between** two men, river flows **between** its banks, an orange in the bowl **among** many apples, a man sitting **among** many women

Target Exercise 20

Directions Choose the correct preposition in the context.

1. I was sitting behind him and he was **in front of/opposite** me.
2. Cross your finger; the good news is **round/around** the corner.
3. The number of people living **under/below** the poverty line has decreased in India.
4. Children **under/below** 18 years are not allowed in the movies having A-certificate.
5. Many personnel work **under/below** him.
6. The Commonwealth Games committee is unhappy as the preparations for the 2010 games are **in front of/behind** schedule.
7. He stood **by/beside** his friend in all his difficulties.
8. The house which was standing **between/among** the trees was well canopied from all sides.
9. The man was standing **by/on** the river and looking **at/around** the evening sky.
10. The area was evacuated as the level of water in the river went **over/above** the danger mark.

Answers 1. in front of 2. round 3. below 4. below 5. under 6. behind 7. by 8. among 9. by, at
10. above

Means and Instrument

- **by, in, from, with**—by hand, by air, by writing, cooked **from** oil/butter, **with** knife/screw-driver/hammer
eg,
 - (i) The money was delivered **by hand**.
 - (ii) The handicraft shop sells things made **by hand**.
 - (iii) Travelling **by air** is faster than travelling **by train or by car**.
 - (iv) We informed them **by writing** a message.
 - (v) Food is **cooked** here **from** pure butter.
 - (vi) He drove a nail in the wall **with a hammer**.

Time

- **at, on, in**—at 4 o'clock, on Monday, in March
- **for** (summed up time), **since** (beginning time)—**for** two hours, **since** morning
- **before, after**—woke **before** the day break, slept **after** the night fall
- **from-to, between-and**—**from** 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., **between** 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- **during, within, till**—**during** the entire day, **within** three days, **till** the day after tomorrow, **till** yesterday
eg,
 - (i) This happened **at 5 in the morning on a Monday in January in 1992**.
 - (ii) It has been **raining since** last week and it has already rained **for** seven days.
 - (iii) She worshipped **before** eating and she worshipped **after** eating.
 - (iv) The show runs **from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.**
 - (v) You can see the doctor **between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m.**
 - (vi) We went to Nainital **during the** holidays.
 - (vii) You will have to complete the test **within** the time provided.
 - (viii) I was quite unaware of this fact **till** yesterday.
 - (ix) They will keep the decision on hold **till** next week.

Cause, Purpose

- **of, from, for**—died **of** cholera, suffering **from** fever, worked **for** social welfare

Rate

- **at, by**—at the speed of 140 km/h, sugar sells **by** the kilogram, cloth **by** the metre and milk **by** the litre

Target Exercise 21

Directions Choose the correct preposition in the context.

1. The poacher killed the animal in one shot **from/with** his AK 47 gun.
2. Sugarcane should be better supplied **on/by** truck than **by/through** a train.
3. The news was first conveyed **on/by** a post card, then **through/by** a telegram.
4. The food cooked **in/from** ghee is preferred over the one cooked **by/from** oil.
5. Many people last year dies **from/of** swine flue.
6. The renowned agrarian leader stood **before/for** the cause of the farmers.
7. Apply **in/within** ten days or visit between Monday to/and Wednesday.
8. Sugar sells **at/by** Rs 40 a kilo these days.
9. In this strange part of the world they sell cloth **at/by** the kilogram.
10. The thief opened the lock **by/with** a hair-pin.

Answers 1. with 2. by, by 3. by, by 4. from, from 5. of 6. for 7. within, and 8. at 9. by 10. with

The usage of preposition with some words is fixed

Some of the most common ones are given below.

- Accustomed of = He was **accustomed of** working hard in his youth. (used to)
- Accused of = The man **accused of** stealing was sent to jail. (blamed of)
- Acquainted with = Please introduce him to me if you are **acquainted with** him. (know)
- Afraid of = Don't get **afraid of** that dog. It won't bite. (fear from)
- Agree to (idea) = The president **agreed to** the resolution and passed it. (accept)
- Agree with (person) = If you **agree with** me please support me. (have same opinion)
- According to = He was acquitted as he was **innocent according to** the jury. (in the opinion of)
- Adapted to = Man easily gets **adapted to** new environments. (change)
- Along with = The Prime Minister **along with** his retinue entered the hall. (together with)
- Associated with = He had long been **associated with** the organization before he retired. (worked with)
- Averse to = Initially people are **averse to** accepting their weakness, but with the passage of time they start realizing and correcting themselves. (unwilling to)
- Believe in (faith) = I **believe in** God. (have faith in)
- Belong to = As this country **belongs to** us, we **belong to** this country. (have a right over)
- Clever at = She is **clever at** painting and playing music, but I am **at** music. (skilled at)
- Congratulate on = I **congratulated her on** her great success. (greeted)
- Cure for = As man conquers a disease and find a **cure** for it, another pops up. (remedy for)
- Depend on = High rate of employment depends on **growth of** economy. (is related with)
- Derived from = Many English words are **derived from** Greek and Latin. (came/originate from)
- Details of = This new book contains **details of** her extensive journey. (description of)
- Different from = Village life is quite **different from** city life. (not same)
- Divide into = The property was **divided into** two parts and given to the two sons. (break into)
- Dream of = The henpeck husband could never **dream of** opposing his wife. (think of)
- Frightened of = Those **frightened of** obstacles never proceed ahead for success. (having fear of)
- Famous for = The city of Benaras is **famous for** its teeming ghats. (known for)
- Good at = He is quite **good at** convincing people in his favour. (skilled at)
- Ignorant of = Being **ignorant of** the consequences, the naives easily fall into bad habits. (not knowing)
- Increase in = There has been a tremendous **increase in** the multi-nationals in our country. (rise in)
- Insist on = The shopkeeper could not deny when she **insisted on** paying later. (said forcefully)
- Interested in = Work hard if you are **interested in** your progress. (want to)
- Lack of = **Lack of** money brings poverty and **lack of** knowledge ignorance. (devoid of, not having)

- Fond of = The mother was very **fond of** her youngest child. (loved/liked very much)
- Aim at = The shooter **aimed at** the target and shot accurately. (fix at the target)
- Laugh at = Don't **laugh at** those who are deprived of God's blessings. (ridicule, make fun of)
- Listen to = Hello! Please **listen to** me. (lend your ear, heed, pay attention to)
- Look at = What are you **looking at?** (see)
- Look after = The nurse **looked after** the child better than the mother. (to take care of, to rear)
- Look for = Have you lost anything? What are you **looking for** under the table. (to search for)
- Look into = I have requested the police commissioner **to look into** the matter of increasing crime in our locality. (investigate, to probe, examine)
- Married to = Sita was **married to** Ram and Ram **to** Sita after a Swayambar.
- Operate on = The doctors **operated on** the patient and transplanted his heart. (to cut to cure)
- Pay for = We need to **pay for** everything that we take in our lifetime. (return in money or kind)
- Pleased with = He is looking too **pleased with** himself. (amused, happy with)
- Prevent from = The strict administration **prevented** the riot **from taking** place. (avoided, stopped)
- Proof of = Many accused get punishment as they cannot produce **proof of** their innocence. (evidence of)
- Reason for = There cannot be a good **reason for** lethargy. (cause, excuse)
- Respond to = People **responded to** the call of the president **and** contributed generously for the cause of the flood victims. (acted positively, acted in favour)
- Remind of = This alluring smell of the flowers **remind me of** my childhood days in a garden. (reminiscent of, bring to memory)
- Shout at = Scolding or **shouting at** children does not **help** their cause in any way. (to be angry loudly, scold loudly)
- Sorry for = Should we feel **sorry at** the end of the day **for what** did during the day? (regret, feel remorse)
- Speak to/with = I wanted to **speak to** you, **but** you were not available.
- Unless the countries **speak with** one another they cannot resolve their disputes. (talk, communicate)
- Suffer from = The businessman **suffered from** great losses and was soon declared bankrupt. (incurred, troubled by)
- Surprised at = The scientists were **surprised at** the remarkable discovery.
- Take part in = **Taking part in** extra-curricular activities is equally important as excelling in academics. (to participate, to be a part of)
- Thank for = Before leaving the participants **thanked** the organizers **for** giving them the opportunity. (be grateful for)
- Tolerant of = In a multi-lingual and multi-cultural country like India people need to be **tolerant of** the diversity and differences. (to be considerate, thoughtful of)
- Translate into = Volumes of works of Sanskrit have been **translated into** English and many other European languages. (change in language)

Target Exercise 22

Directions Choose the correct preposition in the context.

1. Only till few years ago people could not dream **about/of** the facilities and comforts that they enjoy now.
2. The girl was quite frightened **from/of** the ghost stories.
3. Which subject are good **in/at?**
4. He smiled in the way as if he was acquainted **about/with** me.
5. The minister now-a-days are quite averse **to/from** coming out of their comfort zone.
6. People clever **in/at** deceiving get away easy without being reprimanded.
7. The majority of Hindi words are **derived of/from** Sanskrit.
8. If a country progresses the masses should not remain deprived **from/of** the fruits.
9. The quick arrival of the fire-brigade prevented the fire **for/from** spreading further.
10. If one has a problem one should sit down and speak **to/with** the parties involved.

Answers 1. of 2. of 3. at 4. with 5. to 6. at 7. from 8. of 9. from 10. with

Structure Rule

The idiomatic nature of preposition

Convention rules the use of preposition. As we have seen above, there is some collocation between some word and their fixed preposition. At the same time, there phrasal verbs or prepositional verbs which mean different from the words used in them. Therefore, they are idiomatic by nature. See a few :

To look after = to take care of

To look for = to search

To look into = to enquire about

To take after = to resemble

To take to heart = to feel bad

We will discuss these in detail in the chapter Idioms and Phrases.

The seventh question that you have to ask is

“Are the prepositions correctly used?”

This is the rule no. SEVEN

Target Exercise 23

Directions One of the words is incorrectly spelt in each group. Encircle that word.

1. grammar summer summerise hammer
2. author interior governer organiser
3. theatre kilometre kilolitre metre
4. important impotent ignorent obedient
5. licence lens sense influence
6. negligable valuable possible resistible
7. dangerous mystereous superstitious courteous
8. official presidential crucial substancial
9. expense expanse expansion expulstion
10. anxious conscious consentious pretentious

Answers 1. summarise 2. governor 3. kilometre 4. ignorant 5. license 6. negligible
7. mysterious 8. substantial 9. expulsion 10. conscientious

Target Exercise 24

Directions One of the words is correctly spelt in each group. Encircle that word.

1. accomodate accomodate accomodate ecommodate
2. begger beggar beggery beggerly
3. cocoon cucoon cacoon cocun
4. quarrelling quarreling quarelling querrelling
5. residencial recidential reasidential residential
6. apology appology apolosy epology
7. sinsere sincere sinceer sincier
8. restorent restaurent restaurant restaurant
9. profession proffesion profetion profeson
10. posesson possession posession possession

Answers 1. accommodate 2. beggar 3. cocoon 4. quarrelling 5. residential 6. apology
7. sincere 8. restaurant 9. profession 10. possession

Type 11 : Error of Punctuation

Apostrophe with Possessives Nouns

Consider the following :

(i) A boy's bag

(iii) My father's house

(ii) The boys' school

(iv) My parents' place

- (v) Men's saloon
 (vii) Children's park
 (ix) Dickens' novels
- (vi) Women's parlour
 (viii) Socrates' disciple
 (x) Levis' jeans

The nouns ending with 's' do not usually require another 's' after the apostrophe.

Consider the following :

- (i) Jack and Jill's house—**one house** belonging to both
 (ii) Sita and Ram's journey—**same journey** covered together

But

- (i) Jack's and Jill's houses—**two different possessions** or ownerships
 (ii) Sita's and Ram's destinations—**two different destinations** of the two

Structure Rule

Apostrophe is also used to make contracted forms :

It is = it's

I will not = I won't

She had = she'd

There is = there's

He has = he's

She would = she'd

Here is = here's

He is = he's

Do not = don't

I will = I'll

We have = we've

Cannot = can't and so on

Target Exercise 25

Directions Rewrite the sentences after applying proper punctuation marks.

- Keats and Shelley's poems adore nature with deep sensuous passion.
- You can get your car repaired at Salim's and Karim's garage which is only a furlong away.
- R.K. Narayan's, the famous Indian English authors, stories are known for deep insight into their characters.
- The boy's and the girl's school were standing face to face flanking the road.
- Childrens magazines are hardly to be seen anywhere these days.

Answers 1. Keats's and Shelley's poems—two different poets' poems 2. Salim and Karim's—one garage owned by two 3. R.K. Narayan, the famous Indian English author's 4. the boys' and girls' school 5. children's

Punctuation

Use of comma (,), semi-colon (;), colon (:), and quotation marks ("")

Comma

- To mention a list of things : *eg*,
 - You, he and I are friends.
 - She bought mango, apple, guava and orange.
 - Industrialization, urbanization and globalization are the process to bring about modernization
- To separate two clauses : *eg*,
 - When I was there, I did not go out for a day.
 - If you work hard, you will succeed.
- Before and, or, but, if the clauses are long enough: *eg*,
 - I offer her tea but she declined.
 - Some of the boys joined the course, but the girls were not interested.
- After connective like however, therefore, on the other hand, similarly: *eg*,
 - He is sincere. However, he is not successful.
 - They criticized the man. On the other hand, they honoured him.
- When some words intrude the sentence especially between the subject and its verb: *eg*,
 - We were, believe it or not, on the cloud nine last night.
 - He, however, did not do as he had promised.
 - Mr. Victor, the principal of the college, did not agree to our proposal.
 - People, who follow nature, get blessed.

Semi-colon

- To show closeness of two independent sentences where otherwise full stop can be used: *eg*,
 - Idea disseminated; and this is how civilization grew.
 - She invited me; but I was not interest.
 - Some people like summers; others like winter.

Colon

- For writing dialogues: *eg*,
A: What's that? B: Guess.
- For presenting explanations, lists etc: *eg*,
 - Answer the following questions:
 - What's true? 2. What's not true?
 - Her explanation was like this:
- In headings and titles: *eg*,
 - Video wills acceptable: Supreme Court (ii) Punctuation: Apostrophe
 - Chapter One: Sentence Correction

Quotation marks

- Direct speech *eg*,
 - She said, "I'll come tomorrow."
- Quotations
 - The famous proverb goes, "Don't count your chickens before they hatch."
- To make the word stand out: *eg*,
 - He was the "wisest" fool of all times. (ii) I like 'Alice in the Wonderland'.

Target Exercise 26

Directions Rewrite the sentences after applying proper punctuations marks.

- An angry humiliated and wounded A.Q. Khan has finally made the secret of nuclear proliferation public.
- Narayanan reinforced the official position saying We have thermonuclear capabilities.
- What about the drunk customers nuisance.
- Shakuntala Devi the famous numerologists latest book has hit the book-stalls.
- Im going to barge in for the evening worship she insisted.

The eighth important question to be asked is

"Are the spelling and punctuation in place?"

This is the rule no. EIGHT

Answers 1. an angry, humiliated and wounded 2. saying, "We have" 3. customers'
4. numerologist's 5. "I'm Worship", she insisted.