

## We are the stories of our lives!

There are stories all around us. All that is required is a little **empathy** on our part to patiently listen to people around us

Each one of us **lives through** stories in life. What is each incident, each event, if not a story in itself? And, when there are stories, then there is an **urge** to **narrate**, and an urge to be heard. It could be the silent **wail** of **desperation seeking** help; or it could be the desire to be appreciated, to be accepted.

The Internet is an interesting place to be at. However, if someone had told me even at **the turn of the century** the **remarkable** changes that this **virtual** entity would bring into our lives, I would have laughed. My story is not about the internet though; but the way it has helped us **cope**.

I read somewhere on the virtual world recently that there are libraries in Denmark, and in 50-odd other countries, where you rent humans for 30 minutes to **recount** their stories. A quick search on the net revealed that there are at least three human library groups in India on Facebook.

I too started writing on social media a few years back. The **sporadic** writing **turned into a passion** so strong that now I must write something each day. It was my way of **overcoming introverted** nature. I could express my feelings and emotions without fear of being judged.

I was returning home by train recently after attending a literature festival at a university in Gujarat, where I also interacted with young adults during a creative writing workshop on storytelling conducted by me. Almost all the students were from small towns in India. Without exception, all of them had been inspired by someone close. More importantly, I could sense an urge in these young creative minds to write these stories that had motivated them so much.

My co-passengers on the train were two younger persons. One of the persons, probably not older than 19, was to **disembark** at Kota – the city which has helped many youngsters **attain** their dreams, but has also seen many **unfortunate** incidents due to **peer** pressure that many of our youngsters could not **sustain**. They too needed someone out there to listen to them.

I also **presumed** that he was studying in Kota. He was not. He was going to meet his younger brother. He had already joined MIT in America. He **elaborated** upon the full form of MIT in case I did not know. He then showed me his Instagram profile, which contained a number of pictures of leading politicians from his native state. The boy wanted to talk about his life and wanted to be heard. He had also used the social media to **reach out**.

The other person in the cabin was probably a **decade** and a half older. He too opened up about his life story. He now runs a successful business in the education sector. When he realised that I was a published author, he told me that he was also working on a **manuscript** containing **memoirs** from his life. He strongly felt that he lost three important persons in his life due to him. He too wanted a **sounding board**.

There are many such stories all around us. In fact, all of us are the stories of our life. All that is required is a little empathy on our part, to patiently listen to people around us. This small act may go a long way in redeeming a life! [Practice exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.
- **Live through** (phrasal verb) – to experience something difficult or painful and continue to live  
अनुभाव करना
- **The turn of the century** (phrase) – The beginning or end of a particular century

## Vocabulary

1. **Empathy** (noun) – Compassion, understanding, sympathy, affinity, rapport  
सहानुभूति
2. **Urge** (verb) – Encourage, prompt, propel, spur, motivate प्रेरित करना
3. **Narrate** (verb) – Recount, tell, describe, relate, recount कहानी सुनाना
4. **Wail** (noun) – Cry, lament, sob, moan, whine विलाप
5. **Desperation** (noun) – Hopelessness, despair, distress, anguish, urgency निराशा
6. **Seek** (verb) – Try, attempt, effort, endeavour, कोशिश करना
7. **Remarkable** (adjective) – Extraordinary, notable, exceptional, amazing, outstanding असाधारण
8. **Virtual** (adjective) – Digital, online, cyber, simulated, electronic
9. **Cope** (verb) – Manage, deal with, handle, contend with, face सामना करना
10. **Recount** (verb) – Narrate, describe, relate, tell, report कहानी कहना
11. **Sporadic** (adjective) – Occasional, infrequent, irregular, intermittent, scattered छिटपुट
12. **Turn into** (phrasal verb) – Transform, become, convert, change into, evolve into  
में बदल जाना
13. **Passion** (noun) – Enthusiasm, fervor, zeal, love, obsession जुनून
14. **Overcome** (verb) – Conquer, surmount, defeat, beat, master काबू पाना
15. **Introverted** (adjective) – Reserved, shy, reticent, withdrawn, introspective अंतर्मुखी
16. **Disembark** (verb) – Alight, exit, debark, get off, leave उतरना
17. **Attain** (verb) – Achieve, reach, gain, obtain, secure प्राप्त करना
18. **Unfortunate** (adjective) – Unlucky, sad, tragic, adverse, regrettable दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण
19. **Peer** (noun) – Contemporary, equal, counterpart, fellow, colleague सहकर्मी
20. **Sustain** (verb) – Maintain, support, uphold, bear, endure बनाए रखना
21. **Presume** (verb) – Assume, suppose, believe, infer, speculate मान लेना
22. **Elaborate** (verb) – Explain, expand, expound, clarify, detail विस्तार से बताना
23. **Reach out** (phrasal verb) – Extend, offer, communicate, connect, make contact संपर्क करना

24. **Decade** (noun) – Period of ten years दशक  
validity or likely success before they are made public. सलाहकार
25. **Manuscript** (noun) – Draft, script, text, document, handwriting पांडुलिपि
26. **Memoir** (noun) – Autobiography, diary, journal, chronicle, narrative आत्मकथा
27. **Sounding board** (noun) – Advisor, confidant, consultant, counselor, supporter; a person or group whose reactions to suggested ideas are used as a test of their
28. **Go a long way** (phrase) – Have a significant effect, contribute greatly, make a big difference, be very useful, help greatly महत्वपूर्ण योगदान देना
29. **Redeem** (verb) – to improve yourself, or to take action to improve the way other people think of you or something you have done

## Summary of the Editorial

1. Stories are omnipresent in our lives, requiring only empathy and patience to listen to those around us.
2. Life's incidents and events are inherently stories, prompting both a desire to narrate and to be heard.
3. The editorial emphasizes the significant changes brought about by the internet, though the focus is not on the internet itself but on its role in facilitating connection and expression.
4. It mentions the concept of "human libraries" in Denmark and other countries, where people can "rent" humans to hear their stories, noting its presence in India as well.
5. The author shares their personal journey of using social media as a tool to overcome introversion and express emotions without fear of judgment.
6. Reflecting on a recent experience at a literature festival in Gujarat, the author highlights the inspiration and desire to write found in students from small towns.
7. The editorial shares a train journey experience where the author meets two younger individuals, each with their own stories to tell.
8. One co-passenger, a young person headed to Kota, shares their life story and aspirations, utilizing social media to connect and be heard.
9. The other co-passenger, older and successful in the education sector, shares his own life story and his work on a manuscript of memoirs, seeking a sounding board.
10. The editorial underscores the importance of listening and empathy in understanding and valuing the stories of others.
11. It illustrates how storytelling and listening can create connections between individuals from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
12. The narrative highlights the therapeutic and expressive power of writing and storytelling, both personally and in connecting with others.
13. The diversity of stories—from aspirations and successes to losses and the need for support—is emphasized as a universal aspect of human experience.
14. The author advocates for the value of sharing and listening to stories as a means of mutual understanding and support.
15. Conclusively, the editorial reiterates that everyone's life is a compilation of stories, and the act of listening with empathy can be profoundly impactful.

## Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

[Editorial Page]

1. **What is the tone of the passage?**
  - A. Cynical
  - B. Humorous
  - C. Reflective
  - D. Aggressive
2. **What is the main theme of the passage?**
  - A. The rapid advancement of technology
  - B. The challenges of introversion
  - C. The importance of storytelling and empathy in human connection
  - D. The pressures faced by youngsters in competitive environments
3. **What does the passage imply about the role of the Internet in storytelling?**
  - A. The Internet has significantly expanded the avenues through which people can share and listen to stories.
  - B. The Internet has limited the ways people can share and listen to stories.
  - C. The Internet is primarily a tool for entertainment, not for sharing personal experiences.
  - D. The Internet has made traditional storytelling methods more popular than digital storytelling.
4. **What can be inferred about the concept of 'human libraries' mentioned in the passage?**
  - A. Human libraries are physical libraries in Denmark that offer books about human psychology exclusively.
  - B. Human libraries are a new form of online libraries that exclusively store digital books.
  - C. Human libraries offer a unique storytelling experience where individuals can 'rent' people to listen to their stories.
  - D. Human libraries are a metaphor for the extensive databases available on the Internet about human histories.
5. **Based on the passage, what motivated the author to start writing on social media?**
  - A. To attend literature festivals and creative writing workshops.
  - B. To overcome introverted nature and express feelings without fear of judgment.
  - C. To interact with young adults and conduct storytelling workshops.
  - D. To meet people with similar interests and share stories.
6. **Select the most appropriate meaning of the given idiom**  
On cloud nine
  - A. To be extremely cautious
  - B. To be extremely happy
  - C. To be extremely shaky
  - D. To be extremely sad
7. Select the most appropriate **ANTONYM** of the given word.  
Prudent
  - A. Wise
  - B. Atrocious
  - C. Stupid

- D. Crafty
8. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence.**  
The rebels laid up their arms.
- A. laid down  
B. laid out  
C. laid on  
D. laid by
9. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.**  
\_\_\_\_\_ UK government continually reiterates its commitment to halting the brain drain.
- A. The  
B. A  
C. An  
D. Any
10. **The following sentence has been split into four segments. Identify the segment that contains a grammatical error.**  
I caught / a white cat / rustling / beneath my room.
- A. a white cat  
B. I caught  
C. rustling  
D. beneath my room.
11. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in reported speech.**  
"We will have a thorough search before opening the room," the inspector told his subordinates.
- A. The inspector told his subordinates that they would be having a thorough search before opening the room.  
B. The inspector told his subordinates that they can have a thorough search before opening the room.  
C. The inspector told his subordinates that they will had a thorough search before opening the room.  
D. The inspector told his subordinates that they would have a thorough search before opening the room.
12. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in reported speech.**  
The teacher said, "She had started the fight".
- A. The teacher complained that she has started the fight.  
B. The teacher said that she had started the fight.  
C. The teacher ordered that she had started the fight.  
D. The teacher said that she has started the fight.
13. **Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the underlined group of words in the given sentence.**  
The war resulted in ruthless killing of many people.
- A. sacrilege

- B. fratricide  
C. carnage  
D. murder
14. **Select the option that expresses the given sentence in passive voice.**  
The storm destroyed the entire village.  
A. The entire village was destroyed by the storm.  
B. The storm was destroying the entire village.  
C. The village was being destroyed entirely by the storm.  
D. The village was entirely destroyed by the storm.
15. **Select the most appropriate synonym for the highlighted word.**  
The **hapless** incident was a result of sheer negligence by the authorities.  
A. joyful  
B. triumphant  
C. ill- fated  
D. grateful
16. **Select the most appropriate option to substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence.**  
She has gained a lot of fame but still she is **very realistic and sensible**.  
A. down to earth  
B. down to it  
C. down to bottom  
D. down to drown
17. Select the **INCORRECTLY** spelt word  
A. Publicly  
B. Punctual  
C. Protien  
D. Pursuit
18. Select the most appropriate **ANTONYM** of the given word.  
Hasten  
A. Triumph  
B. Spooky  
C. Present  
D. Dawdle
19. **Select the most appropriate option to fill in the blank.**  
Conditions such as stress, depression and anxiety can all affect mental health and \_\_\_\_\_ a person's routine.  
A. fragment  
B. crush  
C. dishevel  
D. disrupt
20. **Select the most appropriate option that can substitute the underlined segment in the given sentence. If there is no need to substitute it, select 'No substitution'.**



He was **advised** for walking alone in the neighbourhood.

- A. No substitution
- B. advised about
- C. advised against
- D. advised on

**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.

The Publications Division (PD), one of the leading publishing houses in the country and the largest in the public sector, functions (1)\_\_\_\_\_ the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. It attempts to promote National Integration by (2)\_\_\_\_\_ information and creating awareness about the various activities, regions, people and the (3)\_\_\_\_\_ cultures and beliefs of the Nation. The Division publishes and sells books at affordable prices through its outlets in important cities and also (4)\_\_\_\_\_ agents. It also participates in exhibitions and books fairs to promote the sale of books and journals. Till date, 7,600 titles (5)\_\_\_\_\_ published, of which 1,500 are live today. Besides books, the Publication Division has also brought out 21 journals about various issues of national and social significance.

**21. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank no. 1.**

- A. of
- B. in
- C. under
- D. on

**22. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank no. 2.**

- A. concealing
- B. disseminating
- C. pouring
- D. assembling

**23. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank no. 3.**

- A. same
- B. myriad
- C. clear
- D. absolute

**24. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank no. 4.**

- A. through
- B. as
- C. about
- D. in

**25. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank no. 5.**

- A. have being
- B. have been
- C. have be
- D. had being

## Answers

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

[\[Practice Exercise\]](#)

## Explanations

### 1. C) Reflective

The tone of the passage is reflective, as the author introspectively considers the impact of storytelling and the internet on personal connections and self-expression. Through personal anecdotes and observations, the author meditates on the power of stories to connect people, the role of empathy in listening, and the transformative potential of sharing and hearing stories. Unlike a cynical or humorous tone, the passage is serious and contemplative, focusing on deeper insights rather than skepticism or humor. It is not aggressive; instead, it invites readers to consider the value of empathy and the significance of stories in our lives.

### 2. C) The importance of storytelling and empathy in human connection

The main theme of the passage is the importance of storytelling and empathy in fostering human connections. The author illustrates this through various examples, including personal experiences with writing and interactions with others who share their stories. The narrative emphasizes how storytelling serves as a medium for expression, understanding, and connecting with others on a deeper level. While technology, introversion, and pressures in competitive environments are mentioned, they serve more as contexts or catalysts for exploring the central theme of how stories and empathetic listening can bridge gaps between individuals and offer solace, understanding, and a sense of belonging.

### 3. A) The Internet has significantly expanded the avenues through which people can share and listen to stories.

The passage describes the author's skepticism about the Internet's impact at the turn of the century, but goes on to illustrate how it has facilitated storytelling and connection among people. For example, the mention of human libraries on Facebook in India and the author's own experience of using social media to express themselves highlight how the Internet has provided new platforms for sharing and listening to stories, thereby significantly expanding the avenues for storytelling.

### 4. C) Human libraries offer a unique storytelling experience where individuals can 'rent' people to listen to their stories.

The passage mentions that in Denmark and 50-odd other countries, there are libraries where you can rent humans for 30 minutes to recount their stories, indicating a unique form of storytelling. This concept clearly steps away from traditional and digital forms of libraries, presenting an innovative approach to sharing and experiencing stories directly from individuals, thus emphasizing the human aspect of storytelling and the empathy involved in listening to others.

### 5. B) To overcome introverted nature and express feelings without fear of judgment.

The passage clearly states that the author began writing on social media as a means to overcome an introverted nature, allowing for the expression of feelings and emotions without the fear of being judged. This motivation is explicitly mentioned and is not directly related to attending events, conducting workshops, or meeting like-minded individuals, which are either outcomes or unrelated aspects of the author's journey.

6. B) **On cloud nine** (phrase) – To be extremely happy बेहद खुश होना

7. C) **Prudent** (adjective) – Judicious, practical, sensible, wise विवेकपूर्ण

**Antonym: Stupid** – मूर्ख

- **Wise** (adjective) – Astute, intelligent, prudent, sage बुद्धिमान
- **Atrocious** (adjective) – Terrible, brutal, appalling, vicious पापिष्ठ, घोर
- **Crafty** (adjective) – Cunning, sneaky, sly, shrewd, devious चालाक

8. A) **Lay down** (phrasal verb) – If you lay down your weapons, you stop fighting हथियार डाल देना

- **Lay up** (phrasal verb) – to force someone to stay in bed:
- **Lay out** (phrasal verb) – to explain something clearly, usually in writing
- **Lay on** (phrasal verb) – to provide something for a group of people

9. A) 'The' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "the" का प्रयोग तब किया जाता है जब noun विशेष या विशिष्ट होती है। दिए गए वाक्य में, "UK government" एक विशिष्ट संस्था है, इसलिए हम इसके पहले "the" का उपयोग करेंगे!

- 'The' should be used because "the" is used before a singular noun when the noun is specific or particular. In the given sentence, "UK government" is a specific entity, so we use "the" before it.

10. D) 'Beneath my room' वाक्यांश में त्रुटि है क्योंकि 'beneath' का अर्थ होता है 'के नीचे'। यदि हम 'room' का उपयोग कर रहे हैं, तो 'beneath' का प्रयोग गलत होगा, क्योंकि हम कमरे के 'नीचे' नहीं बल्कि कमरे के 'अंदर' होते हैं। सही उपयोग होगा 'in my room' या 'under my bed'.

- The segment 'beneath my room' contains a grammatical error because 'beneath' means 'under'. If we're using 'room', 'beneath' is incorrect because we are in a room, not under a room. The correct usage would be 'in my room' or 'under my bed'.

11. D) The inspector told his subordinates that they would have a thorough search before opening the room.

12. B) The teacher said that she had started the fight.

13. C) **carnage** – killing of many people नरसंहार

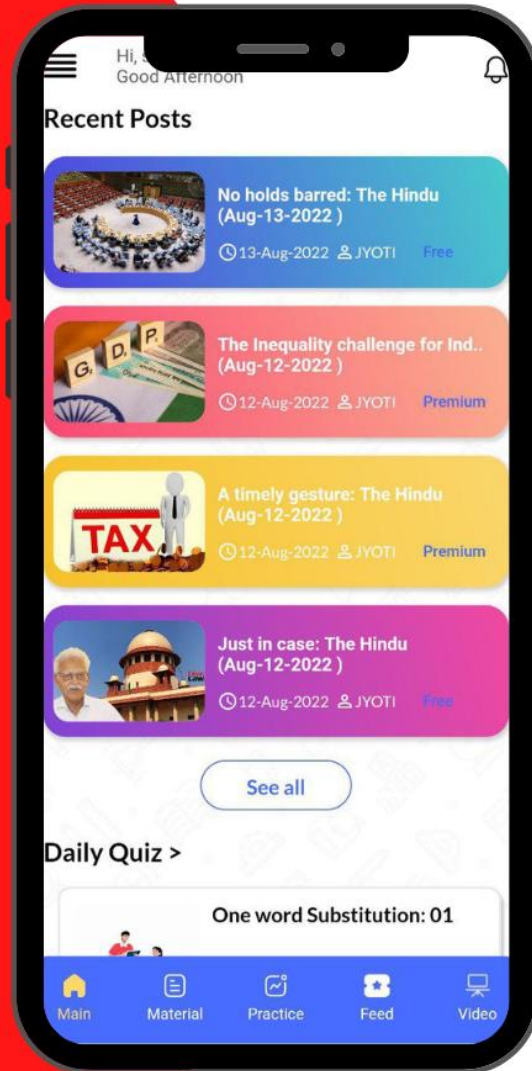
- **sacrilege** – (an act of) treating something holy or important without respect अपवित्रीकरण

- **fratricide** – the crime of murdering your brother, or killing members of your own group or country भ्रातृहत्या
14. A) The entire village was destroyed by the storm.
15. C) **Hapless** (adjective) –Unfortunate, unlucky, luckless, ill-fated, miserable अभाग
- Synonym:** Ill-fated (adjective) – Doomed, unlucky, hapless, unfortunate मनहूस
- **Joyful** (adjective) – Elated, ecstatic, thrilled, pleased, jubilant हर्षित
  - **Triumphant** (adjective) – Successful, winning, victorious, glorious विजयोत्सुक
  - **Grateful** (adjective) – Thankful, appreciative, obliged, indebted, glad कृतज्ञ
16. A) Down to earth (phrase) – very realistic and sensible. विनम्र
17. C) The correct spelling of 'Protien' is Protein
18. D) **Hasten** (verb) – Hurry, rush, speed, accelerate, make haste जल्दी करना
- **Dawdle** (verb) – Waste time, dilly-dally, delay, loiter, procrastinate टाल-मटोल करना
  - **Triumph** (verb) – Victory, achievement, success, conquest, accomplishment विजय प्राप्त करना
  - **Spooky** (adjective) – Scary, frightening, ghostly, unnerving, eerie डरावना
19. D) **Disrupt** (verb) – Interrupt, distract, bother, annoy बाधित करना
- **Fragment** (verb) – Break, divide, disintegrate, shatter टुकड़ा- टुकड़ा करना
  - **Dishevel** (verb) – make (a person's hair or clothes) untidy. बाल नोचना या खसोटना
20. C) 'Advised against' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "advise against" एक phrase है जो किसी को किसी action करने के खिलाफ सलाह देने के लिए प्रयोग किया जाता है। दिए गए वाक्य में, व्यक्ति को अकेले चलने के खिलाफ सलाह दी गई थी, इसलिए हम "advised against" का प्रयोग करेंगे।
- 'Advised against' should be used because "advise against" is a phrase in English grammar that is used to advise someone not to do an action. In the given sentence, the person was advised not to walk alone, so we will use "advised against".
21. C) **Under**
- 'Under' शब्द का प्रयोग तब किया जाता है जब हम किसी प्राधिकरण, संस्थान या निर्देश के तहत काम करने की बात करते हैं। यहाँ "Publications Division" एक संस्था है जो "Ministry of Information and Broadcasting" के तहत कार्य करती है। इसलिए, 'under' शब्द का उपयोग यहाँ सबसे उचित होगा।
- The word 'under' is used when we talk about operating within the jurisdiction or authority of an entity or direction. Here "Publications Division" is an entity that

operates under the "Ministry of Information and Broadcasting". Therefore, the use of 'under' would be most appropriate here.

22. B) दिए गए passage में, Publications Division (PD) के राष्ट्रीय एकीकरण को बढ़ावा देने की कोशिश की जा रही है। यह अलग-अलग क्षेत्रों, लोगों, और देश की विभिन्न संस्कृतियों और आस्थाओं के बारे में जानकारी देने के द्वारा यह करने की कोशिश कर रहा है। इस question में, शब्द "disseminating" अर्थात जानकारी फैलाने का सबसे उचित विकल्प होगा, क्योंकि यह जानकारी को विस्तारित करने या फैलाने का विचार व्यक्त करता है।
- The word "disseminating" is the most appropriate option to fill in blank no. 2 as it refers to spreading or distributing information, which is what the Publications Division (PD) is trying to achieve in the context of promoting national integration. The other options, "concealing", "pouring", and "assembling", do not fit into this context as they do not convey the idea of spreading information.
23. B) 'Myriad' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "myriad" का अर्थ होता है 'अनगिनत' या 'बहुत सारे', जो इस संदर्भ में देश की विभिन्न संस्कृतियों और मान्यताओं की विविधता को दर्शाने के लिए उचित शब्द है। दिए गए वाक्य में, "cultures and beliefs of the Nation" एक विशाल और विविध समूह को संदर्भित कर रहा है, इसलिए हम "myriad" शब्द का उपयोग करेंगे।
- 'Myriad' should be used because 'myriad' means 'countless' or 'innumerable', which is an apt word to depict the diversity of the various cultures and beliefs of the country in this context. In the given sentence, "cultures and beliefs of the Nation" is referring to a vast and diverse group, so we will use the word 'myriad'.
24. A) विकल्प 'A' ("through") यहां सबसे उपयुक्त है, क्योंकि यह Publication division के agents के माध्यम से किताबें बेचने की प्रक्रिया को refer करता है। अर्थात, किताबें agents के "through" या माध्यम से बेची जाती हैं। इसलिए, वाक्य को निम्नलिखित रूप में पूरा किया जाता है: "The Division publishes and sells books at affordable prices through its outlets in important cities and also through agents."
- The most suitable option is 'A' ("through") because it refers to the process of selling books via the Publication Division's agents. In other words, the books are sold "through" or via agents. Therefore, the sentence is completed as follows: "The Division publishes and sells books at affordable prices through its outlets in important cities and also through agents."
25. B) 'Have been' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि 'present perfect passive' tense का प्रयोग होता है जब कोई कार्य past में किया गया हो और उसका परिणाम वर्तमान में अभी भी महसूस हो रहा हो। वाक्य में, "7,600 titles" publish होने की क्रिया पहले की गई थी और उसका परिणाम अभी भी है, इसलिए हम 'have been' का प्रयोग करेंगे।
- 'Have been' should be used because it is used in the 'present perfect passive' tense when an action was done in the past and its result is still felt in the present. In the

sentence, the action of publishing "7,600 titles" was done in the past and its result is still present, so we will use 'have been'.



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**English Madhyam**