

5. HOMONYMS

Homonyms are words that have the same or almost the same pronunciation but are different in meaning.

Example : 'Aught' and 'ought' sound similar. But 'aught' means 'anything' and 'ought' means 'should' as is clear from the sentences below.

Tell me frankly, if you have *aught* to say.

We *ought* to obey our parents.

PRACTICE SET

Directions : In each question below are given two sentences numbered I and II. In these sentences, two homonyms are given in *italics type*, which may be either mis-spelt or inappropriate in the context of the sentences. Read both the sentences carefully and decide on their correctness on the basis of the italicised words.

Give answer

- (a), if only sentence I is correct;
(b), if only sentence II is correct;
(c), if both the sentences I and II are correct;
(d), if I as well as II are incorrect, but both could be made correct by interchanging the italicised words;
(e), if neither I nor II is correct and the sentence could not be made correct by interchanging the italicised words.

- I. Cannons are used in war.
II. The Geeta deals with high *canons* of morality and religion.
- I. An *ordnance* declaring President's rule in the state has been issued today.
II. The *ordinance* depot is situated far away from this city. (NABARD, 1994)
- I. A painter is an *artiste*.
II. Raj Kapoor is a skilled *artist*.
- I. You should not interfere in one's *personal* affairs.
II. The *personel* of ICS were proud of their positions during the British rule in India.
- I. It is on account of his extensive social service that people *deify* him everywhere.
II. We should not *defy* the authority of the Government.
- I. The Government plans to take some *sanitory* measures in the state.
II. The *sanitary* condition of the town is not good.
- I. You should talk to your boss in a *reurent* manner.
II. Our *revrend* Principal is coming.
- I. This drawer is the *depositary* of my private letters.
II. Now a days it is not wise to be *depository* of other's valuables.
- I. He was being laughed at for his *antic* gesture.
- I. *Anticue* articles are priced much these days.
- I. This is the best *stationary* shop in our locality.
II. I saw a *stationery* van there.
- I. The tragic tale narrated by the old man *affected* all the children.
II. The humane attitude of the new manager *efected* a profound change in labour relations. (NABARD, 1994)
- I. Ghosts are not *corporeal* beings.
II. Saints care little for *corporal* affairs.
- I. A volcanic *erruption* engulfed the entire city.
II. Alexander's *irruption* is a memorable event in Indian history.
- I. He is respected for his *peity*.
II. Have *pity* on the poor.
- I. He is *wrapt* up in pleasurable contemplation.
II. I listened to her song with *rapt* attention.
- I. I think this electric *metre* is faulty.
II. I require two *meters* of cloth for this purpose. (Bank P.O. 1995)
- I. *Piane* living and high thinking should be our motto.
II. Men in the *plains* are generally less hardy than the hillmen.
- I. His manners are *urban*.
II. People of *urbane* area are civil in manners.
- I. Quinine is an efficacious *physic* for the cure of malaria.

Homonyms

- I. Living organisms tend to have an inbuilt system to *adopt* themselves to changing environment.
II. He is an *adapt* criminal.
- I. Mr. Khanna died in a railway *collision*.
II. Some gentlemen act in *collusion* with robbers.
- I. He won the election only because of the support he got from his zealous party workers.
II. Savita's friends were *jaelous* of her success in the prestigious competition. (NABARD, 1994)
- I. His views are *opposite* to mine.
II. The speech was *aposite* to the occasion.
- I. It is a *knaughty* problem.
II. Suresh is a *naughty* boy.
- I. He *practices* what he preaches.
II. The *practise* of closing shops on Sundays is quite common.
- I. I saw a *hord* of nomads.
II. Ali Baba found out the *hoard* of robbers' gold and jewels.
- I. During the *riegn* of Gupta rulers, India made tremendous advancements in art and culture.
II. He has taken over the *riens* of the new government.
- I. He *outght* to have *persecuted* his studies.
II. Trespassers will be *prosecuted*.
- I. I *loathe* flattery.
II. He was *loth* to go with Rahul.
- I. Some of the African *immigrants* indulge in smuggling in our country.
II. Many *emmigrants* from India have settled in America. (Bank P.O. 1995)
- I. He did not *acceed* to my request.
II. Don't *exceed* the limits.
- I. Order for ten *bails* of cotton.
II. He was released on *bale*.
- I. He broke my cycle *carier* yesterday.
II. A slight carelessness on your part can spoil your *career*.
- I. The *tenur* of his speech was not clear.
II. His *teneur* of office is drawing to a close.
- I. Archana bought the expensive costume to *complement* her wardrobe for the beauty contest.
- When James remarked that she looked gorgeous, Jane thanked him for the *compliment*.
- I. Don't *merge* your hand in hot water.
II. A dolphin *emerged* out of the ocean.
- I. He *waived* his sword in the air.
II. I *wave* my claim in your favour.
- I. This dress does not *suit* you.
II. He filed a civil *suite* against Mr. Arora.
- I. The white colour in our National Flag is a *symbol* of purity of thought.
II. The folk singers sang to the accompaniment of the *cymbol*.
- I. He drank a *draut* of wine.
II. Crops failed due to *droust*. (Bank P.O. 1995)
- I. Raju is an *ingenious* worker.
II. He made an *ingenuous* confession of his fault.
- I. An over-*doze* of this medicine might be harmful for you.
II. You are not allowed to *dose* in the class.
- I. A vote of *censur* was passed against the President.
II. Before release, every film is sent to the *ensor* office for recommendation.
- I. Despite all our efforts, success remained *elusive*.
II. His manners are *ilusive*.
- I. His dismissal is a *foregone* conclusion.
II. I cannot *forgo* my claim.
- I. Deepak did not get involved in the scandal on account of his friend's wise *council*.
II. Some of the members of the *counsil* walked out in protest during the session. (NABARD, 1994)
- I. There is a great *affection* between the two brothers.
II. Her modesty is mere *affectation*.
- I. We look for the date and day in a *calandar*.
II. Sheet rubber is made by passing rubber through *calenders*.
- I. Sudden *lighening* and the rumble of thunder frightened the baby.
II. Mercury lamps are used for *lightning* the roads.
- I. Painting is done on *canvass*.
II. He was *canvassing* for votes.

ANSWERS

Along with answers, the meanings of each pair of homonyms are given in brackets for better understanding.]

1. (c) : [Cannon = military tank,
Canon = rule of conduct]
2. (d) : [Ordinance = enactment;
Ordnance = military stores]
3. (d) : [Artist = a person skilled in fine
arts, such as drawing, poetry etc.;
Artiste = a person skilled in
theatrical arts such as singing,
dancing, acting.]
4. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'personnel'.
[Personal = private;
Personnel = body of persons
employed in a department.]
5. (c) : [Deify = to worship as God;
Defy = to challenge]
6. (b) : The correct word in I should be
sanatory.
[Sanatory = promoting health,
Sanitary = hygienic]
7. (e) : The correct word in I is 'reverent'
and that in II is 'reverend'.
[Reverent = respectful;
Reverend = respectable]
8. (d) : Depository = place where anything
is deposited
Depositary = one with whom a
thing is deposited]
9. (c) : The correct word in II should be
'Antique'.
[Antic = odd, Antique = old]
10. (d) : [Stationery = a shop selling writing
materials,
Stationary = immobile]
11. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'effected'.
[effect = result, affect = to influence]
12. (a) : The correct word in II should also
be 'corporeal'.
[Corporal = bodily;
Corporeal = having body or material]
e.g. Corporal punishment is not
justified.
13. (e) : The correct word in I should be
'eruption' and that in II should be
'irruption'.
[Eruption = sudden outbreak,
irruption = invasion]
14. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'piety'.
[Pity = compassion; piety = pioussness]
15. (c) : [Wrapt = lost in something,
Rapt = enraptured]
16. (d) : [Meter = a measuring apparatus,
Metre = unit of length]
17. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'Plain'.
[Plain = clear, level;
Plane = level surface]
e.g. Only one circle can be drawn
through three points on the same
plane.
18. (d) : [Urbane = courteous;
Urban = pertaining to city]
19. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'physique'.
[Physic = medicine;
Physique = bodily structure]
20. (e) : The correct word in I should be
'adapt' and that in II should be
'adept'.
[Adapt = change accordingly;
adept = skilled;
adopt = to take recourse to]
e.g. Do not adopt foul means to
earn money.
21. (c) : [Collision = violent clash;
Collusion = secret agreement to act
unlawfully]
22. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'jealous'.
[Zealous = full of zeal;
Jealous = envious]
23. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'opposite'.
[Opposite = contrary;
Apposite = suitable]
24. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'knotty'.
[Naughty = wicked,
Knotty = difficult to solve]
25. (d) : [Practice = a noun;
Practise = verb of 'practice']
26. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'horde'.
27. (e) : The correct word in I should be
'reign' and that in II should be
'rein'.
[Reign = rule; Rein = rigid control]
28. (c) : [Persecute = to pursue,
Prosecute = treat cruelly]
29. (c) : [Loathe = dislike,
Loth/Loath = unwilling]

Homonyms

30. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'migrants'.
[Emigrant = one who leaves his
country to settle in any other
country;
Immigrant = one who enters a
country to settle there]
31. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'accede'.
[Accede = agree; Exceed = surpass]
32. (d) : [Bale = bundle; Bail = security]
33. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'carrier'.
[Carrier = that which carries,
Career = progress through life]
34. (e) : The correct word in I should be
'tenor' and that in II should be
'tenure'.
[Tenor = general meaning,
Tenure = duration of holding office]
35. (c) : [Complement = that which completes,
Compliment = greetings]
36. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'immerge'.
[Immerge/Immerse = to dip into;
Emerge = to come out]
37. (d) : The correct word in I should be
'waved' and that in II should be
'waive'.
[wave = brandish; waive = give up]
38. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'suit'.
[Suit = case, to fit;
Suite = attendants or followers of a
person]
e.g. The prince and his suite took
shelter in a cave.
39. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'cymbal'.
[Symbol = sign;
Cymbal = musical instrument]
40. (e) : The correct word in I should be
'draught' and that in II should be
'drought'.
[Draught = act of swallowing
without taking breath,
Drought = want of rain]
41. (c) : [Ingenious = skilful,
Ingenuous = frank]
42. (d) : The correct word in I should be
'dose' and that in II should be 'doze'.
[Dose = quantity of medicine to be
taken at a time,
Doze = to slumber for short periods]
43. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'censure'.
[Censure = no-confidence;
Censor = official who examines
plays, films, books etc.]
44. (a) : The correct word in II should be
'illusive'.
[Elusive = difficult to grasp,
Illusive = deceptive]
45. (c) : [Forego = to precede,
Forgo = to give up]
46. (e) : The correct word in I should be
'counsel' and that in II should be
'council'.
[Counsel = opinion;
Council = assembly]
47. (c) : [Affection = love;
Affectation = pretence]
48. (b) : The correct word in I should be
'calendar'.
[Calender = a roller-machine]
49. (e) : The correct word in I should be
'lightning' and that in II should be
'lighting'.
[Lightning = electric discharge from
clouds
Lighting = providing light,
Lightening = making less heavy]
50. (d) : [Canvas = a tough cloth,
Canvass = to propagate]