

ENGLISH IN COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS

For almost all competitive examinations the syllabi is more or less same and of similar standard which a 10+2, and of course, a graduate level student should be familiar with. The format of questions may differ from examination to examination, but the content is more or less same for all competitions.

The Test of English Language for the afore-mentioned examinations, is not designed to evaluate your knowledge of English literature. It usually covers 'General English' of the 10 + 2 standard. The questions are mostly multiple-choice Objective-type questions but in some examinations descriptive type questions are also asked.

Your comprehension of English language is tested through objective-type questions on grammar, vocabulary, sentence correction, synonyms, antonyms, idioms and phrases and comprehension passages. As far as grammar is concerned, you are not required to learn the glossary of complicated grammatical jargons, but should have the basic knowledge of word usages, matching of subject and verbs, correct usage of tenses and grammatically correct sentences acceptable in standard written communication.

However, you will find there are certain examinations, especially those of MBA Entrance Examinations, which will have separate section on 'Test of English language' or 'Verbal Ability Section' and 'Test of Comprehension Ability' or 'Reading Comprehension (RC) Sections'.

THE SYLLABI OF VARIOUS COMPETITIVE EXAMINATIONS FOR TEST OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE & COMPREHENSION ABILITY

The data provided below is based on either syllabi mention by the respective test-conducting authorities, or based on memory and self-analysis of the author. The purpose of providing this information is to give the students an insight into formats of different examinations held in recent years. However, the author suggests that students should refer to this analysis just to realize that different type of questions have different significance in different examinations. These formats are not fixed and there may be changes with-in sections or in the overall format of papers. Some of the current syllabi of such examinations are given below in order to help you prepare for the competitive examination you intend to take:

SSC ASSISTANTS' GRADE (PRELIM) EXAMINATION

Paper of Language Comprehension (a) *General English* In addition to the testing of the candidate's understanding of the English language and its correct usage, his writing ability would also be tested. (b) *Communicative or writing skills* In addition to the testing of candidate's ability to understand correct English language, his comprehension and writing ability would also be tested, along with vocabulary and correct usage of words and sentences.

DIVISIONAL ACCOUNTANTS/AUDITORS/UPPER DIVISION CLERKS, ETC. EXAMINATION CONDUCTED BY STAFF SELECTION COMMISSION (SSC)

Paper on Comprehension and Writing Ability of English Questions will be designed to test the candidate's understanding and knowledge of the English language, its vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure, synonyms and antonyms, etc. There will also be questions on comprehension of passages.

PROBATIONARY OFFICERS/DEV. OFFICERS EXAMS

Various banks have started conducting their own tests to recruit Probationary Officers for their cadres. However, there is a marked similarity in the format of the question papers in recent times. The similar formats are there for tests for Development Officers of NABARD (Grade A) or RBI (Grade B) Officers.

Test of English Language For the test conducted for the recruitment of Probationary Officers, the syllabus for English language test generally comprise: grammar, vocabulary, sentence completion, synonyms, antonyms, comprehension of a passage, etc. The format for testing these parameters differ from examination to examination but in most cases cover these topics only. majority of the formats has 50 Questions, test taker may surprise you with a 75 or 100 questions section of Test of English.

NATIONAL DEFENCE ACADEMY AND NAVAL ACADEMY EXAMINATION (NDA/NA)

The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) holds competitive examination for admission to the Army, Navy and Air Force wings of the NDA. ***Test of English Language*** This paper is designed to test the candidate's understanding of English and workman like use of words. The syllabus covers various aspects like grammar and usage, vocabulary, comprehension and cohesion in the extended text to test the candidate's proficiency in English. All questions will be of multiple-choice, objective type and the candidate is required to choose appropriate responses from the given alternatives.

COMBINED DEFENCE SERVICES EXAMINATION (CDS)

The Combined Defence Services Examination (CDS) is conducted by the UPSC. ***Test of English Ability*** A standard of degree level English language is required for this paper. The test contains 120 MCQs on comprehension, sentence completion /improvement, vocabulary, antonyms, synonyms, one-word substitutes, idioms/phrases & error detection etc.

POLICE SUB-INSPECTORS EXAMINATION

This examination is conducted by the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) for recruitment of: (a) Sub-Inspectors (Executive); (b) Sub-Inspectors of Police in CBI; (c) Sub-Inspectors of Indo-Tibetan Border Police; (d) Sub-Inspectors or Platoon Commanders in BSF; (e) Sub-Inspectors in Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF); (f) Sub-Inspectors in Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). Among others, there is a paper of Test of English Language in two parts, each containing 100 questions, viz: ***Part A—Language Comprehension (Objective-type)*** This paper is designed to test the candidate's understanding and knowledge of English language, its comprehension, vocabulary (synonyms and antonyms), spelling and grammar, etc.; ***Part B—Writing Ability Test*** Questions will be deigned to test the candidate's understanding and knowledge of the English language, its vocabulary, grammar, sentence completion, sentence structure, synonyms, antonyms, phrases and idiomatic use of words, etc. There may be questions on paragraph writing and or precis writing.

Both sections cover all the topics given in this book and the format of questions are given to familiarise yourself with the type of questions you are likely to face in your examination.

CLERICAL GRADE EXAMINATIONS

The Banking Service Recruitment Board conducts competitive examination for recruitment for clerical cadre posts in branches/offices of the public sector banks for various states. The standard and format of all these tests are more or less similar for every state BSRB examination.

Test of English Language/English Ability The Test of English language paper consists of following types of questions: (i) Spotting the Errors; (ii) Antonyms and Synonyms; (iii) Filling in the blanks; (iv) Use of prepositions, idioms/phrases; (v) Test of spellings; (vi) Re-arranging jumbled up sentences ; (vii) Comprehension of passage and answering questions based on the passage

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (MBA)

In addition to the four Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and the All India Management Association (AIMA) which conduct the Common Admission Tests (CAT) and Management Aptitude Tests (MAT), certain universities and management institutes also conduct entrance examination for admission. Some of very popular exams are SNAP, NMAT, JMET, XAT, FMS, IIFT, ATMA, IRMA etc. In all these tests there is a paper of Test of English Language or Communication skills. Reading Comprehension Tests holds a significant position in such examinations and you will almost always find a separate RC section whose difficulty level ha become trademark for certain examinations. For exaple, the RC section in CAT is very difficult while RC paragraphs in XAT are very length.

The syllabi for all these tests can collectively be summarized as:

English Language Section This is generally known as *Verbal Ability* test and comprises:

- (a) Sentence improvement/sentence completion
- (b) Vocabulary tests: synonyms, antonyms, one-word substitutes, idioms/phrases, words confused and misused
- (c) Error detection and word usages
- (d) Spellings and word meanings
- (e) Word analogies

Comprehension Ability Section This is generally known as *RC Section* and comprises comprehension passages and questions based on the given passages. Generally, you will find time/question allocated for this section is more than in other section. It is because ample time is provided to read and comprehend the passages before attempting the questions. Needless to say, the two things are important to score high in this section: (i) reading the passage quickly; (ii) comprehending the message/issue discussed in the clearly.

VARIOUS OTHER ADMISSION AND RECRUITMENT EXAMINATIONS

In addition to the above mentioned examinations, there are many more examinations which has 'Test of English' as a core section. We have provided a table in which many such examinations and their respective formats as per recent papers are detailed. Some of these important examinations are:

- Engineering Entrance Examination
- Statistical Investigators Examination
- New India Assurance Examination
- LIC AAO Examination
- Assistant Commissioners of Provident Fund Examination
- Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) Social Security Asst. Exam
- Hotel Management Entrance (JEE) Examination
- National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) Entrance (Design & Fashion) Exam
- National Talent Search Examination (NTSE)
- Law Entrance (LL.B.) Examination etc

We have also given original papers (memory based) of variety of examinations for you to have not only knowledge but also practice of such important exams.