
ASER report has significant pointers on reversing post-pandemic educational losses

The **findings** of the first **nationwide** ASER survey in four years **offer** significant **takeaways**. Covering nearly seven lakh children in the age group of 6 to 16 in 616 districts, it **frames** the impact of the pandemic on **learning outcomes**. As expected, the report card **in this respect** is not too good. But ASER 2022 also **belies** fears that the **prolonged closure** of schools — amongst the longest in the world — **would set back** the **steady** rise in **enrollment** over the past 10 years. More than 98 per cent of 6-16 year-olds are in school. It's **heartening** that the **proportion** of **out-of-school** girls **has** fallen to 2 per cent. The **uncertainties** and **exigencies** of the pandemic years do not **seem** to have **diminished** the importance that parents, across social groups, attach to sending children to school.

ASER recorded a steady rise in learning outcomes between 2014 and 2018. But **the lack** of classroom interaction with the teacher **seems** to have **reversed** these **incremental gains**. The **percentage** of Class 3 students who can read a Class 2 book **has** fallen by nearly 7 percentage points since the last nationwide ASER survey in 2018. The **loss** in numerical skills **is** less **steep** — about 2.3 per cent. But these figures seem less **grim** when seen from another **perspective** — 2022 was the first year in a physical classroom for these students. The report suggests that despite wide **variations** in how children **accessed** technology during the pandemic years, **most schools** — even in rural areas — “**attempted** to keep learning going with digital resources”. Here, too, a significant contribution seems to have been made by mothers and fathers. The **percentage** of young parents who have been to school **has gone up appreciably** in the past 10 years and they may have actively participated in **overcoming** some of the challenges caused by the **pandemic-induced disruption**, the report suggests. In the coming months and years, as states try to find different **pathways** to reach NEP 2020's goal of achieving **universal foundational literacy** and **numeracy**, they would do well to work ASER 2022's **hypothesis** on the role of parents into their plans.

A comparative **analysis** of learning outcomes during the pandemic and post-pandemic years in West Bengal, Karnataka and Chhattisgarh — states where the ASER was conducted during the health crisis — also **offers** hope. It shows that these states have reversed their losses significantly in 2022. **Other studies**, including that by the University of California's Karthik Muralidharan on Tamil Nadu's recovery, **underline** the significance of **empowering** teachers and **reaching out** to students in their homes. A **system** that **synergises** the roles of the home and classroom **is the way to go**. **[Practice Exercise]**

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

Vocabulary

1. **ASER report** (noun) – ASER stands for Annual Status of Education Report. This is an annual survey that aims to provide reliable estimates of children's enrolment and basic learning levels for each district and state in India. ASER has been conducted every year since 2005 in all rural districts of India.
2. **Pointer** (noun) – Indicator, Indication, Hint सूचक
3. **Findings** (noun) – Discovery, Conclusion, Result, Verdict, Outcome खोज, निष्कर्ष
4. **Nationwide** (adjective) – Countrywide, national देशव्यापी
5. **Takeaway** (noun) – Important point, a key fact
6. **Frame** (verb) – to express something in a particular way
7. **Learning outcome** (noun) – Learning outcomes are statements of the knowledge, skills, and abilities individual students should possess and can demonstrate upon completion of a learning experience or sequence of learning experiences.
8. **In this respect/regard** (phrase) – in connection with the point previously mentioned. इस संबंध में
9. **Belie** (verb) – to give an idea of something that is false or not true झुठलाना
10. **Prolonged** (adjective) – Continuing for a long time or longer than usual; lengthy. लंबा
11. **Closure** (noun) – closing down, shutting down, shutdown बन्द होना
12. **Set back** (phrasal verb) – Hinder, delay, hold up, impede, retard बाधा डालना
13. **Steady** (adjective) – constant, unchanging, changeless, unvarying, invariable, स्थिर, लगातार
14. **Enrollment** (noun) – the number of people enrolled at a school or college. नामांकन
15. **Heartening** (adjective) – Encouraging, promising, cheering, optimistic, reassuring, hopeful उत्साहजनक
16. **Proportion** (noun) – a part, share, or number considered in comparative relation to a whole. अनुपात
17. **Out-of-school** (adjective) – not attending school and therefore free to work स्कूल छोड़ दिया

18. **Uncertainty** (noun) – Improbability, changeableness, variability, inconstancy अनिश्चितता
19. **Exigency** (noun) – need, emergency, demand, requirement, want आवश्यकता
20. **Seem** (verb) – appear, look, sound, feel, appear to be प्रतीत होना
21. **Diminish** (verb) – Reduce, lessen, weaken, moderate, make smaller कम होना
22. **Reverse** (verb) – Overturn, undo, annul, render null and void. उलटना
23. **Incremental gains** (noun) – Significant improvement/achievement
24. **Perspective** (noun) – Viewpoint, Standpoint, Outlook, View, Perception, Angle परिप्रेक्ष्य
25. **Variation** (noun) – change, difference, variance, alteration, deviation विभिन्नता
26. **Access** (verb) – to be able to use or obtain something such as a service
27. **Go up** (phrasal verb) – increase बढ़ना
28. **Appreciably** (adverb) – considerably, substantially, significantly, markedly काफी
29. **Overcome** (verb) – Succeed in dealing with (a problem or difficulty) दूर करना
30. **Pandemic-induced** (adjective) – Caused by Pandemic महामारी से प्रेरित
31. **Disruption** (noun) – disturbance, interruption, disorder, break व्यवधान
32. **Pathway** (noun) – method, way, manner, mode, measure मार्ग, रास्ता
33. **Universal** (adjective) – relating to or done by all people or things in the world or in a particular group सार्वभौमिक
34. **Foundational** (adjective) – Denoting an underlying basis or principle; fundamental. मूलभूत
35. **Literacy** (noun) – the ability to read and write साक्षरता
36. **Numeracy** (noun) – the ability to understand and work with numbers.
37. **Hypothesis** (noun) – Theory, premise, suggestion, supposition, postulate अनुमान, परिकल्पना
38. **Underline** (verb) – emphasize, stress on, highlight, accentuate, accent, call attention to ज़ोर देना

39. **Empower** (verb) – authorize, license, entitle, permit, allow, सशक्त करना
40. **Reach out** (phrasal verb) – try to communicate with a person or a group of people, usually in order to help or involve them तक पहुँचना
41. **Synergy** (verb) – to combine or work together in order to be more effective, or to make things or people do this तालमेल कायम करना
42. **The way to go** (phrase) – best method for doing particular thing.

Practice Exercise

Direction: (Q1-Q5): In the following passage some words have been deleted. Fill in the blanks with the help of the alternatives given. Select the most appropriate option for each number.

In a substantial blow in favour of free speech, the Supreme Court has effectively suspended the operation of the sedition provision in the country's penal law. "All pending trials, appeals and proceedings with respect to the charge framed under Section 124A be kept in _____1_____ ", it has said in an order that will bring some welcome relief to those calling for the _____2_____ of Section 124A of the IPC, which criminalises any speech, writing or representation that "excites disaffection against the government". The Court has recorded its hope and expectation that governments at the Centre and the States will refrain _____3_____ registering any fresh case of sedition under Section 124A of the IPC, or continuing with any investigation or taking any _____4_____ measure under it. The hope and the expectation arise from the Union government's own submission that it has decided to re-examine and reconsider the provision as part of the Prime Minister's efforts to scrap outdated laws and compliance burdens. _____5_____, realising that its order may not be enough to deter thin-skinned and vindictive governments and politically pliant police officers from invoking it against detractors and dissenters, the Court has given liberty to the people to approach the jurisdiction courts if any fresh case is registered for sedition and cite in their support the present order, as well as the Union government's stand.

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|-------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. A. Postulate | B. Acumen | C. Abeyance | D. Fabrication |
| 2. A. Connoisseur | B. Abrogation | C. Charisma | D. Arbiter |
| 3. A. to | B. toward | C. From | D. Of |
| 4. A. Utilitarian | B. Indignant | C. Benevolent | D. Coercive |
| 5. A. Perhaps | B. Often | C. Regularly | D. Rarely |

Directions (Q6): In the following questions, four words are given in each question, out of which only one word is rightly spelt.

6. Find the correctly spelt word.
- Hypothesis
 - Hypotesis
 - Hypothesises
 - Hypothesise

Directions (Q7): In the following questions, the passage/sentence is split into five parts and named P, Q, R, S and T. These four parts are not given in their proper order. Read the sentence/passage and find out which of the four combinations is correct. Then find the correct answer.

7. P. The adage 'every crisis contains the seeds of an opportunity' could not have been truer for anyone than for Sri Lanka's Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe.

Q. has pitchforked Mr. Wickremesinghe to an office that he had no chance of occupying until last week.

R. Given the turmoil, Sri Lanka needed a government that would work towards stability and economic recovery.

S. With Mahinda Rajapaksa resigning in the face of determined protests, and the Opposition leader unwilling to work under President Gotabaya, a rare opportunity opened up for Mr. Wickremesinghe.

T. The severe economic crisis, which set off indefinite protests against President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother, (now former) Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa,

- A. PQRST B. PTQRS C. RQSPT D. QRSTP

Directions (Q8-Q9): In the following questions, a sentence has been given in Active/Passive Voice. Out of the four alternatives suggested, select the one which best expresses the same sentence in Passive/Active Voice.

8. He was driving the car so fast that it skidded on the snowy road.
 A. The car has been driven by him so fast that it skidded on the snowy road.
 B. The car was driven by him so fast that it skidded on the snowy road.
 C. The car was being driven by him so fast that it skidded on the snowy road.
 D. The car had been driven by him so fast that it skidded on the snowy road.
9. I don't like people telling me what to do.
 A. I don't like it when people are telling me what to do.
 B. I don't like being told what to do.
 C. Telling me what to do is what I don't Like.
 D. I don't like people when they tell me what to do.

Directions (Q10-Q11): In the following questions, a sentence has been given in Direct/Indirect Speech. Out of the four alternatives suggested, select the one which best expresses the same sentence in Indirect/Direct Speech.

10. John's father reminded him to take his umbrella.
 A. John's father said, "Remember your umbrella John?"
 B. "Here, is your umbrella John," said his father.
 C. "Are you going to take your umbrella or not?" said John to his father.
 D. "Don't forget to take your umbrella, John" said his father.
11. He said, "He took tea in the morning".
 A. He said that he did take in the morning.
 B. He said that he had taken tea in the morning.
 C. He said that he took in the morning.
 D. He said that he would take tea in the morning.

Directions (Q12-Q13): In the following questions, out of the four alternatives, choose the one which can be substituted for the given words/sentence.

12. **A barrier at the entry of a building**
 A. Nifty
 B. Turnstile

- C. Vendetta
- D. Rebel

13. Things which contains elements of different nature

- A. Incarnation
- B. Placard
- C. Heterogeneous
- D. Invocation

Directions (Q14-Q15): Choose the alternative which best expresses the meaning of the Idiom/Phrase.

14. He was often ***in the eye of the storm*** of congressional debates related to U.S. troop withdrawals from Vietnam
- A. Prevent someone or something from moving freely.
 - B. In the middle of a difficult situation
 - C. Show favouritism towards someone or something
 - D. To make someone seem to be a bad person
15. The documentary ***turned the spotlight on*** the low wages paid to manual workers
- A. To focus on or bring attention to someone or something.
 - B. To change the balance of a situation, such that one side or element is favored or gains advantage
 - C. Try to communicate with a person or a group of people, usually in order to help or involve them
 - D. be involved in difficult situation

Directions (Q16-Q17): choose the word opposite in meaning to the given word.

16. Diminish
- A. **Augment**
 - B. Relinquish
 - C. Pivotal
 - D. Serendipity
17. Empower
- A. Nominal
 - B. Histrionic
 - C. Forbid
 - D. Chronicle

Direction: (Q18-Q19): In the following question, out of the four alternatives, choose the word which best expresses the meaning of the given word.

18. Findings
- A. Hiatus
 - B. Abdicate
 - C. Conclusion
 - D. Irrevocable
19. Exigency

- A. Enfranchise
- B. Derogatory
- C. Verisimilitude
- D. Requirement

Directions (Q20-Q21): In the following questions, some part of the sentence is underlined. Which of the options given below the sentence should replace the part underlined to make the sentence grammatically correct. If the sentence is correct as it is given then choose option D 'No Correction required' as the answer.

20. It being very late, Manoj could not return back from Meerut last night
- A. Could not returned back
 - B. Should not be returned back
 - C. Cannot be return back
 - D. Could not return
21. Ahmed was proud for his achievements in the field of sports
- A. were proud for its achievements
 - B. Was proud of his achievements
 - C. Is proud of their achievements
 - D. Was proud of its achievements

Directions (Q22-Q25): Find out the error, if any –

22. He reassured to his boss (A)/ that he had no plans (B)/ to leave the company. (C)/ no error(D)
23. The company reports (A)/ that the demand for their computers (B)/ are growing every day. (C)/ no error (D)
24. When I saw the dress, (A)/ I knew it was exactly (B)/ what I had looked for. (C)/ no error(D)
25. I promise (A)/ I call you (B)/ as soon as I get home. (C)/ no error(D)

Answers

1. C 2. B 3. C 4. D 5. A 6. A 7. B 8. C 9. B 10. D 11. B 12. B
 13. C 14. B 15. A 16. A 17. C 18. C 19. D 20. D 21. B 22. A 23. C 24. C
 25. B

Explanation

1. **Keep in abeyance** (phrase) – temporary inactivity, cessation, or suspension स्थगित रखना
 - **Postulate** (noun) – Something accepted as true without proof an axiom स्वयं सिद्ध मान लेना
 - **Acumen** (noun) – Keeness of judgment; Mental sharpness कुशाग्रता
 - **Fabrication** (noun) – A lie; something made up छलरचना
2. **Abrogation** (noun) – revocation, repeal, abolition, cancellation, nullification निरसन
 - **Connoisseur** (noun) – An expert, particularly in matters of art or taste विशेषज्ञ
 - **Charisma** (noun) – A magical seeming ability to attract followers or inspire loyalty प्रतिभा
 - **Arbiter** (noun) – One who decides; a Judge मध्यस्थ
3. **Refrain** (from) (verb) – Stop oneself from doing something; abstain, withhold, hold back से बचना
4. **Coercive** (adjective) – Relating to or using force or threats; Powerful, forced दंडात्मक
 - **Utilitarian** (adjective) – stressing usefulness or utility above all other qualities; pragmatic उपयोगी
 - **Indignant** (adjective) – Angry; especially as a result of something unjust or unworthy; insulted. क्रोधित
 - **Benevolent** (adjective) – Generous; kind; doing good deeds भलाई करनेवाला
5. **Perhaps** (adverb) – may be, possibly, Imaginably शायद
6. **Hypothesis** (noun) – Theory, premise, suggestion, supposition, postulate अनुमान, परिकल्पना
7. **PTQRS**
 The adage ‘every crisis contains the seeds of an opportunity’ could not have been truer for anyone than for Sri Lanka’s Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe. The severe economic crisis, which set off indefinite protests against President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his brother, (now former) Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, has pitchforked Mr. Wickremesinghe to an office that he had no chance of occupying until last week. Given the turmoil, Sri Lanka needed a government that would work towards stability and economic

recovery. With Mahinda Rajapaksa resigning in the face of determined protests, and the Opposition leader unwilling to work under President Gotabaya, a rare opportunity opened up for Mr. Wickremesinghe.

8. The car was being driven by him so fast that it skidded on the snowy road.
9. I don't like being told what to do.
10. "Don't forget to take your umbrella, John" said his father.
11. He said that he had taken tea in the morning.
12. **Turnstile** – A barrier at the entry of a building
 - **Nifty** – Particularly good, skillful, effective, stylish
 - **Vendetta** – Feud in which the relatives of the dead or injured take revenge
 - **Rebel** – One who takes up arms against the government
13. **Heterogeneous** – Things which contains elements of different nature
 - **Incarnation** – Changing of magic spells
 - **Placard/poster** – Written or printed notice
 - **Invocation** – A prayer asking god's help as a part of religious Service
14. **Into the eye of a new storm** (Phrase) – in the middle of a difficult situation. कठिन परिस्थिति के बीच में
15. **Turn the spotlight on** (Phrase) – To focus on or bring attention to someone or something. पर ध्यान केंद्रित करना
16. **Diminish** (verb) – Reduce, lessen, weaken, moderate, make smaller कम होना
Antonym : **Augment (verb)** - to increase the amount, value, size, etc. of something किसी वस्तु का मूल्य, संख्या आकार आदि बढ़ाना
 - **Relinquish** (verb) – To release or let go of; to surrender; to stop doing त्यागना
 - **Pivotal** (adjective) – Crucial केंद्रीय
 - **Serendipity** (noun) – Accidental good fortune; discovering good thing without looking for them नसीब
17. **Empower** (verb) – authorize, license, entitle, permit, allow, सशक्त करना
Antonym: **Forbid** (verb) - to rule against; not permit; prohibit.
 - **Nominal** (adjective) – In name only; insignificant नाममात्र
 - **Histrionic** (adjective) – Overly dramatic; theatrical नाटकीय
 - **Chronicle** (noun) – A record of event in order of time; a history इतिवृत्त, इतिहास
18. **Findings** (noun) – Discovery, Conclusion, Result, Verdict, Outcome खोज, निष्कर्ष
 - **Hiatus** (noun) – A break or interruption, often from work अभाव, विराम
 - **Abdicate** (verb) – To Step down from position of power of responsibility त्यागना

➤ **Irrevocable** (adjective) – Irreversible स्थिर

19. **Exigency** (noun) – need, emergency, demand, requirement, want आवश्यकता

➤ **Enfranchise** (verb) – To grant the privileges of citizenship, especially the right to vote. मताधिकार देना

➤ **Derogatory** (adjective) – Disapproving; Degrading अपमानजनक

➤ **Verisimilitude** (noun) – Similarity to reality; the appearance of truth; looking the real thing. संभाव्यता, मुमकिननी

20. 'back' का प्रयोग अनावश्यक है क्योंकि 'return' का अर्थ है 'come back/go back' अर्थात् 'वापस आना / वापस जाना'; जैसे-

A. He returned from Delhi.

B. He came back from Delhi.

➤ Use of 'back' is Superfluous as 'return' means 'come back/go back' ; As-

(i) He returned from Delhi.

(ii) He came back from Delhi.

21. 'for' के बदले 'of' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'proud' के साथ Preposition 'of' का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-

A. I am proud of my friends.

B. I feel proud of being a member of this team.

➤ 'of' will be used instead of 'for' because the preposition 'of' is used with 'proud'; As-

A. I am proud of my friends.

B. I feel proud of being a member of this team.

22. (A) 'to' का प्रयोग अनावश्यक है क्योंकि 'assure/reassure somebody' का प्रयोग होता है; जैसे-

A. He assured me that he would help me.

B. She reassured him that she would help her.

(A) Use of 'to' is superfluous because 'assure/reassure somebody' is used; like-

A. He assured me that he would help me.

B. She reassured him that she would help her

23. (C) 'are' के बदले 'is' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि that-clause का subject 'the demand' singular है जिसके लिए singular verb का प्रयोग होगा।

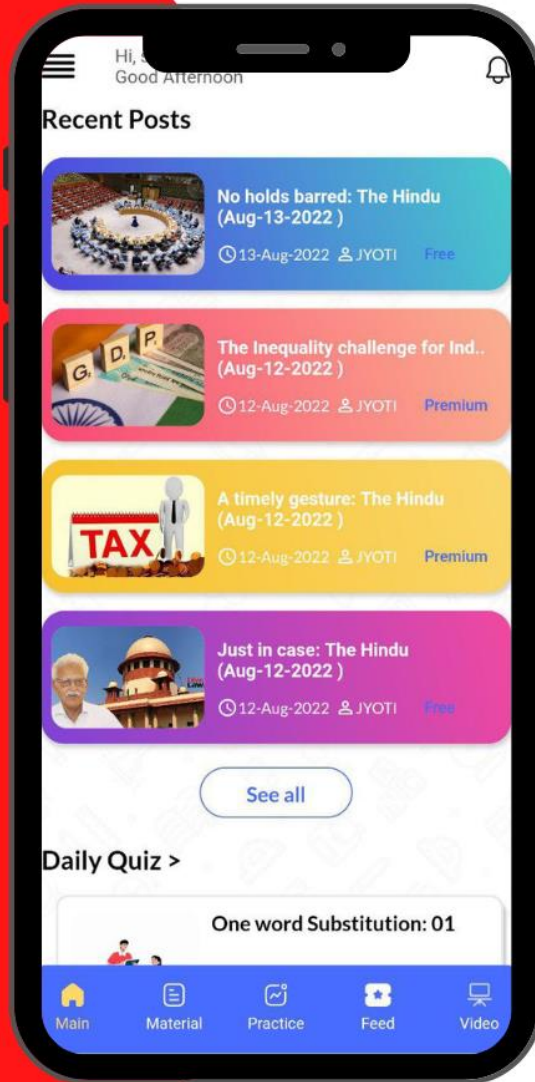
(C) 'is' will be used instead of 'are' because the subject 'the demand' of that-clause is singular for which singular verb will be used.

24. (C) 'had looked' के बदले 'had been looking' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'dress' के खोजने का काम past के past में जारी था और past के past में जारी कार्य के लिए past perfect continuous tense का प्रयोग होता है।

(C) 'Had been looking' will be used instead of 'had looked' because the work of finding 'dress' was going on in the past and past perfect continuous tense is used for the work in the past.

25. (B) 'call' के बदले 'will call' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'call' करने का काम 'घर पहुँचने पर' अर्थात future में होगा।

(B) 'Will call' will be used instead of 'call' because the work of 'calling' will be done 'on reaching home' i.e. in future.



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