

Canary in the coal mine: On the performance of India's core industrial sectors

Core sector data indicate **impending** growth **slowdowns**

The latest **data** on the performance of the core industrial sectors **show** the economy may be facing an industrial **uptick**, but questions about its **sustainability** remain. **Growth** in the Index of Core Industries **rose** to a series-high of 7.9% in September 2026, the second **consecutive** month of **accelerated** performance. Any such improvement is to be celebrated, but a deeper look at what is **driving** it is also **warranted**. The coal sector saw growth suddenly **shoot up** to 10.7% in September. The unexpected and unusual **nature** of this **rapid acceleration** can **be borne out** by the fact that the sector **contracted** by 1.1% over the longer April-September 2026 period. The **growth** in coal in September **was likely** a temporary **blip aided** by a statistical low base and, more importantly, pressure from power plant operators over rapidly **depleting** coal stocks **amid** the heat wave. The electricity sector grew 11.4% in September, **capping off** a half-year dominated by double-digit growth. This **surge** in electricity-related demand for coal **will likely wane**, especially since the **El Niño** factor that drove the heat wave will also **result in** a **milder** winter. The other sector that results in high coal usage, the steel sector, did accelerate in September, but not by enough to **sustain** the coal sector's September output. The **uptick** in steel **did**, however, result in a return to double-digit growth for the iron ore sector, which should **bode well** for the mining component of the larger Index of Industrial Production.

The **performance** of the crude oil, natural gas, and refinery products sectors also **highlights** the **fiscal** problems India faces. At a time when the crude oil and natural gas sectors have both contracted continuously since 2024, refinery output rose to 10.3% in September. This means that the refineries were increasingly processing expensive imported oil. India's oil **imports** in September **were** up 7% by volume but jumped 47% **in terms of** value due to the high price of oil. This is **set to** worsen. The **attacks** on Saudi Arabia's energy **infrastructure** **have** already pushed global oil prices above \$112 a barrel, almost a six-month high. The **reprieve** from the U.S. on **potential** tariffs linked to imports of Russian oil **provide** India a reliable source, but the days of discounts are long gone. It is the time of premium pricing, and each barrel imported is **eating into** India's foreign exchange reserves, which are also being used to **defend** the rupee. Cement and steel are the only **sustainably** growing core sectors, and those too are based on government infrastructure spending. At a time when industrial output is only temporarily **propped up**, the government's fiscal **space** is fast **shrinking**.

[Practice Exercise]

- Red/blue coloring of words in the sentence indicates subject verb relationship; where 'red' denotes 'subject' and 'blue' denotes 'verb'.

Vocabulary

1. **Canary** (noun) - indicator, warning, omen, sign, harbinger चेतावनी
2. **Impending** (adjective) - imminent, approaching, looming, forthcoming, oncoming आने वाला
3. **Slowdown** (noun) - decline, deceleration, downturn, slump, recession मंदी
4. **Uptick** (noun) - increase, rise, increment, surge, boost वृद्धि
5. **Sustainability** (noun) - viability, maintainability, durability, longevity, steadiness स्थिरता या टिकाऊपन
6. **Consecutive** (adjective) - successive, sequential, continuous, following, unbroken लगातार
7. **Drive** (verb) - propel, push, prompt, motivate, steer प्रेरित करना
8. **Warrant** (verb) - justify, necessitate, vindicate, require, validate उचित ठहराना
9. **Shoot up** (phrasal verb) - to increase rapidly and suddenly तेज़ी से बढ़ना
10. **Rapid** (adjective) - swift, fast, quick, speedy, brisk तेज़
11. **Acceleration** (noun) - increase, quickening, hastening, expediting, surge गति वृद्धि
12. **Bear out** (phrasal verb) - to support or confirm a story or explanation पुष्टि करना
13. **Contract** (verb) - shrink, decline, decrease, diminish, lessen सिकुड़ना
14. **Likely** (adverb) - probably, presumably, seemingly, apparently, doubtlessly संभवतः
15. **Blip** (noun) - deviation, anomaly, fluctuation, glitch, interruption मामूली विचलन
16. **Aid** (verb) - help, assist, support, facilitate, promote सहायता करना
17. **Deplete** (verb) - exhaust, consume, diminish, drain, empty कम करना
18. **Amid** (preposition) - among, amidst, during, amongst, midway के बीच
19. **Cap off** (phrasal verb) - to finish or complete an experience or period of time in a particular way समाप्त करना
20. **Surge** (noun) - rise, increase, escalation, upsurge, boost वृद्धि
21. **Wane** (verb) - decrease, decline, diminish, fade, dwindle कम होना
22. **El niño** (noun) - a climate pattern that describes the unusual warming of surface waters in the eastern tropical pacific ocean एल नीनो (एक जलवायु पैटर्न)
23. **Result in** (phrasal verb) - to cause a particular situation to happen के परिणामस्वरूप होना
24. **Mild** (adjective) - gentle, moderate, light, soft, temperate हल्का
25. **Sustain** (verb) - maintain, support, preserve, continue, uphold बनाए रखना
26. **Bode well** (phrase) - to be a sign of a good outcome or future अच्छा संकेत होना
27. **Highlight** (verb) - emphasize, underline, stress, accentuate, spotlight उजागर करना
28. **Fiscal** (adjective) - financial, economic, monetary, budgetary, pecuniary राजकोषीय

29. **In terms of** (phrase) - with regard to the particular aspect or subject specified के संदर्भ में
30. **Set to** (phrasal verb) - ready or likely to do something तैयार होना या होने वाला
31. **Infrastructure** (noun) - framework, base, foundation, setup, architecture बुनियादी ढांचा
32. **Reprieve** (noun) - relief, respite, delay, suspension, pardon राहत
33. **Potential** (adjective) - possible, likely, prospective, probable, future संभावित
34. **Eat into** (phrasal verb) - to use or take away a large part of something valuable such as money or time कम करना (या खर्च करना)
35. **Defend** (verb) - protect, guard, secure, shield, safeguard बचाव करना
36. **Sustainably** (adverb) - viably, steadily, continuously, maintainably, durably स्थायी रूप से
37. **Prop up** (phrasal verb) - to support something physically, financially, or politically सहारा देना
38. **Space** (noun) - room, margin, capacity, leeway, scope गुंजाइश
39. **Shrink** (verb) - decrease, diminish, contract, reduce, dwindle सिकुड़ना

Summary of the Editorial

1. The latest core sector data suggest an industrial uptick, but its sustainability is questionable.
2. The Index of Core Industries grew 7.9% in September 2026, a series high and the second consecutive month of accelerated performance.
3. Coal growth suddenly jumped to 10.7% in September, even though the sector contracted 1.1% over the April-September 2026 period.
4. This coal spike was likely a temporary blip, helped by a statistical low base and pressure from power plant operators over rapidly depleting coal stocks during the heat wave.
5. The electricity sector grew 11.4% in September, capping a half-year of mostly double-digit growth.
6. This power-driven demand for coal will likely wane, as the El Niño factor behind the heat wave will also bring a milder winter.
7. Steel, the other big coal consumer, accelerated in September but not enough to sustain coal output at the September level.
8. The steel uptick did push iron ore back to double-digit growth, which bodes well for the mining component of the Index of Industrial Production.
9. Crude oil and natural gas output have contracted continuously since 2024, yet refinery output rose 10.3% in September, meaning refineries are processing more expensive imported oil.
10. India's oil imports in September rose 7% by volume but 47% by value because of high oil prices.
11. The situation is set to worsen, as attacks on Saudi Arabia's energy infrastructure have pushed global oil prices above \$112 a barrel, nearly a six-month high.
12. The U.S. reprieve on potential tariffs tied to Russian oil imports gives India a reliable source, but the era of discounted Russian crude is over and premium pricing now prevails.
13. Every barrel imported eats into India's foreign exchange reserves, which are also being used to defend the rupee.
14. Cement and steel are the only sustainably growing core sectors, and even their growth depends on government infrastructure spending.
15. With industrial output only temporarily propped up, the government's fiscal space is shrinking fast.

Practice Exercise: SSC Pattern Based

1. **Why does the author characterize the September coal output expansion as an ephemeral surge?** [Editorial Page]
 - A. The temporary rebound was driven by low base effects and emergency utility inventory replenishment.
 - B. The broader mining index contracted sharply due to extended structural declines across steel manufacturing.
 - C. The domestic power generation facilities ceased operating thermal units during prolonged severe heat conditions.
 - D. The central government diverted domestic thermal fuels to sustain imported petroleum refining production units.
2. **According to the passage, what major factor supported double-digit growth in the iron ore sector?**
 - A. The unexpected surge in thermal coal production prompted by power plant operator pressures
 - B. The continuous contraction recorded across domestic crude petroleum and natural gas exploration projects
 - C. The acceleration observed within the domestic steel industry during the month of September
 - D. The infrastructure subsidies granted by foreign governments to offset rising international maritime costs
3. **What does the author signify by observing that "the days of discounts are long gone"?**
 - A. Refineries refuse to purchase domestic crude because imported feedstocks offer subsidies.
 - B. State infrastructure agencies must purchase steel without accessing statutory budget allocations.
 - C. Power plant operators can no longer obtain domestic coal through contracts.
 - D. Russian crude purchases now command market premiums, depleting foreign exchange reserves.
4. **Which phrase best summarizes the core theme of the passage?**
 - A. Core sector volatility and fiscal strains beneath transient industrial growth
 - B. Impact of El Niño phenomena on domestic agricultural commodity pricing
 - C. Structural adjustments within public sector petroleum refining corporate entities
 - D. Expansion of steel manufacturing capacities through private infrastructure investments
5. **In the passage, the word "WANE" is used in the context of electricity-related demand for coal. Which of the following is the most appropriate SYNONYM for "WANE" in this context?**
 - A. Attenuate
 - B. Precipitate
 - C. Proliferate
 - D. Recalibrate
6. **Choose the option with the correct spelling.**
 - A. Surviellance
 - B. Survellance
 - C. Surveillance
 - D. Surveillance

7. Select the option that best expresses the meaning of the given idiom.

In the offing

- A. To have a lot of money or financial resources
- B. Working or ready to be used in a proper position
- C. To add more details or information to a basic plan
- D. Likely to happen or appear soon

8. Choose the antonym of 'meticulous'.

- A. Negligent
- B. Thorough
- C. Precise
- D. Careful

9. Select the option that can be used as a one-word substitute for the given group of words.

The scientific study of plants and their structure

- A. Plantation
- B. Environment
- C. Biology
- D. Botany

10. Select the synonym of Insolent.

- A. Disrespectful
- B. Gentle
- C. Polite
- D. Courteous

11. From the alternatives given below, select the correct passive voice of the following sentence.

Many people in this city rush to their offices due to the fear that their salaries will be deducted.

- A. Their offices were rushed to in this city due to the fear that their salaries will be deducted.
- B. Their offices were rushed to by many people in this city due to the fear that their salaries be deducted.
- C. Their offices were rushed by many people in this city due to the fear that their salaries will be deducted.
- D. Their offices were rushed to by many people in this city due to the fear that their salaries will be deducted.

12. Choose the option that is the most appropriate conversion of the following sentence into Direct Speech.

She exclaimed that she couldn't believe her eyes when she saw the result.

- A. She exclaimed, "I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the result!"
- B. She said, "I can't believe my eyes when I saw the result!"
- C. She said, "I could not believe my eyes when I see the result!"
- D. She exclaimed, "Could I not believe my eyes when I saw the result!"

13. The following sentence has two blanks. Choose the most suitable set of prepositions from the given options to fill in the blanks and complete the sentence meaningfully

He excelled ____ academics and stood out ____ his remarkable leadership skills.

- A. in, for
- B. at, in

- C. with, of
D. by, at
- 14. Direction: Rearrange the following four sentences (1, 2, 3, and 4) in the proper sequence to form a meaningful, logical, and coherent paragraph.**
1. The North Pennines has some of the darkest skies in the country, along with the highest number of official Dark Skies discovery sites in the UK – 16 – making the region’s stargazing festival one of the best.
 2. Choose from a family astronomy event at Grassholme Observatory, a dark skies stroll or stargazing on Alston Moor.
 3. Even a beginner stargazer will find it easy to navigate an autumn night sky, when the stars are at their clearest and constellations such as Orion’s Belt and the Plough flicker and gleam with an iridescent glow.
 4. All events need to be booked in advance.
- A. 1-3-2-4
B. 3-2-1-4
C. 3-1-2-4
D. 1-2-3-4
- 15. Select the most appropriate option to replace the underlined segment in the given sentence.**
Shyama does not laugh, nor she smiles
- A. nor she does smile
B. she does smile
C. or she smile does
D. nor does she smile
- 16. Find the antonym of ‘Impute’.**
- A. Support
B. Energetic
C. Cheerful
D. Lively
- 17. Identify the incorrect sentence.**
- A. Mitali's hair is long and black.
B. Either of the alternatives seems to present major difficulties.
C. One of the cars in the garage is fifty years old.
D. Sharon has shared her devastating grief after the sudden death of her 57-year-old brother.
- 18. Select the synonym of Recalcitrant.**
- A. Loyal
B. Disobedient
C. Submissive
D. Supportive
- 19. Direction: Rearrange the following four sentences (P, Q, R, and S) in the proper sequence to form a meaningful, logical, and coherent paragraph.**
- P. There are autism-friendly sessions and free carers’ tickets and an accessibility bus for those with mobility issues.

Q. The trail is a mystical, atmospheric wander through jewel-hued woodland, with misbehaving clocks, time-themed installations and immersive soundscapes creating the sense of a dreamlike world.

R. This year marks a quarter of a century since the first Enchanted Forest, and the theme taps into the legend: Stop the Clock: The 25th Hour.

S. Legend has it that Faskally Forest – the Pitlochry location of Scotland’s most famous sound and light show – steals an hour from time itself every 25 years.

A. S-R-Q-P

B. R-S-Q-P

C. S-Q-R-P

D. Q-S-R-P

20. A sentence has been given with a blank to be filled with an appropriate word. Choose the correct alternative.

When there are negative and toxic thoughts _____ your mind, you can never think Positively

A. shouting

B. clouding

C. plotting

D. persuading

Directions: Read the cloze passage and answer the following questions:

On September 13, a quiet crowd of readers and researchers (1)___ to attend the first ever public launch of Cities in Fiction at Champaca Bookstore. This online archival project, currently focused on India, helps readers find fictional works through locating them on the world map. Cities in Fiction, founded by Apoorva Saini and Divya Ravindranath, is an online literary archive to find, recognise and (2)___ real world places mentioned in Indian literature. Categorising them through State, city or geography, it ultimately links users to the title of the book and the author's name.

Operating online for the past three years, they opened on a public stage this week. The launch event, titled 'Cities in Fiction: A Database of Literary Landscapes' saw co-founder Apoorva Saini and educator Vijeta Kumar discuss the archive. Fellow co-founder Divya Ravindranath was present in the audience.

From Jeet Thayil's Mumbai and Vivek Shanbagh's Bengaluru, to Ruskin Bond's Dehradun and Arundhati Roy's Ayemenem, this archive lists nearly 700 books categorised on places that works of literature are based on. This includes rural and urban spaces across Indian States and a few cities abroad, as well. The list also included RK Narayan's Malgudi and Khushwant Singh's Mano Majra among others listed under 'Fictional Cities'.

Coming from a literature background, Apoorva says this project was both personal and professional. After multiple discussions with Divya, they decided to fulfill the need of a database at the "(4) intersection of literature and cities". What started in September 2023 with about a hundred books in their database, now (3)___ nearly 700 books, (5) contributed by readers, researchers and authors from India and abroad.

21. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (1):

A. gathered

B. congregate

C. disbanded

D. quorum

22. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (2):

A. obfuscate

B. cartography

C. pinpoint

D. meticulously

23. Select the most appropriate option to fill in blank (3):

A. amounts

B. encompass

C. diminishes

D. comprises

24. The word "intersection" (4) in the passage is closest in meaning to:

A. periphery

B. confluence

C. boulevard

D. dichotomy

25. Select the word that is the most appropriate antonym of "contributed" (5) as used in the passage:

A. bestowed

B. proffered

C. withheld

D. furnished

Answers

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

[Practice Exercise]

Explanations

1. A) **The temporary rebound was driven by low base effects and emergency utility inventory replenishment.**

passage: "The growth in coal in September was likely a temporary blip aided by a statistical low base and, more importantly, pressure from power plant operators over rapidly depleting coal stocks amid the heat wave."---The author says coal growth jumped to 10.7% in September, but over April to September the sector actually shrank by 1.1%. The jump came from two short-term reasons. First, the earlier numbers were low, so growth looked big. Second, power plants rushed to refill their falling coal stocks during the heat wave. Both reasons will fade, so the surge is short-lived. This matches option A.

- Option B: Incorrect. The option says the mining index fell sharply because steel declined, but the passage says steel accelerated in September and iron ore returned to double-digit growth, which is good for mining, hence incorrect.
- Option C: Incorrect. The option says power plants stopped running thermal units during the heat, but the passage says power plant operators pressed for more coal because their stocks were depleting, and electricity grew 11.4%, hence incorrect.
- Option D: Incorrect. The option says the government diverted domestic coal to support petroleum refining, but the passage never says this. It says refinery output rose because refineries processed expensive imported oil, hence incorrect.

2. C) **The acceleration observed within the domestic steel industry during the month of September.**

passage: "The uptick in steel did, however, result in a return to double-digit growth for the iron ore sector, which should bode well for the mining component of the larger Index of Industrial Production."---The passage says steel production sped up in September. Steel needs iron ore, so more steel meant more demand for iron ore. This pushed iron ore back to double-digit growth. This matches option C.

- Option A: Incorrect. The option says the coal surge from power plant pressure supported iron ore, but the passage says the coal surge was a temporary blip, and the iron ore growth came from the uptick in steel, hence incorrect.
- Option B: Incorrect. The option says falling crude oil and natural gas exploration supported iron ore, but the passage mentions these sectors only to show India's fiscal problems, and it never links them to iron ore, hence incorrect.
- Option D: Incorrect. The option says foreign governments gave infrastructure subsidies to offset shipping costs, but the passage never mentions any foreign subsidies. It says cement and steel growth rests on India's own government infrastructure spending, hence incorrect.

3. D) **Russian crude purchases now command market premiums, depleting foreign exchange reserves.**

passage: "The reprieve from the U.S. on potential tariffs linked to imports of Russian oil provide India a reliable source, but the days of discounts are long gone. It is the time of premium pricing, and each barrel imported is eating into India's foreign exchange reserves, which are also being used to defend the rupee."----Earlier, India could buy Russian oil at a discount. The author says those cheap deals are over. Now oil comes at a premium price, and every barrel imported uses up more of India's foreign exchange reserves. This matches option D.

- Option A: Incorrect. The option says refineries refuse domestic crude because imported oil gives subsidies, but the passage says domestic crude output has been falling and imported oil is expensive, not subsidised, hence incorrect.
- Option B: Incorrect. The option says government agencies must buy steel without budget allocations, but the passage says cement and steel growth rests on government infrastructure spending, and the "discounts" line is about oil, hence incorrect.
- Option C: Incorrect. The option says power plants can no longer get domestic coal through contracts, but the passage never says this. The "discounts" line is about imported oil prices, not coal contracts, hence incorrect.

4. A) Core sector volatility and fiscal strains beneath transient industrial growth

passage: "At a time when industrial output is only temporarily propped up, the government's fiscal space is fast shrinking." Also: "The latest data on the performance of the core industrial sectors show the economy may be facing an industrial uptick, but questions about its sustainability remain."---The passage says core sector growth hit a high of 7.9%, but the growth is not lasting. Coal jumped only for a short time, and electricity demand will fade. Oil imports are costing much more, which is draining foreign exchange reserves and shrinking the government's fiscal space. So the main idea is short-lived growth with money pressure underneath. This matches option (a).

- Option (B): Incorrect. The option says the passage is about El Niño's effect on farm commodity prices, but the passage mentions El Niño only once, to explain the heat wave and a milder winter that will reduce coal demand, and it never discusses farm prices, hence incorrect.
- Option (C): Incorrect. The option says the passage is about restructuring of public sector refining companies, but the passage only says refinery output rose by processing costly imported oil, and it never mentions any restructuring of companies, hence incorrect.
- Option (D): Incorrect. The option says the passage is about expanding steel capacity through private investment, but the passage says steel and cement growth rests on government infrastructure spending, and it never talks about capacity expansion or private investment, hence incorrect.

5. A) Attenuate

The most appropriate synonym for "WANE" in this context is A) Attenuate.

Wane means to decrease in vigor, power, or size; to become weaker or diminish. The passage notes that the demand "will likely wane" due to a milder winter, meaning it will weaken or decrease.

Attenuate means to weaken, reduce, or lessen in force, amount, or value, making it the correct synonym.

- B) Precipitate means to cause something to happen suddenly or prematurely.
 C) Proliferate means to increase rapidly in numbers; to multiply.
 D) Recalibrate means to adjust or change something again, usually to match a new standard.
6. C) The correct spelling is '**Surveillance**' which means "close observation, especially of a suspected person" निगरानी।
7. D) **In the offing** (idiom) – likely to happen or appear soon. (जल्द ही होने वाला)
8. A) **Meticulous** (adjective) – Showing great attention to detail; very careful and precise. सावधान, बारीकी से ध्यान देने वाला
 Antonym: **Negligent** (adjective) – Failing to take proper care; careless. लापरवाह
- **Thorough** (adjective) – Complete and careful; similar in meaning to meticulous, not its antonym. पूर्ण, सम्पूर्ण
 - **Precise** (adjective) – Exact and accurate; also similar to meticulous, not an antonym. सटीक
 - **Careful** (adjective) – Taking caution; synonymous with meticulous, not its antonym. सावधान
9. D) **Botany** (noun) – The scientific study of plants and their structure. वनस्पति विज्ञान
- **Environment** (noun) – the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives or operates. पर्यावरण
 - **Plantation** (noun) – a large farm or estate on which crops such as coffee, sugar, and tobacco are cultivated. बागान
 - **Biology** (noun) – the study of living organisms, divided into many specialized fields that cover their morphology, physiology, anatomy, behavior, origin, and distribution. जीवविज्ञान
10. A) **Insolent** (adjective) – Rude, impudent, arrogant, ill-mannered उदंड / बदतमीज़
 Synonym: **Disrespectful** (adjective) – Showing lack of respect, rude, discourteous अपमानजनक / असम्मानजनक
Gentle (adjective) – Kind, mild, soft नम्र
Polite (adjective) – Courteous, well-mannered, respectful विनम्र
Courteous (adjective) – Civil, respectful, polite शिष्टाचारपूर्ण
11. D) Active वाक्य में 'rush to their offices' एक prepositional verb है, इसलिए Passive में Object 'Their offices' Subject बनता है और preposition 'to' verb के साथ बना रहता है (were rushed to)। Tense Simple Present होने के कारण सामान्यतः 'are rushed to' होना चाहिए, परंतु दिए गए विकल्पों में D सबसे उपयुक्त है क्योंकि इसमें 'to', agent 'by many people' और 'will be deducted' सभी सही हैं। Option A में agent छूट गया है, B में 'be deducted' गलत है और C में 'to' छूट गया है।
- 'rush to' is a prepositional verb, so in the passive the object 'Their offices' becomes the subject and 'to' stays with the verb (rushed to). Strictly, the Simple Present would give 'are rushed to', but among the options D is the most appropriate as it keeps 'to', the agent 'by many people' and 'will be deducted'. Option A omits the agent, B wrongly uses 'be deducted', and C omits 'to'.
12. A) Indirect Speech को Direct Speech में बदलते समय 'that' हटाकर Reported Speech को inverted commas में लिखा जाता है और exclamation (!) लगाया जाता है; Reporting Verb 'exclaimed' रह

सकता है। Pronouns: 'she' → 'I', 'her' → 'my', और past की घटना होने के कारण 'couldn't believe... saw' बना रहता है। सही उत्तर: She exclaimed, "I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the result!" Options B और C में Tense असंगत है, और D प्रश्नवाचक बन गया है।

- To change Indirect into Direct Speech, 'that' is removed, the reported speech is put within inverted commas and an exclamation mark is added; 'exclaimed' may be retained. Pronouns: 'she' → 'I', 'her' → 'my', and since it refers to a past event, 'couldn't believe... saw' remains. Hence: She exclaimed, "I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw the result!" Options B and C mix tenses, and D turns it into a question.

13. A) 'in' और 'for' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि "excel in" का अर्थ है किसी क्षेत्र/विषय में उत्कृष्ट होना, और "stand out for" का अर्थ है किसी गुण के कारण अलग पहचान बनाना; जैसे— She excels in mathematics and stands out for her honesty. अन्य options के prepositions इन verbs के साथ सही collocation नहीं बनाते।

- 'in' and 'for' should be used because "excel in" means to be outstanding in a field or subject, and "stand out for" means to be noticeable because of a quality; Like— She excels in mathematics and stands out for her honesty. The prepositions in the other options do not collocate with these verbs.

14. C) 3-1-2-4

Explanation:

Hindi Explanation:

- Sentence 3 paragraph को open करेगा क्योंकि यह broader theme introduce करता है— autumn night sky में stars की clarity और beginner stargazers के लिए Orion's Belt और the Plough जैसी constellations को navigate करने की ease।
- Sentence 1 Sentence 3 को follow करेगा और 3-1 का direct connection बनाएगा। General stargazing setting के बाद Sentence 1 specific location पर shift होता है—North Pennines, जहाँ country के सबसे dark skies हैं और UK के सबसे अधिक 16 Dark Skies discovery sites होने के कारण यहाँ का stargazing festival best माना जाता है।
- Sentence 2 Sentence 1 के ठीक बाद आएगा और 1-2 का mandatory pair बनाएगा। Sentence 1 में "stargazing festival" का mention आने के बाद Sentence 2 visitor options provide करता है—Grassholme Observatory पर family astronomy event, dark skies stroll या Alston Moor पर stargazing।
- Sentence 4 Sentence 2 के बाद आकर paragraph को conclude करेगा। Sentence 2 में listed festival activities के context में Sentence 4 practical guideline देता है कि "All events" advance में book होने चाहिए।

English Explanation:

- Sentence 3 functions as the opening topic sentence, introducing the broad seasonal context of clear autumn skies and accessible celestial landmarks like Orion's Belt and the Plough.
- Sentence 1 follows Sentence 3, shifting from the general astronomical phenomenon to a prime geographic destination: the North Pennines, renowned for dark skies and its premier regional stargazing festival.

- Sentence 2 forms an essential mandatory pair (1-2) with Sentence 1, directly following the mention of the stargazing festival by listing concrete itinerary options, including Grassholme Observatory, dark skies strolls, and Alston Moor sessions.
 - Sentence 4 concludes the passage by offering vital logistical guidance, noting that all the individual activities outlined in Sentence 2 require advance booking.
15. D) 'nor does she smile' का प्रयोग होगा क्योंकि यहाँ 'nor' का प्रयोग Negative Sentence को जोड़ने के लिए किया गया है, और जब 'nor' का प्रयोग किया जाता है तो Helping Verb Subject के पहले आती है; जैसे— She does not sing, nor does she dance.
- 'nor does she smile' will be used because 'nor' is used to connect a negative sentence, and when 'nor' is used, the helping verb comes before the subject; Like— She does not sing, nor does she dance.
16. A) **Impute** (verb) – To attribute or ascribe something (especially blame or a crime) to someone. आरोपित करना / दोषारोपण करना
Antonym: **Support** (verb) – To give assistance or backing to; to hold up. समर्थन करना
Energetic (adjective) – Having or showing great energy or vitality. ऊर्जावान (adjective, unrelated to impute)
Cheerful (adjective) – Noticeably happy and optimistic. प्रसन्न (adjective, unrelated to impute)
Lively (adjective) – Full of life and energy; active. जीवंत (adjective, unrelated to impute)
17. B) 'Either' का प्रयोग केवल दो व्यक्तियों/वस्तुओं में से एक के लिए होता है। वाक्य में 'alternatives' की संख्या निश्चित नहीं है; दो से अधिक विकल्पों के लिए 'Any of the alternatives' का प्रयोग होना चाहिए; जैसे— Any of these five books will help you. अन्य तीनों वाक्य व्याकरणिक रूप से सही हैं ('hair' uncountable होने से 'is', 'One of...' के साथ singular verb 'is')।
- 'Either' is used for one of only two persons or things. As the number of 'alternatives' is not limited to two, 'Any of the alternatives' should be used for more than two; Like— Any of these five books will help you. The other three sentences are grammatically correct ('hair' is uncountable and takes 'is'; 'One of...' takes the singular 'is').
18. B) **Recalcitrant** (adjective) – Defiant, stubborn, uncooperative, resistant अवज्ञाकारी / हठी
Synonym: **Disobedient** (adjective) – Not obeying rules or authority, rebellious, unruly आज्ञा न मानने वाला
Loyal (adjective) – Faithful, devoted, trustworthy वफादार
Submissive (adjective) – Obedient, compliant, yielding विनम्र / अधीन
Supportive (adjective) – Helpful, encouraging, assisting सहयोगी
19. A) **S-R-Q-P**
Explanation:
Hindi Explanation:
- Sentence S paragraph को open करेगा क्योंकि यह foundational setting introduce करता है—Faskally Forest, Scotland का famous sound and light show, और हर 25 साल में time से एक घंटा चुराने से जुड़ी local legend।
 - Sentence R Sentence S के ठीक बाद आएगा और S-R का direct connection बनाएगा। Sentence S में "every 25 years" की legend के बाद, Sentence R बताता है कि this year इस event का "quarter of a century" (25 years) पूरा हो रहा है और इसकी theme इसी legend पर आधारित है: Stop the Clock: The 25th Hour।

- Sentence Q Sentence R को follow करेगा। Theme announce होने के बाद, Sentence Q visitor experience और trail को describe करता है—jewel-hued woodland, misbehaving clocks और immersive soundscapes।
- Sentence P Sentence Q के बाद आकर paragraph को conclude करेगा। Trail के experiential details के बाद Sentence P inclusive visitor arrangements (autism-friendly sessions, free carers' tickets, accessibility bus) की additional information provide करता है।

English Explanation:

- Sentence S opens the sequence as the primary topic sentence, introducing the geographical setting of Faskally Forest in Pitlochry, its famous sound and light show, and the folkloric premise of stealing an hour every 25 years.
- Sentence R forms an immediate mandatory pair (S-R) with Sentence S, directly connecting the 25-year legend to the current milestone—celebrating a quarter of a century with the theme Stop the Clock: The 25th Hour.
- Sentence Q follows Sentence R, shifting from the thematic framework to the sensory experience of the forest trail itself (jewel-hued woods, misbehaving clocks, immersive soundscapes).
- Sentence P concludes the paragraph by detailing practical and logistical provisions, highlighting accessibility features such as autism-friendly sessions, carers' passes, and dedicated transport.

20. B) **Clouding** का use होगा क्योंकि "clouding" का अर्थ होता है धुंधला करना या मन को परेशान करना। Sentence के context में नकारात्मक और विषैले विचार मन को धुंधला कर सकते हैं जिससे सकारात्मक सोचना मुश्किल हो जाता है, इसलिए 'clouding' यहाँ सही है। 'Shouting' का अर्थ है चिल्लाना, 'Plotting' का अर्थ है योजना बनाना और 'Persuading' का अर्थ है मनाना, जो इस context में सही नहीं हैं।

- Clouding' should be used because it means to make something less clear or transparent. In the context of the sentence, negative and toxic thoughts can cloud your mind, making it difficult to think positively, which makes 'clouding' the correct word. 'Shouting' refers to yelling, 'Plotting' means to secretly make plans, and 'Persuading' means convincing someone to do or believe something, which are not appropriate in this context.

21. A) **gathered**

Blank (1) needs a past-tense verb for what the crowd did on September 13 — came together in one place "to attend" the launch. a) gathered: means came together in one place, matching readers and researchers arriving at Champaca Bookstore for the launch. b) congregate: means to come together, close in meaning, but violating the requirement since the event happened "On September 13," so the sentence needs the past tense, "congregated." c) disbanded: means broke up and stopped acting as a group, violating the requirement since a group that breaks apart cannot be coming together "to attend" an event. d) quorum: is a noun meaning the minimum number of members needed for a meeting to go ahead, which suits an event, but violates the requirement since the sentence needs a verb after "crowd," not a noun.

Hindi:

- Blank (1) में ऐसा past-tense verb चाहिए जो बताए कि September 13 को भीड़ ने क्या किया — launch "to attend" करने के लिए एक जगह इकट्ठा हुई। a) gathered: इसका meaning है

एक जगह इकट्ठा होना, जो launch के लिए Champaca Bookstore पहुँचे readers और researchers से match करता है। b) congregate: इसका meaning है इकट्ठा होना, meaning करीब है, पर violate करता है क्योंकि event "On September 13" को हुआ था, इसलिए sentence को past tense "congregated" चाहिए। c) disbanded: इसका meaning है group का टूटकर बिखर जाना, जो violate करता है क्योंकि टूटकर बिखरता group किसी event को "attend" करने के लिए इकट्ठा नहीं हो सकता। d) quorum: यह noun है जिसका meaning है किसी meeting के होने के लिए ज़रूरी कम से कम members की संख्या, जो event से जुड़ा लगता है, पर violate करता है क्योंकि "crowd" के बाद verb चाहिए, noun नहीं।

22. C) pinpoint

Blank (2) needs a base verb that completes the list "to find, recognise and __," naming what the archive does with real places on its world map — locate them exactly. a) obfuscate: means to make something unclear or confusing, violating the requirement since an archive built to "find" and "recognise" places aims to make them clear, not obscure. b) cartography: is a noun meaning the science of making maps, which suits a map-based project, but violates the requirement since the list needs a verb after "and," matching "find" and "recognise." c) pinpoint: means to locate something exactly, matching an archive that marks each book's real-world places on the map. d) meticulously: is an adverb meaning with great care and precision, close in sense, violating the requirement since an adverb cannot act as the verb; "and meticulously real world places" leaves the list without an action.

Hindi:

- Blank (2) में ऐसा base verb चाहिए जो list "to find, recognise and __" को पूरा करे और बताए कि archive अपने world map पर real जगहों के साथ क्या करता है — उन्हें ठीक-ठीक locate करना। a) obfuscate: इसका meaning है किसी चीज़ को unclear या confusing बना देना, जो violate करता है क्योंकि जगहों को "find" और "recognise" करने के लिए बना archive उन्हें clear बनाता है, धुंधला नहीं। b) cartography: यह noun है जिसका meaning है maps बनाने का science, जो map वाले project पर fit लगता है, पर violate करता है क्योंकि "and" के बाद "find" और "recognise" जैसा verb चाहिए। c) pinpoint: इसका meaning है किसी चीज़ को बिल्कुल सही-सही locate करना, जो हर book की real जगहों को map पर mark करने वाले archive से match करता है। d) meticulously: यह adverb है जिसका meaning है बहुत ध्यान और precision के साथ, sense करीब है, पर violate करता है क्योंकि adverb verb का काम नहीं कर सकता; "and meticulously real world places" में list का कोई action ही नहीं बचता।

23. D) comprises

Blank (3) needs a singular present verb that takes "nearly 700 books" directly as its object, since the database that "started... with about a hundred books" now holds far more. a) amounts: means adds up to, close in sense, violating the requirement since it always needs "to," as in "amounts to nearly 700 books." b) encompass: means to include, close in meaning, but violating the requirement since the singular subject "What started..." needs "encompasses," not the base form. c) diminishes: means makes or becomes smaller, violating the requirement since the collection grew from about a hundred to nearly 700 books — it did not shrink. d) comprises: means is made up of, matching a database that now consists of nearly 700 books, with no preposition needed.

Hindi:

- Blank (3) में ऐसा singular present verb चाहिए जो "nearly 700 books" को सीधे object की तरह ले, क्योंकि जो database "started... with about a hundred books" था, उसमें अब कहीं ज़्यादा books हैं। a) amounts: इसका meaning है कुल मिलाकर होना, sense करीब है, पर violate करता है क्योंकि इसके साथ हमेशा "to" चाहिए, जैसे "amounts to nearly 700 books।" b) encompass: इसका meaning है अपने अंदर include करना, meaning करीब है, पर violate करता है क्योंकि singular subject "What started..." के साथ "encompasses" चाहिए, base form नहीं। c) diminishes: इसका meaning है कम करना या कम होना, जो violate करता है क्योंकि collection लगभग सौ से बढ़कर करीब 700 books का हो गया — घटा नहीं। d) comprises: इसका meaning है किसी चीज़ से मिलकर बना होना, जो बिना किसी preposition के करीब 700 books वाले database से match करता है।

24. B) confluence

"Intersection," as used in the passage, means the point where two things meet and overlap — here, where "literature and cities" come together in one database. a) periphery: means the outer edge of an area, as in "the periphery of a city," violating the requirement since an intersection is where things meet, not their outer boundary. b) confluence: means a coming together of two or more things, like rivers joining, matching the meeting of literature and cities that the archive is built on. c) boulevard: means a broad city avenue, which echoes the literal sense of a road intersection and the city theme, but violates the requirement since it names a single street, not a meeting point of two things. d) dichotomy: means a sharp division into two opposed parts, violating the requirement since it stresses separation, while "intersection" means the two fields meeting.

Hindi:

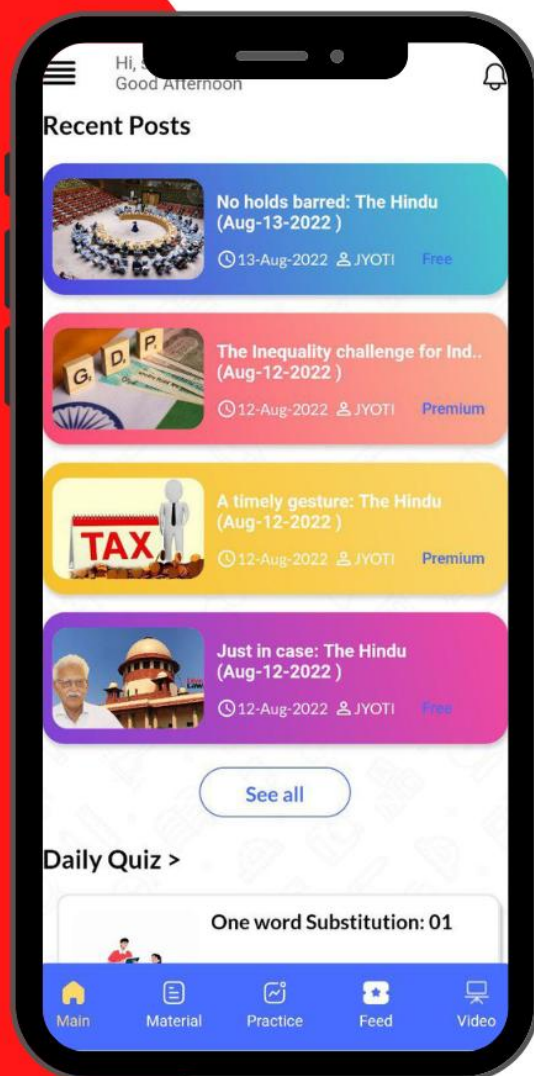
- Passage में "intersection" का meaning है वो point जहाँ दो चीज़ें मिलती और overlap करती हैं — यहाँ जहाँ "literature and cities" एक database में मिलते हैं। a) periphery: इसका meaning है किसी area का बाहरी किनारा, जैसे "the periphery of a city," जो violate करता है क्योंकि intersection वो जगह है जहाँ चीज़ें मिलती हैं, उनका बाहरी किनारा नहीं। b) confluence: इसका meaning है दो या ज़्यादा चीज़ों का आकर मिलना, जैसे नदियों का संगम, जो उस literature और cities के मेल से match करता है जिस पर archive बना है। c) boulevard: इसका meaning है शहर की चौड़ी सड़क, जो road intersection वाले literal meaning और city theme से जुड़ा लगता है, पर violate करता है क्योंकि यह एक ही सड़क का नाम है, दो चीज़ों के मिलने का point नहीं। d) dichotomy: इसका meaning है किसी चीज़ का दो उल्टे हिस्सों में साफ बँटवारा, जो violate करता है क्योंकि यह separation पर ज़ोर देता है, जबकि "intersection" दो fields के मिलने को बताता है।

25. C) withheld

"Contributed," as used in the passage, means given or supplied to the database — books sent in by "readers, researchers and authors" — so the antonym must mean held back or refused. a) bestowed: means given as a gift or honour, violating the requirement since it too describes giving, not holding back. b) proffered: means offered or held out for someone to accept, violating the requirement since it is close to "contributed," not opposite. c) withheld: means held back or refused to give, matching the opposite of readers freely giving books to the archive. d) furnished: means supplied or provided, as in "furnished the details," violating the requirement since it is a near-synonym.

Hindi:

- Passage में "contributed" का meaning है database को दिया या supply किया — "readers, researchers and authors" के भेजे books — इसलिए antonym का meaning रोक लेना या देने से मना करना होना चाहिए। a) bestowed: इसका meaning है gift या honour के रूप में देना, जो violate करता है क्योंकि यह भी देने को बताता है, रोकने को नहीं। b) proffered: इसका meaning है किसी के accept करने के लिए कुछ आगे बढ़ाना या offer करना, जो violate करता है क्योंकि यह "contributed" के करीब है, उल्टा नहीं। c) withheld: इसका meaning है कुछ रोक लेना या देने से मना करना, जो archive को खुशी से books देने वाले readers के उल्टे भाव से match करता है। d) furnished: इसका meaning है supply या provide करना, जैसे "furnished the details," जो violate करता है क्योंकि यह लगभग synonym है।



Learn Vocabulary Through Reading Articles

English Madhyam