

Sentence Improvement

Questions based on *Sentence Improvement* are designed to test a candidate's knowledge of English Grammar and Vocabulary. In such questions a sentence is given with a part underlined or given in bold type. For this part some alternatives are given below the sentence. You have to choose the option which improves the sentence. If the sentence is correct as it is and no improvement is required, choose 'No improvement'. Sound knowledge of grammatical rules and constant practice can make you able to solve such questions.

Exercise I

Directions (Q.Nos. 1 to 100) In questions given below, a part of the sentence is underlined. Below are given alternatives to the underlined part which may improve the sentence. Choose the correct alternative. In case no improvement is needed, option (d) is the answer.

1. He could not look anything in the dark room.
 (a) look at (b) see
 (c) see through (d) No improvement
2. He was fined for careless driving.
 (a) got fined (b) fined
 (c) was to be fined (d) No improvement
3. We look forward to hear from you.
 (a) hearing (b) have heard
 (c) listen (d) No improvement
4. When the examinations were over Anil and me went to our native town.
 (a) me and Anil
 (b) Anil and I
 (c) I and Anil
 (d) No improvement
5. Will you kindly open the knot?
 (a) untie (b) break
 (c) loose (d) No improvement
6. Realising the significance of technical education for developing country, the government laid aside a large sum on it during the last plan-period.
 (a) laid up (b) set aside
 (c) laid out (d) No improvement
7. Other countries have eradicated this disease ten years ago.
 (a) eradicated (b) had eradicated
 (c) did eradicate (d) No improvement
8. We were not the wiser for all this effort to explain the case to us.
 (a) none (b) neither
 (c) nevertheless (d) No improvement
9. If I stood alone in defence of truth, and the whole world is banded against me and against truth. I would fight them all.
 (a) will be banded (b) were banded
 (c) banded (d) No improvement
10. During his long discourse, he did not touch that point.
 (a) touch upon (b) touch on
 (c) touch of (d) No improvement
11. He has not and can never be in the good books of his employer because he lacks honesty.
 (a) has not and cannot be
 (b) has not and can never been
 (c) has not been and can never be
 (d) No improvement
12. This matter admits of no excuse.
 (a) admits to (b) admits from
 (c) admits (d) No improvement

13. You have come here with a view to insult me.
(a) to insulting me (b) of insulting me
(c) for insulting me (d) No improvement
14. For all powers of reason and understanding we know a little about life's secrets.
(a) a little of love secrets
(b) little about life's secrets
(c) nothing about life's secrets
(d) No improvement
15. Not a word they spoke to the unfortunate wife about it.
(a) did they speak (b) they will speak
(c) they had spoken (d) No improvement
16. More than one person was killed in the accident.
(a) were killed (b) are killed
(c) have been killed (d) No improvement
17. If he had time he will call you.
(a) would have (b) would have had
(c) has (d) No improvement
18. His powerful desire brought about his downfall.
(a) His intense desire (b) His desire for power
(c) His fatal desire (d) No improvement
19. All, but her, had made an attempt.
(a) All, but she, (b) All, but herself,
(c) All, but her, (d) No improvement
20. I hope you vividly remember the premier of the film when I, my wife and you were present in the hall.
(a) my wife, I and you (b) you, I and my wife
(c) my wife, you and I (d) No improvement
21. With a thundering roar the huge rocket soared up from the launching pad.
(a) flew up (b) went upwards
(c) took off (d) No improvement
22. My opinion for the film is that it will bag the national award.
(a) opinion to (b) opinion about
(c) opinion on (d) No improvement
23. He sent a word to me that he would be coming late.
(a) sent word (b) had sent a word
(c) sent words (d) No improvement
24. It became clear that the strangers were heading into a serious disaster.
(a) along (b) towards
(c) for (d) No improvement
25. Fifty km are not a great distance in these days of fast moving vehicles.
(a) is not a great distance (b) is no distance
(c) aren't a great distance (d) No improvement
26. I am used to hard work.
(a) work hard (b) work hardly
(c) hard working (d) No improvement
27. It was indeed a shock for her, but she has later recovered from it.
(a) since (b) then
(c) afterwards (d) No improvement
28. There is dearth of woman doctor in our state. We shall have to recruit some from the other states.
(a) women doctor
(b) woman doctors
(c) women doctors
(d) No improvement
29. The poor villagers have waited in the bitter cold for more than four hours now.
(a) have been waiting (b) had waited
(c) has been waiting (d) No improvement
30. Most donors would seriously protest any effort to extrapolate from such limited data.
(a) protest against (b) protest at
(c) protest to (d) No improvement
31. The greatest thing in style is to have a use of metaphor.
(a) knowledge (b) command
(c) need (d) No improvement
32. In fact, if it hadn't been for his invaluable advice on so many occasions I wouldn't have achieved anything in my life.
(a) remarkable advice (b) valuable advices
(c) priceless suggestion (d) No improvement
33. To get one's name in the Rowland Ward's book of hunting records was the hot ambition of every serious hunter.
(a) extreme (b) burning
(c) high (d) No improvement
34. I have lived in Delhi since I was four.
(a) am living (b) lived
(c) had lived (d) No improvement
35. My friend was in hospital for a week after an accident.
(a) through (b) following
(c) for (d) No improvement
36. I want you to clearly understand that matter.
(a) you clearly to understand
(b) you to understand clearly
(c) to clearly understand you
(d) No improvement
37. If you cross the line, you will be disqualified.
(a) cross upon the line
(b) cross on the line
(c) cross out the line
(d) No improvement

38. No sooner he had returned home then his mother felt happy.
 (a) had he returned home when
 (b) he had returned home than
 (c) did he return home than
 (d) No improvement
39. There is no more room for you in this compartment.
 (a) There is no more seat
 (b) There is no more space
 (c) There is no more accommodation
 (d) No improvement
40. Young men and women should get habituated to reading and writing about current affairs.
 (a) used (b) prepared
 (c) trained (d) No improvement
41. While crossing the highway a five year old child was knocked out by a passing car.
 (a) away (b) up
 (c) down (d) No improvement
42. Every time I go in a lift to my sixth floor apartment, I remember the calm and serenity of my ancestral home in the village.
 (a) move in a lift (b) ascend in a lift
 (c) take a lift (d) No improvement
43. He found a wooden broken chair in the room.
 (a) wooden and broken chair
 (b) broken wooden chair
 (c) broken and wooden chair
 (d) No improvement
44. If the room had been brighter, I would have been able to read for a while before bed time.
 (a) If the room was brighter
 (b) If the room are brighter
 (c) Had the room been brighter
 (d) No improvement
45. Practically every part of the banana tree is used by man.
 (a) each part (b) any part
 (c) most part (d) No improvement
46. Hoping not to be disturbed, I sat down in my easy chair to read the book, I won as a prize.
 (a) I had won as a prize (b) I have won as prize
 (c) I had to win as a prize (d) No improvement
47. His father won't be able to leave for Varanasi until they have arrived.
 (a) until they arrive
 (b) until they will have arrived
 (c) until they will arrive
 (d) No improvement
48. The company goes to great length to ensure that employees can be comfortable in their work environment.
 (a) are comfortable (b) will be comfortable
 (c) should be comfortable (d) No improvement
49. The reason why he wrote the letter was because he could not contact him over the phone.
 (a) why he wrote the letter was since
 (b) for which he wrote the letter because
 (c) why he wrote the letter was that
 (d) No improvement
50. I shall be grateful to you if you are of help to me now.
 (a) help (b) would help
 (c) helped (d) No improvement
51. Will you lend me few rupees in this hour of need?
 (a) lend me any rupees (b) borrow me a few rupees
 (c) lend me a few rupees (d) No improvement
52. He should move on to the next point, and not harp one string only.
 (a) harp on string only
 (b) harp only one string
 (c) hard upon one string only
 (d) No improvement
53. Please make it a point to send your letter at my address.
 (a) on my address (b) to my address
 (c) in my address (d) No improvement
54. The demonstration passed off peacefully.
 (a) passed out (b) passed away
 (c) passed on (d) No improvement
55. This telephone number is not existing.
 (a) has not existed
 (b) does not exist
 (c) has not been existing
 (d) No improvement
56. Whenever my students come across new words, I ask them to look for them in the dictionary.
 (a) to look it up (b) to look them up
 (c) to look at them (d) No improvement
57. Please remind me of posting these letters to my relatives.
 (a) by posting (b) to post
 (c) for posting (d) No improvement
58. If you are living near a market place you should be ready to bear the disturbances caused by traffic.
 (a) to bear upon (b) to bear with
 (c) to bear away (d) No improvement
59. I shall not go until I am invited.
 (a) till I am invited
 (b) Unless I am invited
 (c) if not I am invited
 (d) No improvement
60. I took the cycle which he bought yesterday.
 (a) that he bought yesterday
 (b) that which he had bought yesterday
 (c) that he had bought yesterday
 (d) No improvement

61. If you had attended the meeting, you would have benefited a great deal.
 (a) could benefit (b) would benefit
 (c) benefited (d) No improvement
62. The cloud of misfortunes appears to have blown out.
 (a) over (b) up
 (c) away (d) No improvement
63. We had nothing to eat since 8'o clock, this morning.
 (a) have had nothing (b) has had nothing
 (c) did have nothing (d) No improvement
64. If you are not clear about the meaning of a word, it is wise to look to a dictionary.
 (a) look for (b) look at
 (c) look up (d) No improvement
65. They are social insects, living in communities, regulated by definite laws, each member of society bearing well-defined and separate part in the work of a colony.
 (a) who are living in communities
 (b) living among a community
 (c) who lives with a community
 (d) No improvement
66. The dissidents hold a great problem in every political party.
 (a) cause (b) give
 (c) pose (d) No improvement
67. Not long back, in Japan, a mysterious nerve gas affected a large number of people.
 (a) effected (b) infected
 (c) infested (d) No improvement
68. As she was suffering from high fever, she could not face the examination.
 (a) bear (b) suffer
 (c) take (d) No improvement
69. As he is past his teens now, he can look for himself.
 (a) after (b) to
 (c) around (d) No improvement
70. Either he or I am going.
 (a) he or I are going (b) he is going or I am
 (c) I or he is going (d) No improvement
71. It will be no good trying to find an excuse next time.
 (a) to try to find (b) to try finding
 (c) trying finding (d) No improvement
72. We did not see this movie yet.
 (a) have seen (b) have not seen
 (c) have seen (d) No improvement
73. She says she's already paid me back, but I can't remember, so I'll have to take her word.
 (a) to take her word true
 (b) to take her at her word
 (c) to take her word for it
 (d) No improvement
74. When it was feared that the serfs might go too far and gain their freedom from serfdom, the protestant leaders joined the princes at crushing them.
 (a) into crushing (b) in crushing
 (c) without crushing (d) No improvement
75. In India today many of our intellectuals still talk in terms of the French Revolution and the Rights of Man, not appreciating that much has happened since then.
 (a) much has been happening
 (b) much had happened
 (c) much might happen
 (d) No improvement
76. The end of the examinations is an opportunity for celebrating.
 (a) chance (b) moment
 (c) occasion (d) No improvement
77. Our office clock is not so correct as it should be, it is usually five minutes fast.
 (a) right (b) regular
 (c) accurate (d) No improvement
78. You cannot forbid him leaving.
 (a) he leaving (b) his leaving
 (c) him to leave (d) No improvement
79. I hope you won't object to me watching while you work.
 (a) against me watching
 (b) me to watch
 (c) to my watching
 (d) No improvement
80. But in all these cases conversion from scale have well-formulated.
 (a) can be well-formulated
 (b) are well-formulated
 (c) well-formulated
 (d) No improvement
81. The more they earn, more they spend.
 (a) More they earn, more they spend
 (b) More they earn, the more they spend
 (c) The more they earn, the more they spend
 (d) No improvement
82. Although India is still by far a poor country, it can become rich if its natural and human resow s are fully utilised.
 (a) few and far between
 (b) by and large
 (c) by and by
 (d) No improvement
83. Due to these reason we are all in favour of universal compulsory education.
 (a) Out of these reasons (b) For these reasons
 (c) By these reasons (d) No improvement

84. While we would like that all Indian children to go to school, we need to ponder why they do not.
 (a) that all the Indian children
 (b) if all the children of India
 (c) all Indian children
 (d) No improvement
85. You are warned against committing the same mistake again.
 (a) to commit (b) for committing
 (c) against to commit (d) No improvement
86. The workers are hell bent at getting what is due to them.
 (a) hell bent on getting (b) hell bent for getting
 (c) hell bent upon getting (d) No improvement
87. He died in the year 1960 at 11pm on 14 July.
 (a) on 14 July in the year 1960 at 11pm
 (b) in the year 1960 on 14 July at 11pm
 (c) at 11pm on 14 July in the year 1960
 (d) No improvement
88. The logic of Berlin wall already had been undermined but when the news came through that the wall itself had been opened I jumped into a car.
 (a) had been undetermined already
 (b) had already been undetermined
 (c) had been already undetermined
 (d) No improvement
89. Taxpayers are to be conscious of their privileges.
 (a) have to (b) need
 (c) ought to (d) No improvement
90. I would have waited for you at the station if I knew that you would come.
 (a) had known
 (b) was knowing
 (c) have known
 (d) No improvement
91. No one could explain how a calm and balanced person like him could penetrate such a mindless act on his friends.
 (a) perpetuate (b) perpetrate
 (c) precipitate (d) No improvement
92. The old man felled some trees in the garden with hardly no effort at all.
 (a) hard effort (b) hardly any effort
 (c) a hardly any effort (d) No improvement
93. Five years ago today, I am sitting in a small Japanese car, driving across Poland towards Berlin.
 (a) was sitting (b) sat
 (c) have been sitting (d) No improvement
94. Sumit had told me that he hasn't done it yet.
 (a) told (b) tells
 (c) was telling (d) No improvement
95. The record for the biggest tiger hunt has not been met since 1911, when Lord Hardinge, then Viceroy of India, shot a tiger than measured 11 feet and 6 inches.
 (a) improved (b) broken
 (c) bettered (d) No improvement
96. Whatever to our other problems, we have no shortcoming to cheap labour in India.
 (a) default (b) deficit
 (c) scarcity (d) No improvement
97. If he would have tried he would have succeeded.
 (a) is tried (b) was tried
 (c) had tried (d) No improvement
98. I will not go to school, if it shall rain tomorrow.
 (a) it would rain tomorrow (b) it will rain tomorrow
 (c) it rains tomorrow (d) No improvement
99. Why the dinosaurs died out is not known.
 (a) it is not known (b) the reason is not known
 (c) that is not known (d) No improvement
100. He is quite well now, except a slight cold.
 (a) except with a slight cold
 (b) excepting a slight cold
 (c) except for a slight cold
 (d) No improvement

Exercise II

Directions (Q.Nos. 1 to 24) Look at the underlined part of each sentence. Below each sentence, three possible substitutions for the underlined part are given. If any one of them is better than the underlined part, indicate your response (a), (b) or (c). If none of the substitutions improves the sentence, your answer is (d).

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1. If I were you, I would do it at once.
 (a) was (b) am
 (c) would be (d) No improvement
2. They set a strong guard, lest anyone could escape.
 (a) would (b) might
 (c) should (d) No improvement
3. The matter called up an explanation of his conduct.
 (a) out (b) in
 (c) for (d) No improvement
4. The accused refused having murdered anybody.
 (a) disagreed (b) denied
 (c) declaimed (d) No improvement

We need honest workers, not people of redoubtable integrity.

- (a) doubting (b) doubtful
(c) doubtless (d) No improvement

By the time he arrived, everybody had gone home.

- (a) when he arrived (b) at which he arrived
(c) by which he arrived (d) No improvement

There is no alternate, so we must leave now.

- (a) altering (b) alternative
(c) alternation (d) No improvement

I cannot listen what she is saying.

- (a) hear what (b) listen for what
(c) listen to that (d) No improvement

He is still in vigorous health although he is on the right side of sixty.

- (a) wrong (b) left
(c) negative (d) No improvement

We are sorry to hear regarding your father's death.

- (a) of (b) over
(c) for (d) No improvement

Babu asked his friend, "where you went yesterday?"

- (a) "Where did you go yesterday?"
(b) "Where you had gone yesterday?"
(c) "Where you did go yesterday?"
(d) No improvement

He lay on the grass enjoying the sunshine.

- (a) laid (b) lied
(c) led (d) No improvement

Some passengers were flown to Paris on the last trip.

- (a) fled (b) flied
(c) flew (d) No improvement

Fifty miles are a long distance to walk.

- (a) is (b) become
(c) be (d) No improvement

After the vote was taken the meeting broke.

- (a) broke down (b) broke up
(c) broke out (d) No improvement

16. The speaker asked the audience to bear upon him for a few minutes more.

- (a) on (b) with
(c) for (d) No improvement

17. Many people find it difficult to make both hands meet.

- (a) both accounts (b) both hand to mouth
(c) both ends meet (d) No improvement

18. I am afraid you two are at cross purpose.

- (a) are at cross-purposes
(b) are in cross-purposes
(c) are at a cross-purpose
(d) No improvement

19. Take care that you are not to be cheated.

- (a) that you will not be cheated
(b) you will not be cheated
(c) that you are not cheated
(d) No improvement

20. Can you tell me where has he gone?

- (a) where has gone he (b) where gone has he
(c) where he has gone (d) No improvement

21. No sooner I heard the shot when I rushed to the spot.

- (a) No sooner I heard the shot than
(b) No sooner did I hear the shot when
(c) No sooner did I hear the shot than
(d) No improvement

22. Hardly he had entered the station, when the train whistled.

- (a) Hardly had he entered
(b) Hardly he entered
(c) He hardly had entered
(d) No improvement

23. Let's go for a walk, shouldn't we?

- (a) shall we (b) can we
(c) can't we (d) No improvement

24. The teacher asked me what is the matter?

- (a) what was the matter (b) what the matter is
(c) what the matter was (d) No improvement

Answers

Exercise I

- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------|
| 1. (b) | 2. (d) | 3. (a) | 4. (b) | 5. (a) | 6. (b) | 7. (a) | 8. (a) | 9. (b) | 10. (b) |
| 11. (c) | 12. (d) | 13. (a) | 14. (b) | 15. (a) | 16. (a) | 17. (c) | 18. (b) | 19. (a) | 20. (c) |
| 21. (c) | 22. (b) | 23. (a) | 24. (b) | 25. (a) | 26. (d) | 27. (a) | 28. (c) | 29. (a) | 30. (a) |
| 31. (a) | 32. (d) | 33. (c) | 34. (d) | 35. (b) | 36. (d) | 37. (d) | 38. (c) | 39. (b) | 40. (d) |
| 41. (c) | 42. (c) | 43. (b) | 44. (c) | 45. (d) | 46. (a) | 47. (a) | 48. (a) | 49. (b) | 50. (b) |
| 51. (c) | 52. (c) | 53. (b) | 54. (d) | 55. (b) | 56. (b) | 57. (b) | 58. (b) | 59. (b) | 60. (c) |
| 61. (d) | 62. (a) | 63. (a) | 64. (c) | 65. (d) | 66. (a) | 67. (b) | 68. (c) | 69. (a) | 70. (d) |
| 71. (a) | 72. (b) | 73. (b) | 74. (b) | 75. (d) | 76. (b) | 77. (c) | 78. (c) | 79. (c) | 80. (b) |
| 81. (c) | 82. (b) | 83. (b) | 84. (c) | 85. (d) | 86. (c) | 87. (c) | 88. (b) | 89. (a) | 90. (a) |
| 91. (b) | 92. (b) | 93. (a) | 94. (b) | 95. (b) | 96. (c) | 97. (c) | 98. (c) | 99. (d) | 100. (c) |

Exercise II

1. (d) The sentence needs no improvement.
2. (c) 'Lest' is always followed by should.
3. (c) 'Call for something' means to need something.
4. (b) It should be 'denied'.
5. (b) It should be 'doubtful'.
6. (d) The sentence needs no improvement.
7. (b) It should be 'alternative'.
8. (a) It should be 'hear what'.
9. (a) It should be 'wrong'.
10. (a) 'hear of' means to know about.
11. (a) 'where did you go yesterday?' is the correct form.
12. (d) The sentence needs no improvement.
13. (d) The sentence needs no improvement.
14. (a) 'Fifty miles' in the sentence represents a single quantity.
15. (b) It should be 'broke up'.
16. (b) 'bear with somebody' means to be patient with somebody.
17. (c) 'both ends meet' is the correct use.
18. (a) 'are at cross-purposes' is the correct use.
19. (c) It should be 'that you are not cheated'.
20. (c) It should be 'where he has gone'.
21. (c) In the sentences starting with 'No sooner', inverted form of verb and than are used.
22. (a) Inverted form of verb is used in the sentences starting with 'hardly'.
23. (a) It should be 'shall we'.
24. (c) 'What the matter was' is the correct use.