

## Time to ease norms: On COVID-19 restrictions

Masks must remain mandatory only for the **vulnerable** and in health-care **settings**

As the third winter begins in India after the COVID-19 pandemic began in January 2020, fresh daily **infections** of the novel coronavirus — there was a small **spike** in July and August — **have** been **dipping** since the third wave **peaked** in late January 2022. Daily new cases nationally dropped below the 1,000-**mark** after November first week, and below 500 in the last four days. While the case decline may not be a true **reflection** of the actual level of infection in the population, **given** the low level of testing across the country, the **test positivity rate** and **the number** of **hospitalisations** due to moderate to severe COVID-19 disease **are** at a low level — **a far cry from** the **peak** of the second wave in 2021. COVID-19 deaths too have been very low, with many States not reporting any for days together; Kerala has been reporting some **backlog** deaths on certain days but nil fresh deaths on many days. Nationally, the case **fatality** rate was 1.19% as of November 22. The situation in India is **vastly** different from what it is like in a few other countries where the daily infections are **witnessing** a sharp spike. Even the extremely high **transmissible Omicron sub-lineages** and **recombinant lineages** have only caused a small spike in fresh cases but no **concomitant** increase in hospitalisations or deaths in India.

Given the very low number of cases and hospitalisations, the **situation** in India **is** no longer **cause for concern**. Even with most businesses and educational institutions back to **functioning** as in the **pre-pandemic** days and large **gatherings** being seen even in poorly **ventilated** places with almost no voluntary mask wearing, there has been no spike in cases since the peak of the third wave. This makes a strong **case** to ease any mandatory **COVID-appropriate behaviour**, masks included. A week ago, India made mask wearing optional for air passengers **precisely** because of the improved ground situation. It is only in hospitals and health-care settings that mask wearing should remain mandatory. The low level of infection **notwithstanding**, it is advisable that the vulnerable population including the elderly and those with **comorbidities** at least wear a mask to reduce the risk of infection. Long COVID is real and **poses** a risk even to otherwise healthy people. The virus is **evolving**, and the **emerging variants** of concern will, by default, be even more highly transmissible. Their **lethality** cannot be **predicted** as **transmission** happens prior to disease **onset** and so the **selection pressure** is for higher transmission and not disease **severity**. **[Practice Exercise]**

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

## Vocabulary

1. **Ease** (verb) – alleviate, relieve, comfort, mitigate, soothe; reduce, lessen कम करना/ढील देना
2. **Vulnerable** (adjective) – weak, susceptible, unsafe, defenseless कमजोर
3. **Setting** (noun) – place, milieu, backdrop, location, locale परिसर
4. **Spike** (noun) – a rapid increase उछाल
5. **Dip** (verb) – Drop, sink, fall, plummet, decrease गिरना
6. **Peak** (verb) – reach its highest point, reach the high point चरम पर होना
7. **Mark** (noun) – level, point, stage निशान
8. **Reflection** (noun) – indication, display, demonstration, manifestation संकेत
9. **Given** (preposition) – considering, taking into account, bearing in mind देखते हुए
10. **Hospitalisation** (noun) – admission to hospital for treatment. अस्पताल में भर्ती करना
11. **A far cry from** (phrase) – be very different to. बहुत अलग
12. **Peak** (noun) – summit, apex, pinnacle, acme, height शिखर
13. **Backlog** (noun) – a large number of things that you should have done before and must do now
14. **Fatality** (noun) – death, mortality, casualty मृत्यु संख्या
15. **Vastly** (adverb) – immensely, hugely, greatly, extremely, enormously काफी
16. **Witness** (verb) – see, observe, watch, look on at देखना
17. **Transmissive** (adjective) – Of or relating to the transmission of something. संचरणशील
18. **Omicron** (noun) – a variant of the COVID-19 virus.
19. **Sub-lineage** (noun) – A sublineage is a group of similar viruses within a lineage
20. **Recombinant** (adjective) – relating to or denoting an organism, cell, or genetic material formed by recombination.
21. **Lineage** (noun) – lineage is a group of genetically similar viruses with a common ancestor.
22. **Concomitant** (adjective) – associated, related, connected, coexistent सहवर्ती
23. **Cause for worry** (phrase) – Reason to worry चिंता का कारण

24. **Functioning** (noun) – Performance, execution, performing, operation, running, working कामकाज
25. **Pre-pandemic** (adjective) – Of or relating to a period before pandemic महामारी से पहले
26. **Gathering** (noun) – A group of persons together in one place सभा
27. **Ventilated** (adjective) – aired ; exposed to air हवादार
28. **Case** (noun) – reason, ground, basis, rationale कारण
29. **COVID-appropriate behaviour** (noun) – It includes Hand hygiene, Physical distancing, Face masks, Cough etiquettes, No spitting at public places, Avoiding gatherings and crowded places, etc.
30. **Precisely** (adverb) – exactly, accurately, right, just, absolutely ठीक
31. **Notwithstanding** (preposition) – in spite of, despite, regardless of, for all के बावजूद
32. **Comorbidity** (noun) – a disease that is simultaneously present with another or others in a patient. सहरुग्णता
33. **Pose** (verb) – Cause, create, present, produce खड़ा करना (खतरा)
34. **Evolve** (verb) – to develop gradually विकसित होना
35. **Emerging** (adjective) – developing, evolving, emergent, उभरती
36. **Variant** (noun) – variation, form, alternative, type प्रकार
37. **Lethality** (noun) – the capacity to cause death or serious harm or damage. घातकता
38. **Predict** (verb) – Forecast, foresee, envisage, expect, guess भविष्यवाणी करना
39. **Transmission** (noun) – spread, communication, diffusion, conduction प्रसार
40. **Onset** (noun) – start, commencement, beginning शुरुआत
41. **Selection pressure** (noun) – an agent of differential mortality or fertility that tends to make a population change genetically.
42. **Severity** (noun) – intensity, violence, harshness, fury, vehemence तीव्रता

## Practice Exercise

**Direction (Q1 – Q3): Select the best express synonym of the given words**

**[Editorial page]**

1. **FATALITY**

- A. Accolade
- B. Mortality
- C. Facile
- D. Pacify

2. **CONCOMITANT**

- A. Vicarious
- B. Coexistent
- C. Tenacious
- D. Discern

3. **ONSET**

- A. Dearth
- B. Commencement
- C. Assuage
- D. Subtle

4. **Idioms & Phrase**

**All eyes were on** Carla as she completed her final dive.

- A. To take strong action to try to make it happen
- B. Used to emphasize a situation, quality, or type of behaviour
- C. To achieve something at the loss of something
- D. Everyone is paying attention to something or someone

5. **Direction: Five statements are given below, which are jumbled in any random order. These statements will form a coherent and meaningful paragraph, when arranged in the correct sequence. Arrange the sentences in the right order and answer the questions that follow.**

**The Nobel Prize for Medicine this year will be awarded to Svante Pääbo, a Swedish geneticist and a director of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany.**

**P.** Pääbo brought Neanderthals — believed to be among the many human-like species and losers of the evolutionary race — to the centre on the question of human evolution.

**Q.** he has been chosen as the lone winner of the Medicine or Physiology Prize this year — something not witnessed since 2016.

**R.** Pääbo, 67, has quietly instigated a Copernican revolution. Much like the latter placed the sun at the centre and demoted the earth to another circumscribed, perambulatory planet,

**S.** Science being of an increasingly collaborative and competitive nature, recent trends in Nobel Prizes suggest that there are usually multiple winners for every prize.

**T.** Thanks to his work, it is now known that Europeans and Asians carry anywhere between 1%-4% of Neanderthal DNA.

U. It is a tribute to the originality and revolutionary implications of Pääbo's research that in a world perennially reshaped by advances in biology,

Which among the following will be the **Fourth** sentence of the paragraph after the rearrangement?

- A. U                      B.S                      C.T                      D.Q                      E.R

**Direction (Q6 – Q7): Read the given sentences to find out whether there is any grammatical error in them**

6. I have seen (A)/ that film last year (B)/ but I do not remember its story (C)/ No Error (D)

7. Mahatma Gandhi remained (A)/ a man of principle (B)/ all through his life. (C)/ No Error (D)

**Directions (8-9): In the following questions two columns are given containing three Sentences/phrases each. In first column, sentences/phrases are A, B and C and in the second column the sentences/phrases are D, E and F. A sentence/phrase from the first column may or may not connect with another sentence/phrase from the second column to make a grammatically and contextually correct sentence. Each question has five options, four of which display the sequence(s) in which the sentences/phrases can be joined to form a grammatically and contextually correct sentence. If none of the options given forms a correct sentence after combination, mark option (E), i.e. "None of these" as your answer.**

8.

	Column (1)		Column (2)
A.	As soon as the train left Kharagpur and	D.	on the topics" Types of Pollution and their effect
B.	I, Nidhi Jain, am happy to express my views	E.	return back from Meerut last night
C.	It being very late, Jaya could not	F.	gained speed, a band of robbers brought out their revolvers and daggers.

- A. C-D, B-F    B. B-D, A-F    C. A-E, C-D    D. A-D    E. None of these

9.

	Column (1)		Column (2)
A.	Ahmed was proud of his	D.	achievements in the field of sports.
B.	The closer I approached the valley,	E.	the more dense the vegetation became
C.	He had not even registered	F.	her presence in the same room

- A. A-E    B. A-F, B-E    C. A-E, C-D    D. B-D    E. None of these

10. Find out the misspelt word

- A. Enthusiastic  
B. Frivilous

- C. Trifling
- D. Trivial

**Direction: Read the passage given below and answer the following questions.**

**(The Hindu Editorial: Checks without balance – Oct 21, 2022)**

Each of these men has been listed as designated terrorists in India's Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act terror list as well as on the Federal Bureau of Investigation or U.S. Treasury lists. **(1)**/ China's decision to block two proposals by India and the United States to list Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commanders on the United Nations Security Council's 1267 terror list is part of a well-worn pattern now. **(2)**/ Since June, New Delhi and Washington have made five such proposals, with China placing a hold on each. **(3)**/ This includes Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar's brother Rauf Asghar and LeT leaders Abdur Rahman Makki (Hafiz Saeed's brother-in-law), 26/11 handler Sajid Mir and the latest listing requests for Talha Saeed (Hafiz Saeed's son) and Shahid Mehmood, who is charged with recruitment and collection of funds for the terror group. **(4)**/

Each of them have a record (A)/ of charges over the past two decades of involvement in the attacks by the LeT and JeM, organisations (B)/ that are banned by the UN, and responsible for targeted (C)/ strikes in India — from the IC-814 hijack, Parliament attack and Mumbai 26/11, to Pathankot, Uri and Pulwama. (D)

Even so, China's response to the requests has been consistently **recalcitrant**, placing hold upon hold on the proposals made, regardless of the figure it cuts in the global counter-terrorism space, using what New Delhi has forcefully criticised as a "political bias" towards Pakistan to \_\_\_\_\_**11**\_\_\_\_\_ the process.

Given the situation, India has three clear choices: the Government can \_\_\_\_\_**12**\_\_\_\_\_ the effort until China can be persuaded to change its stance, or it can continue to bring terror listing proposals to the UN knowing they will be blocked by China, but showing that China is indeed misusing its power as a permanent member of the Security Council. Neither route will, however, ensure India's goal of listing the remaining leadership of the terror groups. A third option is to open a diplomatic channel with China that focuses on the issue of global cooperation on terrorism, separate from other \_\_\_\_\_**13**\_\_\_\_\_ bilateral issues, and to induce Beijing to reconsider its untenable position. While the last option **seems(A)** the most difficult, if not impossible, it must be **remembered(B)** that China was **persuaded(C)** to "grey list" Pakistan at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) from 2012-2015, and from 2018 to the present, and remove its hold and allow the terror listing of Masood Azhar at the UNSC in 2019, after **blocking(D)** such attempts since 2009. As Pakistan moves off the FATF grey list — as it is expected to on Friday — it is time for India to consider all its options with China to ensure justice for all the victims of the cross-border terrorism that has exacted a deep and \_\_\_\_\_**14**\_\_\_\_\_ on the country.

**Fill in the blank with the most appropriate word given in the option (From Q11 – Q14)**

11. Regardless of the figure it cuts in the global counter-terrorism space, using what New Delhi has forcefully criticised as a "political bias" towards Pakistan to \_\_\_\_\_**11**\_\_\_\_\_ the process
- A. Rigorous
  - B. Enervate

- C. Stymie  
D. Complicity
12. Given the situation, India has three clear choices: the Government can \_\_\_\_\_12\_\_\_\_\_ the effort until China can be persuaded to change its stance
- A. Machination  
B. Abandon  
C. Revere  
D. Palpable
13. A third option is to open a diplomatic channel with China that focuses on the issue of global cooperation on terrorism, separate from other \_\_\_\_\_13\_\_\_\_\_ bilateral issues, and to induce Beijing to reconsider its untenable position.
- A. Erudite  
B. Diffident  
C. Fractious  
D. Martial
14. It is time for India to consider all its options with China to ensure justice for all the victims of the cross-border terrorism that has exacted a deep and lasting \_\_\_\_\_14\_\_\_\_\_ on the country.
- A. Congenial  
B. Toll  
C. Belittle  
D. Insular
15. **The following sentence may or may not contain an error in one of its parts. Identify the part containing the error. If the sentence is correct, select 'No error' as your answers.**  
Each of them have a record **(A)**/ of charges over the past two decades of involvement in the attacks by the LeT and JeM, organisations **(B)**/ that are banned by the UN, and responsible for targeted **(C)**/ strikes in India — from the IC-814 hijack, Parliament attack and Mumbai 26/11, to Pathankot, Uri and Pulwama. **(D)**
- A. (A)  
B. (B)  
C. (C)  
D. (D)  
E. No Error
16. **Rearrange the sentence to form a meaningful sentence.**  
Each of these men has been listed as designated terrorists in India's Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act terror list as well as on the Federal Bureau of Investigation or U.S. Treasury lists. **(1)**/ China's decision to block two proposals by India and the United States to list Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commanders on the United Nations Security Council's 1267 terror list is part of a well-worn pattern now. **(2)**/ Since June, New Delhi and Washington have made five such proposals, with China placing a hold on each. **(3)**/ This includes Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar's brother Rauf Asghar and LeT leaders Abdur Rahman Makki (Hafiz Saeed's brother-in-law), 26/11 handler Sajid Mir and the latest listing requests for Talha Saeed (Hafiz

Saeed's son) and Shahid Mehmood, who is charged with recruitment and collection of funds for the terror group. (4)/

- A. 2341
- B. 1234
- C. 2134
- D. 2143
- E. 4321

17. Given below is a word, followed by three sentence that consist of that word. Identify the sentence (S) that best express (es) the meaning of the word. Choose option 5 'None of the above' if the word is not suitable in any of the sentence

**RECALCITRANT**

- (i) Tenants petitioned their **recalcitrant** landlord to finish repairs to their building.
  - (ii) They showed fictionalised encounters between a range of **recalcitrant** youths and the authorities.
  - (iii) Approaches to developing **recalcitrant** extraction systems for tropical forest products.
- A. Only (i)
  - B. Only (ii)
  - C. Only (iii)
  - D. (i), (ii)
  - E. (ii), (iii)

18. In the following question, a sentence is given with four words marked as (A), (B), (C), and (D). These words may or may not be placed in the correct order. Four options with different arrangements of these have been provided. Mark the option with the correct arrangement as the answer. If no rearrangement is required, mark option (5) as your answer.

While the last option **seems(A)** the most difficult, if not impossible, it must be **persuaded(B)** that China was **remembered(C)** to "grey list" Pakistan at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) from 2012-2015, and from 2018 to the present, and remove its hold and allow the terror listing of Masood Azhar at the UNSC in 2019, after **blocking(D)** such attempts since 2009.

- A. A – D
- B. B – C
- C. D – B
- D. A – C
- E. No arrangement

19. Select the phrase/ connector/ word-pair from the given options to form a single sentence from the two sentence given, implying the same meaning as expected in the original sentences. The phrase/ connector must appear at the beginning of the sentences

- (i) One meat costs lesser than the other and is more nutritious according to a community.
  - (ii) There's a chance it will be consumed more.
- A. Unlike
  - B. But
  - C. So



- D. If
- E. None of these

**20. Fill the appropriate preposition in the given blanks**

We should not be blind \_\_\_\_\_ the fault of your children.

- A. with
- B. In
- C. By
- D. To

## Answers

1. B    2. B    3. B    4. D    5. E    6.A    7. D    8.B    9.E    10. B    11. C  
 12. B    13.C    14. B    15. A    16. A    17.D    18. B    19.D    20.D    **[Practice Exercise]**

## Explanations

4. **All eyes are on** (Phrase) – everyone is paying attention to something or someone. सबकी निगाहें लगी हैं कोई चीज़ पर
5. **SUQRPT**  
 The Nobel Prize for Medicine this year will be awarded to Svante Pääbo, a Swedish geneticist and a director of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany. Science being of an increasingly collaborative and competitive nature, recent trends in Nobel Prizes suggest that there are usually multiple winners for every prize. It is a tribute to the originality and revolutionary implications of Pääbo's research that in a world perennially reshaped by advances in biology, he has been chosen as the lone winner of the Medicine or Physiology Prize this year — something not witnessed since 2016. Pääbo, 67, has quietly instigated a Copernican revolution. Much like the latter placed the sun at the centre and demoted the earth to another circumscribed, perambulatory planet, Pääbo brought Neanderthals — believed to be among the many human-like species and losers of the evolutionary race — to the centre on the question of human evolution. Thanks to his work, it is now known that Europeans and Asians carry anywhere between 1%-4% of Neanderthal DNA.
6. (A) 'have seen' के बदले 'saw' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि Part (B) में 'last year' का प्रयोग है जिससे पता चलता है कि घटना past की है और past की घटना के लिए Simple Past का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-
- He came here last year.
  - She went to America last month.
- 'saw' will be used instead of 'have seen' because 'last year' is used in Part (B) which shows that the event is of past and Simple Past is used for past event is; As-
    - He came here last year.
    - She went to America last month.
7. (D) No error
8. **Correct Option: B**  
**As soon as the train left Kharagpur and gained speed, a band of robbers brought out their revolvers and daggers.**  
 Fragment A of column 1 is matched with fragment F of column 2 to make the sentence contextually and grammatically correct.  
**I, Nidhi Jain, am happy to express my views on the topics" Types of Pollution and their effect.**  
 Fragment B of column 1 is matched with fragment D of column 2 to make the sentence contextually and grammatically correct  
**It being very late, Jaya could not return back from Meerut last night.**

Fragment C of column 1 is not matched with fragment E of column 2 to make the sentence contextually and grammatically correct

**Correct is: It being very late, Jaya could not return from Meerut last night.**

- back' का प्रयोग अनावश्यक है क्योंकि 'return' का अर्थ है 'come back/go back' अर्थात् 'वापस आना / वापस जाना'; जैसे-
  - (i) He returned from Delhi.
  - (ii) He came back from Delhi

9. **Correct Option: E**

**Ahmed was proud of his achievements in the field of sports.**

Fragment A of column 1 is matched with fragment D of column 2 to make the sentence contextually and grammatically correct

**The closer I approached the valley, the more dense the vegetation became**

Fragment B of column 1 is not matched with fragment E of column 2 to make the sentence contextually and grammatically correct

**He had not even registered her presence in the same room**

Fragment C of column 1 is matched with fragment F of column 2 to make the sentence contextually and grammatically correct

10. Frivolous (adjective) – trivial, silly, foolish, unimportant, superficial तुच्छ
11. **Stymie** (verb) – impede, interfere with, hamper, hinder, obstruct, inhibit, बाधा डालना, रोकना
12. **Abandon** (verb) – to stop doing something, especially before it is finished छोड़ देना, त्याग देना
13. **Fractious** (adjective) – making trouble and complaining झगड़ालू
14. **Toll** (noun) – The number of deaths, casualties, or injuries arising from particular circumstances, such as a natural disaster, conflict, or accident (घायलों की) संख्या
15. Replace 'have' with 'has' because when we use each of with a plural noun as subject, it's normally followed by a singular verb
16. (A) **2341**  
China's decision to block two proposals by India and the United States to list Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) commanders on the United Nations Security Council's 1267 terror list is part of a well-worn pattern now. Since June, New Delhi and Washington have made five such proposals, with China placing a hold on each. This includes Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Masood Azhar's brother Rauf Asghar and LeT leaders Abdur Rahman Makki (Hafiz Saeed's brother-in-law), 26/11 handler Sajid Mir and the latest listing requests for Talha Saeed (Hafiz Saeed's son) and Shahid Mehmood, who is charged with recruitment and collection of funds for the terror group. Each of these men has been listed as designated terrorists in India's Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act terror list as well as on the Federal Bureau of Investigation or U.S. Treasury lists.
17. **Recalcitrant** (adjective) – unruly, intractable, refractory, disobedient, headstrong, obstinate, stubborn हठी

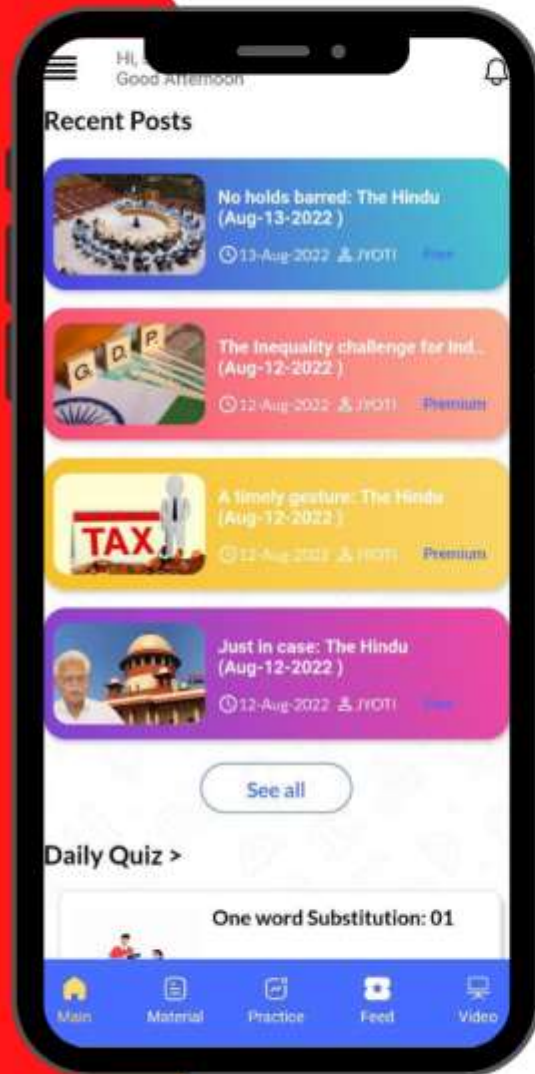
According to the given options only (i) AND (ii) are contextually correct.

Because the (iii) sentence is not giving any meaning and correct sentences should be like Approaches to developing sustainable extraction systems for tropical forest products.

18. As Pakistan moves off the FATF grey list — as it is expected to on Friday — it is time for India to consider all its options with China to ensure justice for all the victims of the cross-border terrorism that has exacted a deep and lasting toll on the country.
19. 'If' means on the condition or supposition that. These two sentences are perfectly connected by 'if' which make perfect sense.
- 'If one meat costs lesser than the other and is more nutritious according to a community, there's a chance it will be consumed more.'

### Explanation of other important words

Sr.NO	Words		Meanings	
Q1	<b>Accolade</b>	noun	An award; an honor	सम्मान
	<b>Facile</b>	adjective	Fluent; skillful in a superficial way; easy	सरल, सुगम, आसान
	<b>Pacify</b>	verb	To calm someone down; to placate	शांत करना
Q2	<b>Vicarious</b>	adjective	Experienced performed or suffered through someone else; living through the experience of another as though they were one's own experience.	उपनियुक्त
	<b>Tenacious</b>	adjective	Persistent; stubborn; not letting go	दृढ़ पकड़नेवाला
	<b>Discern</b>	verb	To have insight; to see thing clearly, to discriminate; to differentiate.	पहचानना, विचार करना, देखना
Q3	<b>Dearth</b>	noun	Lack; scarcity	कमी, अकाल
	<b>Assuage</b>	verb	To soothe; to pacify; to ease the pain of; to relieve	शांत करना
	<b>Subtle</b>	adjective	Not obvious; able to make fine distinction; ingenious; crafty	सूक्ष्म
Q11	<b>Rigorous</b>	adjective	Strict; harsh; severe	कड़ा; कठोर
	<b>Enervate</b>	verb	To reduce the strength or energy or, especially to do so gradually	बलहीन बनाना, कमजोर करना,
	<b>Complicity</b>	noun	Participation in wrongdoing; the act of being an accomplice	सहापराध, सहभागिता
Q12	<b>Machination</b>	noun	Scheming Activity for an evil purpose	चालबाज़ी
	<b>Revere</b>	verb	To respect highly; to honor	सम्मान
	<b>Palpable</b>	adjective	Capable of being touched; obvious; tangible	स्पर्शनीय
Q 13	<b>Erudite</b>	adjective	Scholarly; deeply learned	वैज्ञानिक, विद्वत्तापूर्ण, जानी
	<b>Diffident</b>	adjective	Timid; lacking in self confidence	संकोची, शंकायुक्त, शर्मीला
	<b>Martial</b>	adjective	Warlike; having to do with combat	सामरिक
Q14	<b>Congenial</b>	adjective	Agreeably suitable; pleasant	अनुकूल, सौहार्दपूर्ण
	<b>Belittle</b>	verb	To make to seem little; to put someone down	छोटा करना, मूल्य घटना
	<b>Insular</b>	adjective	Like an island; isolated	द्वीपीय



# Learn Vocabulary Through Reading Articles

English Madhyam

