

Dousing farm fires

It's that time of year again, when Punjab and Haryana come under **intense scrutiny** to **gauge** the success of their efforts to control farm fires. Punjab **claims** to have taken several **proactive**, even **penal**, measures. A **series** of reports in The Tribune **has brought out** the trials and **tribulations** as well as **the hits and misses** in the state's campaign. Red entries are being made in the revenue records of farmers who burn crop **residue**. They can't apply for or renew arms licences. In Amritsar, as **stubble** management plans **falter** and **baler** operators **cry foul**, **quickfix** options are being **tried out**. In Sangrur, the district with the most farm fires in the past, scientific solutions have been **chalked out**. Ludhiana, **strangely**, is seeing opposition to such **interventions**. It's a long, tough road ahead. Much more is expected than a strategy that can at best deliver a slight drop in count.

Like last year, paddy harvesting, and stubble burning as a result, has started early in Punjab this season. Those **setting** stubble **on fire** **insist** that since the **window** for **sowing** wheat is short, this is the quickest way to **get rid of** the paddy residue. Several districts have been identified as stubble-burning **hotspots**. **Teams** of government staff **have** been activated. With farmers' unions warning against **coercive** methods, any **stringent** action is unlikely. A **reassuring aspect** is the growing awareness among farmers of the need to **desist** from stubble burning and how it is in everyone's interest, **in particular** their own. The worrying part is the **inefficacy** of policy initiatives. State support and **optimum incentivisation** have to be at the **core** of plans to **counter** the **resistance**.



The farm fire season **often** becomes a **rallying point** against the farmers. Irresponsible and **uninformed** reactions only **complicate** the **pressing** issue and **dilute** the debate. **[Practice Exercise]**

- **Sow** (verb) – Sow (verb) – Plant the seeds of (a plant or crop) बीज बोना
- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denote 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

Vocabulary

1. **Douse** (verb) – Extinguish, put out, quench, smother बुझाना
2. **Intense** (adjective) – Strong, extreme, forceful, powerful तीव्र
3. **Scrutiny** (noun) – Examination, inspection, investigation, analysis जाँच
4. **Gauge** (verb) – Measure, assess, evaluate, estimate मापना
5. **Claim** (noun) – Assertion, statement, declaration, pronouncement दावा
6. **Proactive** (adjective) – Taking initiative, forward-looking, preemptive, anticipatory सक्रिय
7. **Penal** (adjective) – Punitive, disciplinary, corrective, relating to punishment दंडात्मक
8. **Bring out** (phrasal verb) – Reveal, disclose, expose, highlight उजागर करना
9. **Tribulation** (noun) – Suffering, hardship, difficulty, trouble कष्ट
10. **The hits and misses** (phrase) – Successes and failures, achievements and shortcomings सफलताएँ और असफलताएँ
11. **Residue** (noun) – Remains, leftovers, remnant, remains अवशेष
12. **Stubble** (noun) – Crop remnants, stalks, straw, plant residue पराली
13. **Falter** (verb) – Waver, stumble, hesitate, weaken असफल होना
14. **Baler operator** (noun) – A person operating machines to compress crops into bales, agricultural machinery operator गड्ढर मशीन संचालक
15. **Cry foul** (noun) – Protest, complain, raise objection, accuse शिकायत करना
16. **Quickfix** (noun) – Temporary solution, stopgap, makeshift, shortcut तात्कालिक समाधान
17. **Try out** (phrasal verb) – Test, experiment with, attempt, trial आजमाना
18. **Chalk out** (phrasal verb) – Plan, design, outline, strategize योजना बनाना
19. **Strangely** (adverb) – Oddly, unusually, peculiarly, bizarrely अजीब ढंग से
20. **Intervention** (noun) – Interference, involvement, mediation, intercession हस्तक्षेप
21. **Set something on fire** (phrase) – Ignite, burn, kindle, inflame आग लगाना
22. **Insist** (verb) – Demand, persist, emphasize, assert जोर देना
23. **Window** (noun) – Opportunity, timeframe, period, slot समयावधि/ मौका

24. **Get rid of** (phrase) – Eliminate, remove, dispose of, discard छुटकारा पाना
25. **Hotspot** (noun) – Focus area, high-risk zone, problem area, critical point संवेदनशील क्षेत्र
26. **Coercive** (adjective) – Forceful, oppressive, intimidating, compelling बलपूर्वक
27. **Stringent** (adjective) – Strict, severe, rigorous, harsh कड़ा
28. **Reassuring** (adjective) – Comforting, soothing, encouraging, calming आश्वस्त करने वाला
29. **Aspect** (noun) – Feature, facet, characteristic, component पहलू
30. **Desist** (verb) – Refrain, stop, cease, hold back रोकना
31. **In particular** (phrase) – Specifically, especially, particularly विशेष रूप से
32. **Inefficacy** (noun) – Ineffectiveness, failure, lack of success, uselessness निष्क्रियता
33. **Optimum** (adjective) – Best, ideal, most favorable, perfect सर्वोत्तम
34. **Incentivisation** (noun) – Encouragement, motivation, stimulation, inducement प्रोत्साहन
35. **Core** (noun) – Center, essence, heart, nucleus केंद्र
36. **Counter** (verb) – Oppose, resist, respond to, combat विरोध करना
37. **Resistance** (noun) – Opposition, defiance, refusal, pushback विरोध
38. **Often** (adverb) – Frequently, commonly, regularly, repeatedly अक्सर
39. **Rallying point** (noun) – Focus of support, cause for unity, unifying cause एकजुटता का कारण
40. **Uninformed** (adjective) – Ignorant, unaware, ill-informed, misinformed अपरिचित
41. **Complicate** (verb) – Make difficult, confuse, entangle, perplex जटिल बनाना
42. **Pressing** (adjective) – Urgent, critical, important, immediate जरूरी
43. **Dilute** (verb) – Weaken, lessen, reduce, diminish कमजोर करना

Summary of the Editorial

1. Punjab and Haryana are under scrutiny again for their efforts to control farm fires during the post-harvest season.
2. Punjab has implemented several measures, including punitive actions against farmers who burn crop residue.
3. Farmers burning stubble face penalties such as red entries in revenue records and restrictions on arms license applications.
4. In Amritsar, alternative stubble management methods have struggled, and quick-fix solutions are being tried.
5. Sangrur, a district with a high rate of farm fires, is focusing on scientific solutions.
6. Surprisingly, Ludhiana has shown resistance to interventions aimed at managing stubble.
7. Stubble burning is driven by the short window between paddy harvesting and wheat sowing, pushing farmers to the quickest solution.
8. Several districts have been identified as hotspots for stubble burning, prompting government staff to be activated for monitoring.
9. Farmers' unions are warning against coercive measures, making strict enforcement unlikely.
10. There is growing awareness among farmers about the harmful effects of stubble burning on their own interests and the environment.
11. Policy initiatives to curb farm fires have been largely ineffective, raising concerns about the government's approach.
12. State support and proper incentives are critical for effectively addressing farmers' resistance to stubble management.
13. Public reactions to farm fires often paint farmers as irresponsible, which complicates efforts to find solutions.
14. The focus should be on constructive, informed dialogue rather than placing blame on farmers.
15. A comprehensive and sustainable strategy is needed to significantly reduce farm fires, rather than relying on temporary solutions.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

[Editorial page]

1. What is the tone of the passage?

- A. Optimistic
- B. Sarcastic
- C. Neutral
- D. Critical

2. Based on the passage, which of the following can be inferred about Punjab's efforts to control farm fires?

- A. Punjab's measures have been mostly ineffective.
- B. Punjab has implemented several strategies, but they have not fully resolved the issue.
- C. Punjab has completely succeeded in eliminating farm fires.
- D. Punjab has not made any efforts to control farm fires.

3. Match the following districts in Punjab with the interventions mentioned in the passage.

Column A

Column B

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Amritsar | a. Scientific solutions |
| 2. Sangrur | b. Opposition to interventions |
| 3. Ludhiana | c. Quick-fix options being tried |
| 4. Baler operators | d. Complaints about stubble plans |

- A. 1-c, 2-a, 3-b, 4-d
- B. 1-a, 2-c, 3-d, 4-b
- C. 1-d, 2-c, 3-a, 4-b
- D. 1-c, 2-d, 3-b, 4-a

4. Complete the following sentence based on the passage:

The measures taken by Punjab to control farm fires, including red entries in revenue records and denying _____, are aimed at discouraging the practice of crop residue burning.

- A. government subsidies
- B. legal rights to own land
- C. renewal of arms licenses
- D. crop insurance

5. Which of the following statements is correct based on the passage?

- A. The government has already imposed strict punishments on farmers burning stubble.
- B. The resistance to stubble burning is growing among farmers due to awareness of its harmful effects.
- C. There are no efforts being made by the government to address the issue of stubble burning.
- D. Farmers' unions are advocating for strict legal action against farmers involved in stubble burning.

6. Sentences of a paragraph are given below in jumbled order. Arrange the sentences in the correct order to form a meaningful and coherent paragraph.

- A. In the United Nations calendar, September 26 is the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

- B. This year's General Assembly agenda includes a session on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), or the Ban Treaty, as distinguished from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NPT
- C. over the Israel-Palestine conflict; and in responding to accelerating climate change and other related inequalities
- D. It will be a chance to take stock at a time when the UN is bitterly divided — over the war in Ukraine;
- A. BDAC
- B. CABD
- C. BCAD
- D. ABDC

7. **Select the correct option to form a meaningful sentence.**

world (a)/ newspapers, news channels and websites (b) / and destruction (c)/ Today, social media, (d)/ are (e) / all filled (f) / all (g) / and sad news about conflicts, (h) / with depressing (i) / the (j) / over (k)

- A. a, d, c, e, f, i, h, g, k, j, b
- B. a, d, e, k, f, i, h, b, g, j, c
- C. d, b, e, f, i, h, c, g, k, j, a
- D. d, c, e, g, f, i, h, b, k, j, a

Comprehension:

In the following passage, some words have been deleted. Read the passage carefully and select the most appropriate option to fill in each blank.

For decades, humans have tried to theorise the origin and evolution of the universe. Many theories have been proposed and rejected. However, the Big Bang theory has been the most (1) _____ accepted. According to this theory, the universe began as a single point, or singularity, around 13.8 billion years ago. This singularity contained all the matter and energy that would eventually (2) _____ the stars, galaxies and other structures that make up our universe today. The Big Bang theory is supported by a (3) _____ of observational evidence, including the cosmic microwave background radiation, the (4) _____ of light elements in the universe and the large-scale structure of the cosmos. Despite its success, the Big Bang theory is still an active area of research, with scientists seeking to better understand the earliest moments of the universe and the (5) _____ of dark matter and energy.

8. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 1.**

- A. vastly
- B. largely
- C. loosely
- D. widely

9. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 2.**

- A. prepare
- B. form
- C. design
- D. destroy

10. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 3.**
- A. rich
 - B. store
 - C. debt
 - D. wealth
11. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 4.**
- A. success
 - B. plenty
 - C. fortune
 - D. abundance
12. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank number 5.**
- A. brand
 - B. nature
 - C. capture
 - D. environment
13. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word.**
- Permit
- A. Approve
 - B. Disgrace
 - C. Abandon
 - D. Flout
14. **The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a spelling error.**
- The make-up room was filled / with incadescent lights / which added to the misery / of those subjected to make-up.
- A. which added to the misery
 - B. The make-up room was filled
 - C. with incadescent lights
 - D. of those subjected to make-up
15. **Select the most appropriate synonym of the given word.**
- Tedious
- A. Boring
 - B. Exciting
 - C. Happening
 - D. Working
16. **Select the most appropriate ANTONYM of the underlined word.**
- No one trusts her as her reasons are always explicit.
- A. Ambiguous
 - B. Exact
 - C. Precise
 - D. Distant
17. **Select the correct collocation to complete the following sentence.**

He made _____ use of the opportunity to travel.

- A. full
- B. whole
- C. entire
- D. Total

18. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined word in the given sentence.**

The dedicated teacher laboured assiduously to aid her pupils in achieving success

- A. uninvolved
- B. apathetic
- C. un-biased
- D. committed

19. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined word segment in the following sentence.**

The girl which is wearing a blue shirt is my sister

- A. who wear a blue shirt
- B. which is wearing the blue shirt
- C. who is wearing a blue shirt
- D. which wear a blue shirt

20. **Select the INCORRECTLY spelt word.**

- A. Immense
- B. Irreverent
- C. Innoculate
- D. Immaculate

21. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the underlined idiom.**

The United Nations is working to eliminate the vicious cycle of poverty

- A. Strength of something
- B. Loophole of something
- C. The barrier of poverty
- D. One problem causes other

22. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence.**

Employers in many developing countries report that a lack of skilled workers is a major and increasing bottleneck for their operations, affected their capacity to innovate

- A. affect their capacity
- B. effect their capacity
- C. effecting their capacity
- D. affecting their capacity

23. **Read the sentence carefully and select the most appropriate option to substitute the underlined part.**

The clamour distracted the priest and made him angry

- A. loud and confused noise

- B. narrow-mindedness
- C. introduction of new things
- D. humorous deception

24. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.**

Which _____ do you usually take to reach your office?

- A. route
- B. rude
- C. root
- D. rout

25. **Select the most appropriate homophone to fill in the blank.**

Arun knows perfectly well how to mix the food items with _____.

- A. source
- B. sause
- C. sauce
- D. saws

Answers

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

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

Explanations

1. D) Critical

A: The passage highlights the difficulties and shortcomings in addressing farm fires, not a hopeful or positive outlook.

D: The passage critically examines the inefficacy of current strategies to prevent stubble burning and suggests that much more effort is required.

C: The passage is not neutral, as it expresses concern about the inefficiency of current approaches.

B: The tone is serious and critical, not mocking or ironic, which sarcasm would imply.

2. B) Punjab has implemented several strategies, but they have not fully resolved the issue.

The passage mentions that Punjab has taken several proactive measures, including penal actions, but acknowledges that there are still challenges, indicating that while efforts have been made, they haven't fully resolved the issue.

A is incorrect because the passage doesn't suggest that the efforts have been entirely ineffective; it mentions trials and interventions.

C is incorrect because the passage clearly indicates that farm fires are still a problem.

D is incorrect because the passage specifically talks about Punjab's efforts to control farm fires.

3. A) 1-c, 2-a, 3-b, 4-d

Amritsar: Quick-fix options are being tried out.

Sangrur: Scientific solutions have been chalked out.

Ludhiana: Opposition to interventions is mentioned.

Baler operators: They are complaining about stubble management plans.

B is incorrect because the matching of interventions to districts does not align with the passage's details.

C and D are incorrect due to mismatches in assigning the wrong intervention to the wrong district.

4. C) renewal of arms licenses

The passage explicitly mentions that farmers who burn crop residue cannot apply for or renew arms licenses.

A is incorrect because there is no mention of government subsidies being affected.

B is incorrect because there is no mention of land ownership being impacted.

D is incorrect because the passage does not mention crop insurance being denied.

5. B) The resistance to stubble burning is growing among farmers due to awareness of its harmful effects.

B is correct because the passage mentions that there is growing awareness among farmers of the need to desist from stubble burning, and this is described as a "reassuring aspect."

A is incorrect because the passage clearly states that "any stringent action is unlikely," indicating that strict punishments have not yet been imposed.

C is incorrect because the passage notes that "teams of government staff have been activated," which shows that efforts are being made.

D is incorrect because the passage states that farmers' unions are warning against coercive methods, not advocating for strict legal action.

6. D) ABDC

A: Sentence A introduces the main topic of the paragraph, which is about the "International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons."

B: B gives additional information about this year's General Assembly and introduces the subject of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which naturally extends the idea introduced in A.

D: D elaborates on the situation at the UN General Assembly, mentioning its division over various issues like the war in Ukraine. Since B mentioned the agenda of the UN General Assembly.

C: C completes the thought by adding more issues the UN is facing, such as the Israel-Palestine conflict and climate change. It acts as a continuation of the issues introduced in D, giving the paragraph a natural flow by concluding with additional problems faced by the UN.

7. **C) d, b, e, f, i, h, c, g, k, j, a.**

Today, social media, newspapers, news channels and websites are all filled with depressing and sad news about conflicts, violence, war, bloodshed and destruction all over the world.

d. Today, social media starts with the subject and time reference.

b. newspapers, news channels and websites expands the subject to include other forms of media.

e. are serves as the linking verb.

f. all filled explains the state of the subject.

i. with depressing introduces the content.

h. and sad news about conflicts specifies the type of depressing news.

c. and destruction adds another aspect of the content.

g. all emphasizes the universality of the issue.

k. 'over' and j 'the' prepare for the final noun.

a. world completes the sentence, specifying that this news is global.

8. D) '**Widely**' का use होगा क्योंकि "widely" का अर्थ होता है व्यापक रूप से स्वीकार किया गया। जबकि 'vastly' का अर्थ है बहुत अधिक मात्रा में, 'largely' का अर्थ है मुख्य रूप से, और 'loosely' का अर्थ है ढीला या अस्पष्ट रूप से, जो इस संदर्भ में सही नहीं है।

- '**Widely**' should be used because it means broadly or extensively accepted. Whereas, 'vastly' means in a great degree, 'largely' means mainly, and 'loosely' means vaguely or not tightly, which don't fit in this context.

9. B) '**Form**' का use होगा क्योंकि "form" का अर्थ है आकार लेना या बनाना, जो इस संदर्भ में सही है। जबकि 'Prepare' का अर्थ है तैयार करना, 'Design' का अर्थ है डिजाइन करना या योजना बनाना, और 'Destroy' का अर्थ है नष्ट करना, जो इस संदर्भ में सही नहीं है।

- '**Form**' should be used because it means to shape or create, which fits in this context. Whereas, 'Prepare' means to get ready, 'Design' means to plan or create, and 'Destroy' means to demolish, which don't fit in this context.

10. D) '**Wealth**' का use होगा क्योंकि "wealth" का अर्थ होता है प्रचुर मात्रा या संपत्ति, जो इस संदर्भ में उपयुक्त है। जबकि 'Rich' का अर्थ भी प्रचुर मात्रा होता है, परंतु यहाँ 'wealth' का प्रयोग अधिक सटीक है। 'Store' का अर्थ है भंडार और 'Debt' का अर्थ है ऋण, जो इस संदर्भ में सही नहीं हैं।

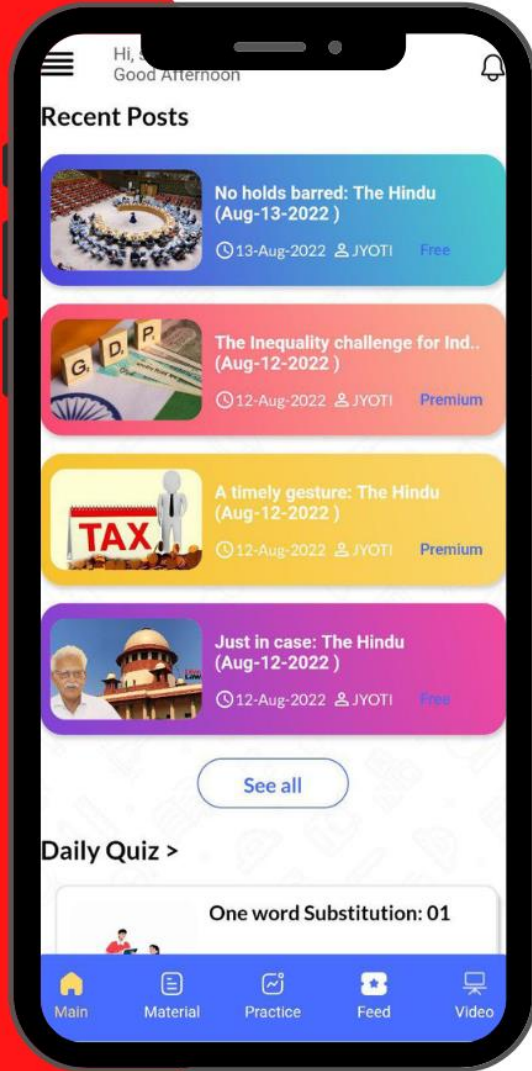
- '**Wealth**' should be used because it means an abundance or plentiful amount, which fits the context. While 'Rich' also means abundance, 'Wealth' is more precise here. 'Store' means a reserve or stock, and 'Debt' means something owed, which don't fit in this context.

11. D) '**Abundance**' का use होगा क्योंकि "abundance" का अर्थ होता है प्रचुर मात्रा में होना। जबकि 'success' का अर्थ है सफलता, 'plenty' का अर्थ है बहुतायत, और 'fortune' का अर्थ है भाग्य, जो इस संदर्भ में सही नहीं है।
- '**Abundance**' should be used because it means being in large quantities. Whereas, 'success' means achievement, 'plenty' means a lot, and 'fortune' means luck, which don't fit in this context.
12. B) '**Nature**' का use होगा क्योंकि "nature" का अर्थ होता है किसी चीज़ की मौलिक गुण या स्वभाव। जबकि 'Brand' का अर्थ है ब्रांड या प्रकार, 'Capture' का अर्थ है पकड़ना, और 'Environment' का अर्थ है पर्यावरण, जो इस संदर्भ में सही नहीं है।
- '**Nature**' should be used because it means the inherent quality or essence of something. Whereas, 'Brand' means a type or kind, 'Capture' means to catch, and 'Environment' means surroundings, which don't fit in this context.
13. A) **Permit** (verb) – To give authorization or consent to someone to do something. अनुमति देना
Synonym: **Approve** (verb) – To officially agree to or accept as satisfactory. मंजूरी देना
- **Disgrace** (noun) – Loss of reputation or respect as the result of a dishonorable action. अपमान
 - **Abandon** (verb) – To give up completely (a practice or a course of action). छोड़ देना
 - **Flout** (verb) – Openly disregard (a rule, law or convention). उल्लंघन करना
14. C) The segment that contains a spelling error is "incadescent" The correct spelling should be "incandescent" The word "incandescent" means "emitting light as a result of being heated" दीप्तिमान, चमकता हुआ।
15. A) **Tedious** (adjective) – Too long, slow, or dull; tiresome or monotonous. उबाऊ
Synonym: **Boring** (adjective) – Not interesting; tedious. नीरस
- **Exciting** (adjective) – Causing great enthusiasm and eagerness. रोमांचक
 - **Happening** (adjective) – Taking place; occurring. हो रहा
 - **Working** (adjective) – Engaged in work; functioning. काम कर रहा
16. A) **Explicit** (adjective) – Clear, plain, straightforward, definite. स्पष्ट
Antonym: **Ambiguous** (adjective) – Open to more than one interpretation, unclear, vague. अस्पष्ट
- **Exact** (adjective) – Precise, accurate, correct, right. सटीक
 - **Precise** (adjective) – Exact, accurate, specific, detailed. सटीक
 - **Distant** (adjective) – Far away, remote, far-off, unapproachable. दूर
17. 'A) 'full' का use होगा क्योंकि 'full use' एक सामान्य और सही collocation है जो किसी अवसर का पूरा लाभ उठाने के संदर्भ में प्रयोग होता है। sentence में बताया जा रहा है कि उसने यात्रा करने के अवसर का पूरा उपयोग किया, इसलिए सही अभिव्यक्ति 'full use' होगी; जैसे—He made full use of the opportunity to travel.
- 'full' will be used because 'full use' is a common and correct collocation used in the context of taking complete advantage of an opportunity. The sentence indicates that he took full

advantage of the opportunity to travel, so the correct expression is 'full use'; Like—He made full use of the opportunity to travel.

18. D) '**Dedicated**' के बदले '**Committed**' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि दोनों शब्दों का अर्थ समान है।
'Committed' वह व्यक्ति है जो अपने कार्यों के प्रति दृढ़ निश्चयी और समर्पित होता है; जैसे— The committed teacher laboured assiduously to aid her pupils in achieving success.
- '**Committed**' will be used instead of 'dedicated' because both words have the same meaning. 'Committed' is a person who is determined and devoted to their tasks; Like— The committed teacher laboured assiduously to aid her pupils in achieving success.
19. C) '**which**' के बदले '**who**' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'who' का प्रयोग इंसानों के लिए होता है न कि चीजों के लिए। इस sentence में 'girl' इंसान है, अतः 'who' सही विकल्प है; जैसे— The girl who is wearing a blue shirt is my sister.
- '**who**' will be used instead of 'which' because 'who' is used for people, not for things. In this sentence, 'girl' is a person, so 'who' is the correct option; Like— The girl who is wearing a blue shirt is my sister.
20. C) The correct spelling of 'Innoculate' is '**Innoculate**' which means 'to protect a person or animal from a disease by giving him/her/it a mild form of the disease with a needle which is put under the skin (an injection)' टीका लगाना
21. D) **The vicious cycle** (idiom) – One problem causes another एक समस्या दूसरी समस्या का कारण बनती है
22. D) 'affecting their capacity' का use होगा क्योंकि 'affecting' वाक्य में एक present participle के रूप में प्रयोग हो रहा है जो बताता है कि यह कमी उनकी क्षमता पर नकारात्मक प्रभाव डाल रही है। 'affect' का अर्थ है "प्रभावित करना," और यहां 'affecting' का प्रयोग जारी क्रिया के रूप में किया गया है; जैसे— Employers in many developing countries report that a lack of skilled workers is a major and increasing bottleneck for their operations, affecting their capacity to innovate.
- 'affecting their capacity' will be used because 'affecting' is functioning as a present participle in the sentence, indicating that this shortage is currently having a negative impact on their capacity. 'Affect' means "to influence," and here 'affecting' is used to show an ongoing action; Like—Employers in many developing countries report that a lack of skilled workers is a major and increasing bottleneck for their operations, affecting their capacity to innovate.
23. A) Clamour (noun) – loud and confused noise **कोलाहल**
24. A) 'route' का use होगा क्योंकि यह सही है जो रास्ते या मार्ग को दर्शाता है। वाक्य में पूछा जा रहा है कि आप अपने कार्यालय तक पहुँचने के लिए कौन सा रास्ता अपनाते हैं, इसलिए 'route' सही विकल्प है; जैसे—Which route do you usually take to reach your office?
- 'route' will be used because it is the correct word that refers to a path or way taken to reach a destination. The sentence is asking which path you usually take to reach your office, so 'route' is the appropriate choice; Like—Which route do you usually take to reach your office?
25. C) 'sauce' का use होगा क्योंकि यह सही homophone है जो भोजन में मिलाए जाने वाले तरल पदार्थ को दर्शाता है। sentence में mention है कि अरुण को भोजन में सॉस को सही तरीके से मिलाना अच्छे से आता है, इसलिए 'sauce' सही है; जैसे—Arun knows perfectly well how to mix the food items with sauce.

- 'sauce' will be used because it is the correct homophone that refers to the liquid condiment added to food. The sentence indicates that Arun knows how to properly mix the food items with sauce, so 'sauce' is the appropriate choice; Like—Arun knows perfectly well how to mix the food items with sauce.



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