

Chapter 4: Intellectual Rubbish

WARMING UP! [PAGE 93]

Warming Up! | Q 1. (a) | Page 93

How will you react in the following situation?

Your Science teacher tells you plants exposed to the sunlight grow faster than those always in the shade.

SOLUTION

If my science teacher tells me that plants exposed to sunlight grow faster than those always in the shade, I shall believe her as I know being a teacher she knows more than me and she's there to teach me and I am there to learn from her.

Warming Up! | Q 1. (b) | Page 93

How will you react in the following situation?

Your aunt tells you not to go for a job interview because it's a no moon day, that very same day.

SOLUTION

If my aunt tells me not to go for a job interview because it's a no moon day, I shall definitely not obey her because I do not believe in such superstitions, and for me, the job interview is more important than the unknown effects of a no moon day.

Warming Up! | Q 1. (c) | Page 93

How will you react in the following situation?

Your friend argues with you that Mount Everest is not the tallest peak in the world.

SOLUTION

I have known for years that Mt. Everest is the tallest peak in the world for years. I have read about it in several books and on the Internet. Therefore when a friend argues with me about it not being the tallest peak, I shall counter-argue and prove her wrong.

Warming Up! | Q 1. (d) | Page 93

How will you react in the following situation?

A stranger at your door claims to be a magician and promises your mother to turn all her silver jewellery into gold.

SOLUTION

This sounds a little funny to me. I will definitely not believe him and will not allow him inside my house.

Warming Up! | Q 2.1 | Page 93

What do you notice about the following pairs of words?

- act naturally

- liquid gas
- open secret
- sound of silence
- sweet sorrow
- original copy
- only choice
- growing smaller

SOLUTION

These words are a pair of opposites like the "open secret". These contradictory terms appear together. They are used to create some sort of drama or laughter for the reader. They are called Oxymorons.

Warming Up! | Q 2.2 | Page 93

Now try to add a contradictory word to the following:

- What a _____ mess you've got us into!
- It's a _____ imitation of a diamond necklace.
- My trip to Matheran was a _____ holiday.
- With such heavy makeup, she looks _____ ugly.
- A _____ crowd gathered to see the magic show.

Note: Contrasting words that go together are examples of the language device called Oxymoron.

SOLUTION

Contradictory word to the following:

- What a **clear** mess you've got us into!
- It's a **real** imitation of a diamond necklace.
- My trip to Matheran was a **working** holiday.
- With such heavy makeup, she looks **pretty** ugly.
- A **small** crowd gathered to see the magic show.

ENGLISH WORKSHOP [PAGES 98 - 99]

English Workshop | Q 1. (a) | Page 98

The following expression is a combination of a noun preceded by a describing word.

fatal mistake.

Replace the describing word with as many others as you can, that goes with the underlined noun.

SOLUTION

silly mistake, a grave mistake, careless mistake, obvious mistake, etc.

English Workshop | Q 1. (b) | Page 98

The following expression is a combination of a noun preceded by a describing word.

foreign customs

Replace the describing word with as many others as you can, that goes with the underlined noun.

SOLUTION

old customs, traditional customs, Indian customs.

English Workshop | Q 1. (c) | Page 98

The following expression is a combination of a noun preceded by a describing word.

unappetizing diet

Replace the describing word with as many others as you can, that goes with the underlined noun.

SOLUTION

a balanced diet, a healthy diet, a weight-loss diet, a nutritive diet.

English Workshop | Q 1. (d) | Page 98

The following expression is a combination of a noun preceded by a describing word.

plentiful supply

Replace the describing word with as many others as you can, that goes with the underlined noun.

SOLUTION

restricted supply, industrial supply, efficient supply.

English Workshop | Q 1. (e) | Page 98

The following expression is a combination of a noun preceded by a describing word.

simple device

Replace the describing word with as many others as you can, that goes with the underlined noun.

SOLUTION

an electronic device, a rhetorical device, a storage device, a tracking device.

English Workshop | Q 1. (f) | Page 98

The following expression is a combination of a noun preceded by a describing word.

savage controversy

Replace the describing word with as many others as you can, that goes with the underlined noun.

SOLUTION

major controversy, bitter controversy, endless controversy, political controversy.

English Workshop | Q 1. (g) | Page 98

The following expression is a combination of a noun preceded by a describing word.

modern technique

Replace the describing word with as many others as you can, that goes with the underlined noun.

SOLUTION

the analytical technique, alternative technique, popular technique, modified technique.

English Workshop | Q 1. (h) | Page 98

The following expression is a combination of a noun preceded by a describing word.

foolish custom

Replace the describing word with as many others as you can, that goes with the underlined noun.

SOLUTION

new custom, ancient custom, Indian custom, nice custom.

English Workshop | Q 2. (a) | Page 98

Use the following idiom/expression in sentences of your own.

to be prone to

SOLUTION

to be prone to - This stretch of road is prone to accidents.

English Workshop | Q 2. (b) | Page 98

Use the following idiom/expression in sentences of your own.

to have a difference of opinion

SOLUTION

to have a difference of opinion - "There was a difference of opinion between the Principal and the class teacher".

English Workshop | Q 2. (c) | Page 98

Use the following idiom/expression in sentences of your own.

to go beyond

SOLUTION

to go beyond - We need to go beyond, and solve the problem rather than talking about it.

English Workshop | Q 2. (d) | Page 98

Use the following idiom/expression in sentences of your own.
to have a beneficial effect

SOLUTION

to have a beneficial effect - Her speech had a beneficial effect on me.

English Workshop | Q 2. (e) | Page 98

Use the following idiom/expression in sentences of your own.
to have a bias

SOLUTION

to have a bias - They have a bias against the minorities.

English Workshop | Q 2. (f) | Page 98

Use the following idiom/expression in sentences of your own.
to undo

SOLUTION

to undo - Can someone help me to undo my seat belt?

English Workshop | Q 2. (g) | Page 98

Use the following idiom/expression in sentences of your own.
to be wary of

SOLUTION

to be wary of - Parents should teach their children to be wary of strangers.

English Workshop | Q 2. (h) | Page 98

Use the following idiom/expression in sentences of your own.
under the influence

SOLUTION

under the influence - She misbehaved because she was under the influence of drugs.

English Workshop | Q 3. (a) | Page 99

Say 'WHY'?

One should avoid getting angry about a difference of opinion.

SOLUTION

One should avoid getting angry about a difference of opinion - because it shows that one is subconsciously aware of having no good reason for one's thinking.

English Workshop | Q 3. (b) | Page 99

Say 'WHY'?

The writer found his stay abroad very profitable.

SOLUTION

The writer found his stay abroad very profitable - **because it helped him in diminishing the intensity of insular prejudice.**

English Workshop | Q 3. (c) | Page 99

Say 'WHY'?

The writer grew less dogmatic and more open-minded.

SOLUTION

The writer grew less dogmatic and more open-minded - **because:**
(1) he mingled with social groups having different opinions.
(2) he traveled and,
(3) he observed himself whenever there were contrary opinions.

English Workshop | Q 3. (d) | Page 99

Say 'WHY'?

Men declaring that they are Saints write letters to the writer.

SOLUTION

Men declaring that they are Saints write letters to the writer - **because they want to propagate their thoughts and thus earn popularity for themselves.**

English Workshop | Q 3. (e) | Page 99

Say 'WHY'?

The writer claims that all false beliefs need not be replaced by cold science.

SOLUTION

The writer claims that all false beliefs need not be replaced by cold science - **because the world would lose some of its interest and variety.**

English Workshop | Q 4. (a) | Page 99

Make sentences of your own to show the difference in usage of the following Homophones.

- device _____
- devise _____

SOLUTION

- device - The computer is an electronic device.
- devise - Mr. Malhotra manages to devise a new strategy to fight the competition.

English Workshop | Q 4. (b) | Page 99

Make sentences of your own to show the difference in usage of the following Homophones.

- advice _____
- advise _____

SOLUTION

- advice - Myra also gave some helpful advice on fire prevention in the home.
- advise - The teachers advised him to take the test.

English Workshop | Q 4. (c) | Page 99

Make sentences of your own to show the difference in usage of the following Homophones.

- practice _____
- practise _____

SOLUTION

- practice - You need more practice.
- practise - You should practise more to get good marks.

English Workshop | Q 5 | Page 99

When a family member is very ill for long, the grandmother of the family urges everyone to send for a person who claims he can cure victims of black magic. Compose a dialogue with her, in which her granddaughter politely convinces her that she should not believe in such things.

SOLUTION

(The granddaughter is calmly speaking to her worried grandmother as they sit near the patient's bed.)

Grandmother:	Why won't you people listen to me? Somebody, please go get the witch doctor from the next village. This child has been ill for far too long. Medicines won't help her anymore, only magic can.
Granddaughter:	Grandma, Meera is also my little sister and I am equally worried about her health. She is down with viral fever. The doctors have assured us that she will fully recover in a few more days.
Grandmother:	What nonsense is this? The child has been ill for the past seven days now. The medicines have been completely ineffective. The witch doctor is the last resort. Please call him immediately. You will see she will get better.
Granddaughter :	Grandma, that witch doctor is well known to fool people into believing his lies and stealing them of their money. When people are emotionally disturbed, they don't see sense and fall into the evil clutches of black magic and superstitions.

Grandmother:	But I only want her to get better. I can't see her like this. I would take all her sufferings away if I could.
Granddaughter:	Grandma, you must remain calm. The doctors have promised us that the fever will go away in a few more days and she will be back on her feet in no time.
Grandmother:	That is the problem dear. I cannot see her like this any longer.
Granddaughter:	Grandma, you are such a broadminded woman, in spite of being illiterate yourself you made sure that all of your children became well educated and progressed in life.
Grandmother:	(Nodding sadly) Yes, dear.
Granddaughter:	But what is the point of education if we still believe in superstition and are unable to think rationally? Please be calm Grandma and get some rest. I will sit next to Meera until then. You can see all of us are equally tensed about her. She will be fine, please don't worry.
Grandmother:	Yes, dear, I am so sorry for my hysterical behaviour. I guess I panicked unnecessarily. I'll just go lie down a little. Please let me know if you need anything. I'll be in the next room. I love you, Angel.
Granddaughter:	Yes, Grandma. Please go and sleep. You will definitely feel better. I love you too. (The Grandmother goes to sleep in the next room while the granddaughter continues to sit next to the patient.)

English Workshop | Q 6 | Page 99

List the various ways of avoiding the errors mentioned in the passage.

SOLUTION

The various ways of avoiding error mentioned in the passage are:

1. Observation: make the observation yourself. Thinking that you know when in fact you don't is a fatal mistake.
2. If an opinion contrary to your own makes you angry, that is a sign that you are subconsciously aware of having no good reason for thinking as you do. Whenever you find yourself getting angry about a difference of opinion, be on your guard; you will probably find, on examination, that your belief is going beyond what the evidence warrants.
3. Traveling is a good way of ridding oneself of certain kinds of dogmatism by becoming aware of opinions held in social circles different from one's own. It is also very profitable in diminishing the intensity of insular prejudice.
4. Imagine an argument with a person having a different bias. You may grow less dogmatic and cocksure through realizing the possible reasonableness of a hypothetical opponent.
5. Be very wary of opinions that flatter your self-esteem.

6. Other passions (strong emotions) besides self - esteem are common sources of error. We often make mistakes when we are overwhelmed by emotions.
7. Fear is the most common source of error. There are two ways of avoiding fear: one is by persuading ourselves that we are immune from disaster, and the other is by the practice of sheer courage. Poltroons are more prone to cruelty and superstition than brave men.

English Workshop | Q 7. (a) | Page 99

Answer the following question :

If an opinion contrary to your own makes you angry, what does it indicate?

SOLUTION

If an opinion contrary to your own makes you angry, that is a sign that you are subconsciously aware of having no good reason for thinking as you do.

English Workshop | Q 7. (b) | Page 99

Answer the following question :

What are the most savage controversies about?

SOLUTION

The most savage controversies are those about matters as to which there is no good evidence either way. So whenever we find ourselves getting angry about a difference of opinion, be on our guard; we will probably find, on examination, that your belief is going beyond what the evidence warrants.

English Workshop | Q 7. (c) | Page 99

Answer the following question :

What are the benefits of travel?

SOLUTION

Traveling is a good way of ridding oneself of certain kinds of dogmatism by becoming aware of opinions held in social circles different from one's own. It is also very profitable in diminishing the intensity of insular prejudice.

English Workshop | Q 7. (d) | Page 99

Answer the following question :

Is the influence of foreign customs always beneficial?

SOLUTION

The influence of foreign customs is not always beneficial. In the seventeenth century, when the Manchus conquered China, it was the custom among the Chinese for the woman to have small feet, and among the Manchus, for the men to wear pigtails. Instead of each dropping their own foolish custom, they each adopted the foolish

custom of the other, and the Chinese continued to wear pigtails until they shook off the dominion of the Manchus in the revolution of 1911.

English Workshop | Q 7. (e) | Page 99

Answer the following question :

What are the advantages of an imaginary argument with a person having a different bias?

SOLUTION

Having an imaginary argument with a person having a different bias has only one advantage, as compared with the actual conversation with opponents; this one advantage is that the method is not subject to the same limitations of time and space.

English Workshop | Q 7. (f) | Page 99

Answer the following question :

Why should one be wary of opinions that flatter one's self-esteem?

SOLUTION

One should be very wary of opinions that flatter one's self-esteem. Both men and women, nine times out of ten, are firmly convinced of the superior excellence of their own sex. There is abundant evidence on both sides. For example, if you are a man, you can point out that most poets and men of science are male; if you are a woman, you can retort that so are most criminals. The question is inherently insoluble, but self-esteem conceals this from most people.

English Workshop | Q 7. (g) | Page 99

Answer the following question :

How does fear lead us to error?

SOLUTION

Fear is the most important source of error. It sometimes operates directly, by inventing rumours of disaster in wartime, or by imagining objects of terror, such as ghosts; sometimes it operates indirectly, by creating belief in something comforting, such as the elixir of life, or heaven for ourselves and hell for our enemies.

English Workshop | Q 7. (h) | Page 99

Answer the following question :

What are the two ways of avoiding fear?

SOLUTION

There are two ways of avoiding fear: one is by persuading ourselves that we are immune from disaster, and the other is by the practice of sheer courage. The latter is difficult, and to everybody becomes impossible at a certain point. The former has, therefore, always been more popular.

English Workshop | Q 8 | Page 99

What is the meaning of 'intellectual rubbish'?

SOLUTION

The writer uses the phrase "intellectual rubbish" to describe all false beliefs, baseless opinions, superstitions of various kinds. He highlights the obscurantist attitude of people which stops mankind from walking on the path of knowledge and wisdom. He feels this 'intellectual rubbish' is the result of an illogical and unreasonable view of things in general. People follow certain beliefs, ideas, customs, and rituals without inquiring about their validity. In actual fact, many of these beliefs and customs lead to evil and suffering in the world. The writer observes that human rationality is nowhere to be found. The human mind is lacking in common sense and driven by dogmatism, pride, and fear. He finds cruelty, superstition, oppression, and cruelty to be on the rise. He gives us plenty of solid examples to prove his thesis in this lesson.

English Workshop | Q 9 | Page 99

Find the opposites of the following :

cautious -	_____
dogmatic -	_____
contrary -	_____
savage -	_____
beneficial -	_____
reasonable -	_____
hypothetical -	_____
cruelty -	_____
immune -	_____

SOLUTION

cautious -	<u>reckless</u>
dogmatic -	<u>open-minded</u>
contrary -	<u>agreeable</u>
savage -	<u>calm</u>
beneficial -	<u>worthless</u>
reasonable -	<u>irrational</u>
hypothetical -	<u>actual</u>

cruelty -	<u>compassion</u>
immune -	<u>susceptible</u>

English Workshop | Q 10 | Page 99

Write an imaginary dialogue contesting opposite views on a topic of your choice, e.g., 'Girls should learn to do all the housework and not boys.'

SOLUTION

(Two housewives Manisha and Arpita are debating whether Girls should learn to do all the housework or not.)

Manisha:	Hello Arpita, you seem a little worried. What is it that is bothering you?
Arpita:	Yes, dear, I am worried about my daughter Tara.
Manisha:	But why are you worried about Tara. She is such a special and sweet child. She is so brilliant in her academics. She will be a doctor in two more years. You should be so proud of her.
Arpita:	I know she is a great kid and I am very proud of her but the other day while we were in the kitchen I insisted that she also learned cooking as it would help her after marriage when she goes to live with her husband and his family. She simply refused and said she would rather have her husband do the cooking for her.
Manisha:	She must have said that jokingly, besides your daughter is studying to be a doctor and not a cook or a servant. Today women are becoming fiercely independent. They are not content being housewives and mothers. They have bigger and more important roles to play in society.
Arpita:	But we are Indian women, serving the other members of the family should come naturally to us. Who will look after the child if not the mother? Who will tend to the needs of the family if not the woman?
Manisha:	A woman can still love and care for her family without being a housewife. Besides, why should girls do all the housework, why not boys? Why can't men and women be equal? Tara may have said it jokingly but why can't her future husband do the cooking for her. Do you want your daughter to be a wife to a husband or a slave to a cruel master?
Arpita:	I understand dear but I still can't stop worrying about her future as I am her mother. You know how prejudiced this society is against women.

Manisha:	We cannot let our children live in the shadow of fear and slavery that has probably engulfed us already. I always tell my own son Virat to treat girls with adulation and respect, to see them as his equals. If a woman decides to work and a man decides to do household work, there is absolutely nothing embarrassing or wrong about it.
Arpita:	You are so right Arpita. I guess I am worrying unnecessarily. My daughter is my pride and by God's grace, she will do very well in life, wherever she goes, whatever she does. I shouldn't bother myself with such stupid thoughts.
Manisha:	Exactly, you are simply stressed out. Come, it's time for our favourite show. I'll get some Snacks.
Arpita:	(smiling) Yes dear, let's watch some T.V. (They arrange some snacks and start watching their favourite T.V. Show.)